

IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS FROM STAFF, PARENTS AND STAKEHOLDERS WORKFIRST REDESIGN PROJECT

As of December 7, 2010

		Staff (partner agencies)	Parents former/ current	Online client survey	One Table participants	Tribal input	Other Stack- holders
Goals	• Institute clearly defined vision, uniform performance measures, outcomes and goals for the program.	✓	✓		✓		
	• Evaluate results based on outcome driven performance measures that support family success factors.	✓	✓		✓	✓	
	• Establish a flexible, cultural sensitive program that provides services appropriate for the family's needs.	✓	✓		✓	✓	
	• Program should be temporary and viewed as an opportunity.	✓					
	• Have a policy that ultimately eliminates the need for TANF by stopping the cycle.	✓					
	• Address all causes of poverty instead of blaming TANF recipients.	✓					
	• Given current fiscal challenges, how do we continue the two-prong approach (services/activities to foster healthy child development and ensure parents have needed resources for self-sufficiency) to break the cycle of poverty?	✓					
Eligibility & Benefits	• TANF grant benefit structure 1. Grant reduction and redesign 2. Issue vouchers instead of cash	✓					
	• Strongly opposes lowering the TANF grant household size and limiting the household size to initial members.		✓		✓		✓
	• Count AmeriCorps income as income against the TANF grant.	✓					
	• Count SSI benefit as income to the family	✓					
	• Prorate TANF grant based on the amount of participation. Participation = Pay!!	✓					

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No TANF eligibility until a pregnant woman is in her 3rd trimester unless she has other eligible child(ren) in the home 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No TANF eligibility until the 9th month of pregnancy; many pregnant women live with parents and are on sanction. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No TANF eligibility for children under 18. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not require families to be destitute before offering services; frontload services to prevent them from falling deeper into poverty. 		✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate asset limits for TANF applicants and recipients. 				✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mandatory drug testing for parents before the TANF grant is opened and random testing thereafter. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitigate out of state TANF applicants who have become TANF ineligible in their parent state. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a TANF job quit penalty similar to the job quit penalty for Basic Food. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to cap the program, use time limits and more effective incentives and sanctions in order to make changes envisioned in the redesign. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently apply rule allowing TANF parents to retain their grant for 180 days following the removal of their children. 	✓					
Asset Building						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide financial literacy education and training on budgeting and money management. 		✓			✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support individual development accounts to save for education, a home, or start a small business. Individuals provide initial deposits from earnings and allow contributions from other sources thereafter. 					✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that each TANF parent is connected to a bank account via their EBT cards. 				✓		

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Child Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DSHS needs to approach the Legislature to repeal or reduce the DRA child support pass-through payment: TANF families have no incentive to accept a \$9 per hour job when they can stay on TANF and receive their grant PLUS a DRA pass-through. 	✓					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximize the child support pass-through—do not lower it. 		✓				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Division of Child support needs to prioritize pass-through cases and collect the most money possible; more people would be willing to cooperate with collection if it yields more money (TANF + pass-through) for the family. 		✓				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore putting child support collection on hold for parents up to 200 % FPL for 12 months following a child’s placement in foster care. 					✓	
Child-only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-needy grants should be based on the relative’s need. 	✓				✓	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is misleading to track child-only cases based on the relationship between the head of household to the child. Example, this category does not include children of undocumented parents living with other relatives or guardians, and does not include children on State Family Assistance (SFA) grants who will be put on TANF if SFA is eliminated. 	✓					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use child-only TANF caseload parents to mentor one another in a controlled setting. 	✓					
Diversion Cash Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the Diversion Cash Assistance program to 150-200% FPL. 	✓					
Time Limit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce the 60-month time limit without exemptions. 	✓					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce the 60 month rule. 	✓					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 60-month time limit needs to be enforced, but the program needs to clearly define who is eligible for time-limit extensions. For example, clarify whether a disability exemption includes a physical and serious mental or learning disability that prevents a person from attaining self-sufficiency. 	✓				✓	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the 60 month rule is enforced, then we need to begin the exit pathway at 48 months. We should provide early notice to those facing time limit terminations, pay attention to grant recipients who need 	✓				✓	

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help with housing or other safety net issues, and provide extra social service help work with community providers to help recipients through this transition.						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the TANF time limit. For example, reduce it to 3 years (36 months). 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High opposition to time limits—especially the 5-year TANF time limits with no exceptions regardless of compliance status. Seems cruel to enact this during the current economic climate. 		✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinforce that TANF is temporary assistance and align the time limits for TANF with the time limit for Disability Lifeline: 60-month life time limit for those who can work and 24 month lifetime limit for those who cannot work to get well enough to work or get on SSI/SSDI. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor persons receiving a time-limit extension to ensure the situation exempting them from termination has not changed. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assign a protective payee for all clients in an extension. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop transition plans near the end of TANF service months; help them plan for a future without monthly cash assistance; there needs to be a well-defined “hand-off” to make transition a success. 	✓	✓				
Case Planning & Case Management						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen program relationship and communication with child welfare and other resources for family support. 	✓	✓		✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need a better interface with CPS and issues around families in poverty; need a strong focus on family preservation. 		✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a greater emphasis on “engagement” and initial assessment; conduct a Social Services Family Assessment before participation starts; focus on strength-based assessment; focus assessment and services to the family instead of just the adults. 	✓	✓		✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify generational poverty at assessment or the Comprehensive Evaluation (CE) so staff can educate parents and help break the cycle for the next generation. 	✓			✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CE should assess a parent in their whole environment including their family. 	✓			✓		

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• Need to have facilitated team meetings on complex cases.		✓				
• Allow case managers the time they need to connect with families; do frequent check-ins with participants; celebrate big and small successes/accomplishments; case managers need to inspire/empower participants.	✓	✓		✓		
• Support case managers and create learning opportunities to gain case management skills; reduce the time spent measuring processes; provide cultural sensitivity training to case managers.	✓	✓		✓		
• DSHS staff need anti-oppression training: the system robs people of their humanity and the biggest issue is now people feel they are treated.		✓				
• Have current or former participants help train staff so they can better engage people, gain an understanding that for TANF families “it’s about survival” as they have lost everything including perhaps their dignity and learn to make it better for them by engaging them in a trustful, respectful and empowering way.		✓				
• Train or retrain frontline staff with coaching methodologies to work with returning TANF participants.				✓		
• Staff need to learn more about the differences between economic classes to better serve those in poverty. <i>Bridges out of Poverty</i> by Phil DeVol offers great insight into how social service agencies can better understand those in poverty and help move them into middle class.”	✓					
• Case managers need to be researchable and caring as the program is confusing and participants have to deal with many changes along with personal or family issues.			✓			
• Staff need to be more customer friendly; treat everyone as a person not a number; remind them to smile and smile often; staff need to attend cultural sensitivity training.		✓			✓	
• Pregnancy to Employment (PTE) pathways needs to be revamped; use the CE to refer high risk participants to social workers.	✓					
• Revise IE deferral due to pregnancy to 9 months (from the current 12 months) and limit deferral to 3 months after birth.	✓					

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If we keep the 12 month IE deferral then need more options for parents to do part-time participation such as an open entry GED program. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a year-long Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP); provide "more carrots, less sticks" approach with less case management oversight. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revisit IRPs, specifically focusing on their punitive nature to bring them in alignment with federal law on abuse victims. 				✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants asked for reminders that the grant is not "free" money and case managers should stay in constant contact with them to get them off services and "get on with their lives." 		✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current system to engage everyone to ensure that we are leveraging and providing integrated services and case management. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know the difference between what the parents need and what others think they need. 				✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate participants on services available through other state agencies, especially WorkFirst partners such as the Employment Security Department (ESD), colleges, Commerce, etc. 		✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opposes recommendation from DSHS One Table to enact a tiered system. DSHS would have to hire people to categorize TANF recipients which may be in ways that are demeaning or unhelpful to the families involved. If work requirements were voluntary then families could choose what is best for them. 		✓				
Parental Responsibility & Child Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address the needs of the children (infant/youth/teen); focus on providing better support to TANF children and build those services to ensure these children have the best opportunities for success. 	✓	✓	✓	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to families involved with the child welfare system also be attentive to families with children with special needs (such as those receiving services from the Division of Developmental Disabilities) or the juvenile justice system. 	✓	✓		✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize early intervention programs with the Department of Early Learning and other agencies for resource leverage; improve linkages with early learning opportunities for TANF children; allow parents to work at their children's school. 	✓	✓		✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link into medical aid/treatment models. Help parents find a doctor or dentist. 	✓	✓	✓	✓		

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		✓				
		✓				
	✓			✓		
	✓	✓		✓	✓	
	✓			✓		
	✓					
	✓					
	✓					
Support Services		✓		✓		
	✓					
	✓					
	✓					
AREN	✓					
Child Care			✓	✓		

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having child care on campus or onsite allows parents to focus on learning, supports family values and helps parents meet participation requirements. 	✓	✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer longer certification periods; move to a 12-month child care subsidy authorization system so that families do not fall through cracks (continue the discussion beyond the pilot). 		✓		✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop relationships/partnerships with employers willing to subsidize their employees' child care cost/emergency child care (in additional to regular child care or as a standalone benefit to employees). 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ignore child care overpayment when the client received Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) but should have received child care coverage from other programs such as Children's Administration or Homeless Child Care. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WCCC needs to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide more non-standard hour child care options for birth-3 year olds 2. Increase the number of providers in rural areas 3. Focus on the child's development rather than the parent's employment status 4. There is a lack of monitoring for quality child care and fraud 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend WCCC for 3 – 4 months when a family has lost a job so that they have child care during job search. 				✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow child care for X component (exempted) participants to attend treatment, counseling or other self-sufficiency activities as they frequently lack a support system and cannot bring their children to these activities. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department of Early Learning (DEL) could poll and target more TANF parents to become child care providers. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not assume that children are in the best day cares (or are in better care than their own families could provide) when women cannot access transportation and have to deal with competing time demands associated with participation requirements. 		✓				
Housing						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help parents find and keep stable, safe housing for the family. 		✓	✓	✓		

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• Create a list to match those facing foreclosure with TANF families looking for housing.	✓					
• Increase rental assistance by increasing the Home Based Services fund.				✓		
• Prioritize subsidized housing slots for families involved in the child welfare system to remove barrier to reunification.	✓					
• Need better intersection between Section 8 housing and WorkFirst; we need to advocate together for more Section 8 housing vouchers.		✓				
• Housing authorities need to implement rules for TANF clients on Section 8 to actively participate in WorkFirst and take action if they do not participate.	✓					
• Work in collaboration with housing authorities to improve housing availability.				✓		
• Reinstate Housing Trust Fund to \$200million.				✓		
• Expand the THOR program providing rental assistance to families and individuals who are homeless or are in danger of becoming homeless.				✓		
• Support changes to tenant screening (limit the number of times a fee can be collected per month, type of information that can be used, etc.).				✓		
• Separate subsidized housing and TANF to encourage participants to become self-sufficient.	✓					
• Offer parents a choice of either TANF or subsidized housing and let them save/bank months that they are not using in a particular program.	✓					
Peer Support						
• Create opportunities for group learning and support within the TANF population; mentoring by former successful participants; peer mentoring between current and new TANF participants.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
• Build partnerships with the schools and local non-profit agencies to develop mentoring and training to increase self-esteem, especially for participants who need only “light-touch” services. Look to Pierce County for program models.	✓			✓		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require participation in a peer mentoring or support group in the IRP. 	✓					
Life Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create opportunities to change attitudes, beliefs and low self-esteem. Provide opportunities to learn skills and practice self-advocacy and decision-making because these life skills are critical to success. 	✓					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TANF parents do peer mentoring for other TANF parents and count towards participation. 	✓					
Family Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Want to see more work with family planning in Pierce County. 	✓			✓		
Family Violence Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DV advocate training of at minimum one Social Worker in the local office to replace the Domestic Violence advocate contracts. 	✓			✓		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The family violence option is horribly underused and needs to be intensified. Family violence is much more prevalent than what is being uncovered in the current intake process and in client/staff relations, and has disastrous consequences for the family. 		✓				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do family violence screening for child-only relative and non-relative caregiver households. 						✓
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure staff are trained to screen for family violence at participant assessment and know how to serve victims of family violence at their identified stage of abuse. 						✓
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure the Children’s Administration case managers involved in integrated case management with WorkFirst case managers are properly trained on domestic violence protocol so as not to unfairly penalize family violence victims. 						✓
Barrier Removal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental health and chemical dependency are major issues for current and returning participants; Help fund chemical dependency treatment from the TANF Box. 	✓			✓		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build collaboration with drug courts, DSHS Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration, and community programs with mental health and chemical dependency components to provide better services and help in these areas. 	✓			✓		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help participants overcome the impact of their past criminal history. 				✓		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SSI facilitators help disable participants gather medical documents, paying vouchers, etc. 	✓					

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Work Participation	• Transportation and lack of transportation need to be addressed. For example, allow more travel time when parents travel by bus, especially in rural areas.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	• Help parents pay for transportation costs such as gas and auto insurance (limited gas vouchers and client disqualified for gas vouchers because they cannot provide proof of valid insurance).	✓	✓	✓			
	• Private transportation is needed for successful participation in multiple activities; allow a second vehicle to meet family needs and participation requirements.		✓				
	• Co-locate activities to save time and transportation cost.		✓				
	• Help participants with DUIs get or re-qualify for a driver's license.		✓				
	• Participation needs to be meaningful and useful: focus on activities that count rather than counting activities.	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	• Participants are overwhelmed by participation requirements and options need to be flexible enough to allow parents to address their family needs. Take family needs into consideration when scheduling required appointments. Set reasonable expectations and give clear instructions to staff, providers and parents.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	• Reduce needless requirements especially for young mothers and parents with children under 6 or children with disabilities.		✓				
	• Make work requirement voluntary in general, but especially for families with children under 6. Children's Administration made work requirements voluntary and are saving \$ 519 million.		✓				
	• Review requirements for single parents and take their needs into consideration; reduce participation hours for single parents.	✓	✓				
• Let one parent in a two-parent home stay home to care for children.		✓					
• Allow women to stay home with their young children and engage in reasonable participation and engagement strategies that strengthen families.		✓					

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• Program needs to increase countable volunteer activities.	✓	✓		✓		
• Allowing participants to serve as volunteers (in their own child(ren)'s classroom or provide childcare for other TANF recipients) would yield great results for all participants and save money.		✓				
• See if colleges with onsite child care centers are willing to have non-student volunteers provide child care as their WorkFirst participation.	✓					
• Allow parents to participate in school activities with their children to instill the value of education in the child.	✓	✓		✓		
• Allow cultural activities as participation. For example, a canoe journey is a clean and sober event that provides positive influence on the young, and supports family unity.	✓				✓	
• Count education/college hours as participation.	✓				✓	
• Count any level of schooling (including secondary and post secondary programs) as work participation. There are discrepancies in the approval rates of education in IRPs in areas where there are a higher number of people of color.		✓				
• Offer flexibility in excusing participants from participation, e.g. care for a sick child.		✓				
• Ask all participants to perform community service during hours they are not performing other activities and take turns supervising each other during this activity. Even if participants misreport hours; it is still better than not doing full-time participation.	✓			✓		
• Allow TANF parents to supervise community service groups as a WorkFirst activity. Support this by offering supervisory/management classes for WorkFirst participants. They would have some hours taking the training and some hours performing various supervisory roles. It would be ideal to have a Vista Volunteer or AmeriCorps volunteer organize the program.	✓			✓		
• Adjust job search requirement (e.g. align TANF requirements similar to Unemployment Insurance requirements).		✓		✓		
• Some participants feel the process of verifying participation is "demeaning".			✓			

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a participation database accessible by clients and case managers to document weekly client activities that include participant input in developing participation requirements. (EJAS is great for what it does, but we need a companion system to accomplish those things that EJAS has not been able to do.) 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidate child welfare and WorkFirst plans and require child welfare related activities to count as state allowable WorkFirst activities including activities such as participation on Family Team Decision Meetings, Transformation Design Committee, Parent Advocacy Committee, Foster Care Commission, etc. 				✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synchronize participation requirements with hours when children are in school to reduce child care costs and allow parents to spend more time with their children. 		✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate participation requirements; issue the grant without any extra requirements. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold classes/workshops to inform parents that they can provide child care to parents doing job search as their WorkFirst participation. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate the infant exemption and allow reduce post partum per child to 12 - 20 weeks. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write IRPs for teenagers. 	✓					
Sanctions						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate the sanction process all together and terminate cases that do not participate. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need more clear and real consequences for non-participation. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold (do not distribute) benefits on the EBT card for non-participating client before the end of the sanction process, which can take months, to keep them in contact with the office. 	✓					

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The conversation during Good Cause appointments when clients have failed to participate should include a focus on why the client did not perform the specific agreed upon WorkFirst activity, and a discussion about activities the client performed during that period of time that were not included on the IRP. We need client input for reporting their activities. We need a web of interlocking activity options that include the full 168 hours per week a client could perform activities. If a client has an obstacle to performing some of them due to circumstances that arise during the week, they perform others instead of scheduling an appointment to talk their case manager into changing their IRP. (DSHS). 	✓					
Workforce Attachment & Job Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer incentives to participants who get a GED/high school diploma, obtain employment which closes the grant, or accept existing jobs rather than seeking job with limited availability. 	✓				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a special track for women who want to start their own businesses; support ownership and asset development. Enterprise for Equality (in Olympia) and other similar programs can help women start a business but this does not count as participation. 		✓			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist with business needs of microenterprises: fire suppression equipment, safety gates, etc. 	✓				✓
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-locate job placement services at community services offices. 		✓			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parenting young children is work and can be worthwhile. Women lose around a half million dollars on average in wages over a lifetime due to care giving of family members. 		✓			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job search is too rigid with unrealistic expectations that do not yield results; need to focus on results and accomplishments not requirements and the amount of time people are searching for work and the number of applications they submit. 		✓			

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve employers/business community in the process: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interview/survey sample employers that hire WorkFirst participants: some have reported that they are tired of hiring WorkFirst participants because they quit after only 1-2 weeks at work, and participants also want to know why they were not selected for employment 2. Recruit and poll local employers, volunteer groups and organizations. Our parents need more exposure to employer/employee structure and relationships. (WEX/OJT) 3. Work with employers to develop entry-level jobs with potential for livable wage employment 4. Learn what skills/training employers need from employees for jobs of the future and upward career mobility 5. Assist small businesses to use tax incentives to employ WorkFirst participants in jobs and paid internships. 	✓	✓	✓	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redefine “job ready” (too narrow). Customize job search to find good fit: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide different services to “job ready” and “career ready/minded” populations 2. Job search services should be linked to educational program completion 3. Send all parents directly to full-time job search when they have GED/high school diploma and no barriers 4. Increase the use of the Employment Security Department’s Data Warehouse (Go2WorkSource.com) which is an excellent tool for those more motivated in job search and could help reduce the need for additional staff 5. Involve SBCTC in job search. Instead of returning parents to ESD after they complete their vocational education, use Career Planning centers on campus for OJTs or Career Jump-like activities. 	✓	✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to employers surveyed by ESD the lack of soft skills is the primary habit/quality that creates barriers to success on the job; employer lists work ethic, attitude and aptitude as the most important factors when they consider promoting employees. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soft skills are essential to obtaining and keeping long-term employment. Offer training on dependable strengths such as job retention, self-sufficiency planning, interview skills training that incorporates the participant’s own strengths. 	✓			✓	✓	

WORKFIRST/TANF REDESIGN SUGGESTIONS FROM STAFF, PARENTS AND STAKEHOLDERS

	Staff (partner agencies)	Parents former/ current	Online client survey	One Table participants	Tribal input	Other Stack- holders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program should focus on workforce attachment and development with TANF children as the next generation workforce; create supported employment opportunities (like apprenticeships); provide microenterprise opportunities. 	✓				✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have more programs to bridge the gap between TANF and employment; WorkFirst case managers can be the liaison between participants and employers and give participants more specific information to help bridge this gap 			✓	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand Career Jump; provide unpaid activities that lead to wage paying activities. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be creative and flexible in looking at jobs for those who have been unsuccessful in the job market (due to a long absence, lack of technical and soft skills, criminal history, etc.). 		✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help participants with past criminal records to find and keep employment. 		✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job development for the TANF population is unique and needs approaches that are more creative. For instance: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work in partnership with the SEIU to develop health care jobs 2. Expand participation in AmeriCorps 3. Work with employers differently to create job experiences with mentoring; similar to services provided by the DSHS Division of Vocational Rehabilitation 4. Need better connection between participants and job development 5. The local agency needs to act as a job hunter for TANF job seekers 6. Treat TANF participants more like employees 7. Have job developers and specific marketing strategies 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide summer youth employment services. Coordinate this seasonal increase with partners such as WSU extension and child care providers. Also provide targeted training for youth workers. Suggested trainings include information about the dangers of methamphetamine, a “Celebrities in Motion” presentation, and a panel presentation by tribal police. 					✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide job clubs that are industry specific. 		✓				

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	Staff (partner agencies)	Parents former/ current	Online client survey	One Table participants	Tribal input	Other Stack- holders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create other opportunities or paths for hard-to-serve cases without the excessive pressure to be completely job ready per current requirement with ESD. If ESD job search is not a good match for the hard-to-serve long-term TANF caseload, then another partner could create job search options to help this population. For example, some hard-to-serve parents have found employment by working with a CSO social worker to remove barriers. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The program is torn between the short-term goal of gaining <u>any</u> employment and the long-term goal of self-sufficiency: Some find that there is “value” in low wage jobs for people without work experience while others caution against forcing participants into low-wage, “dead-end” jobs to avoid creating more working poor in the community. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refocus on the original message: “get a job, get a better job, get a career” 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLSA requirements are barriers to employment: it is hard to meet current federal work requirement. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There seems to be a breakdown in communication between DSHS (WorkFirst) and ESD. 		✓				
Community Jobs						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase Community Jobs (CJ) positions by expanding the provider base to include the private sector for multiple placements. 	✓	✓		✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subsidizing wages with private and non-profit employers who will hire CJ participants is more beneficial than just obtaining work experiences alone. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at CJ and supported work to determine if jobs developed through these programs add value to the programs and are truly creating opportunities for job experience. 	✓	✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review CJ to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expand this program to more people such as those who do not have barriers but need job experience and increasing opportunity for persons with limited English proficiencies 2. Extend the length of CJ placement 3. Allow flexibility to remove barriers, such as providing co-located educational sites closer to the CJ work site, providing peer support, helping parents in the child welfare system 	✓	✓	✓	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow one parent to continue CJ even if the other parent finds employment. 		✓				

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	Staff (partner agencies)	Parents former/ current	Online client survey	One Table participants	Tribal input	Other Stack- holders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants need to know CJ is a one-time option. 		✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need additional placements with job potential after completion of the program. 	✓	✓		✓		
Workforce Education & Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review time limits for higher education (too rigid); remove one-year limit on vocation education; focus educational goals/programs to get participants to the “<u>tipping point</u>” (one year college education plus a vocational certificate) to improve long-term job success. 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants must have education to get livable wage; policies must be flexible for people who want and need more education. 		✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let participants continue on TANF and attend school full-time if they are successful in school and on a pathway out of poverty. 		✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education should be geared towards a career not just any job. 		✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct an assessment upfront and throughout the training program; view students and their families holistically. 	✓	✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove student loan requirements and offer tuition assistance as a barrier to school enrollment. 	✓		✓			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve high school completion rate to help parents and children gain self-sufficiency. 	✓		✓	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand access to Adult Basic Education and English as a Second Language for those who need basic education as a foundation before advancing to the tipping point. 				✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer efficiencies such as: reducing paper needed to enroll TANF participant in college, offer online training and classes (such as GED completion) when appropriate with flexible tuition payment options and to achieve efficiencies, and provide short-term skills development training as an open entry/open exit opportunity. 	✓	✓			✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop open entry GED programs. 	✓					

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	Staff (partner agencies)	Parents former/ current	Online client survey	One Table participants	Tribal input	Other Stack- holders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate education programs with work experience to help participants find sustainable employment; offer courses that are pertinent to the local job market; create more options for high wage/high demand programs. 	✓	✓		✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combine classroom training with: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> internships, externships, work study and paid work experience is the most valuable workforce attainment activity per students Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) speeds up arrival at self-reliance computer literacy skills, critical thinking and people skills is indispensable in the current job market with microenterprise that presents income possibilities presents opportunities even in a recession 	✓	✓		✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-locate WorkFirst staff on campus and start up programs similar to Families that Work that integrates parent work and educational goals. 	✓	✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow TANF participants to take school breaks like other students attending community and technical colleges. 		✓	✓			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure participants are aware of college programs they can attend. 		✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach participants to dress for success; it would be helpful for participants to see case managers modeling employment dress expectations at the office. 		✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to have more job placement assistance after completion training or education. 		✓				
Post Employment						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transitional benefits are needed for clients to maintain employment and remain off TANF. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide career services to all families who leave the program due to employment. 	✓					
Tribal TANF						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request reports cards to keep children on track in school and immunization records to help keep them healthy. 					✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide transportation assistance: gas vouchers and bus passes for employment and job related activities and daily activities needed to meet individual and family needs (medical appointments, grocery shopping, etc.); obtain, renew or reinstate a driver's license. 					✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide incentives to obtain a driver's license and pay the automobile insurance for up to 6 months. 					✓	

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	Staff (partner agencies)	Parents former/ current	Online client survey	One Table participants	Tribal input	Other Stack- holders
					✓	
Financing & Resource Leveraging	• Utilize early intervention programs with Department of Early Learning (DEL) and other agencies.	✓				
	• Provide funding for innovative and effective projects linking local farmers to food banks and providing additional farm fresh produce, dairy and meat for families and individuals in need of food.				✓	
	• Create an Innovative Pilot Fund from the TANF Box for partnerships with community groups to test pilots focused on reducing the return rate and increasing wages for TANF recipients.	✓				
	• Create a program to empower participants and help them develop problem solving skills – perhaps something like the WorkFirst Innovation Fund.	✓				
	• Allocate Opportunity Grant slots for TANF recipients.	✓				
	• Fund the Working Families Tax Rebate.					✓
	• Support and leverage any and all strategies that connect to job creation.		✓			
• Work with Children’s Administration, court appointed special advocates (CASA), and DEL to provide the following training: 1. Educate parents on resources available to protect children during times that they are unable to provide care and protection for their children to avoid accusations of neglect and child abandonment 2. Create a training packet for drug and alcohol treatment providers to help them prevent child abuse or neglect when their clients have a relapse	✓					
Performance Outcome & Accountability	• Have more realistic participation requirements that focus on the outcome to shift staff focus in a positive direction when they work with parents.					✓
	• Pay point or incentive could be tied to the WF funding they receive to run their programs.	✓				
	• Hold each partner accountable and reward them for job placement leading to self-sufficiency.	✓				

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		Staff (partner agencies)	Parents former/ current	Online client survey	One Table participants	Tribal input	Other Stack- holders
Process Improvement & Efficiency	• Shorten the Comprehensive Evaluation (CE); many questions are repetitive.	✓					
	• The Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP) and CE do not address an individual family's strengths and needs.	✓			✓		
	• Do not repeat the same orientation for people returning to TANF; it is a waste of time and resources and it is disrespectful.		✓				
	• Revisit those "have to" things such as orientation or workshops ESD must put a parent through each time they are referred back even if the break in service is as short as a few days. Redirect that energy and time to activities that will lead to better outcomes the parents.	✓	✓	✓			
	• Participation tracking and verification of actual hours is cumbersome and prevents addressing other parent needs. 1. Make EJAS reports compatible with Excel to make EJAS reports (MCAR – Monthly Client Accountability Report, and DCAR-Daily Client Accountability Report) searchable 2. Change MCAR and DCAR, in EJAS, so that clicking on a section to get a client list will give a list of all clients. It may take a bit longer initially to load the list; however it is inefficient to go screen by screen for 15 – 20 screens to get to the data from the current system.	✓					
	• Create WorkFirst reports and databases that allow performance to be measured based on outcomes and the process that led to the desired outcomes.	✓					
	• Have a concerted effort to weed out client fraud.	✓	✓				
	• Break down TANF expenditures in EMAPS by type similar to the breakdown of General Assistance by type: child-only, one parent, two parents. Breakdown child-only further into kinship, disability, undocumented parents, guardianship, etc.	✓					
	• Have 2 letter mailing dates per month and combine letters and notices and inserts to be mailed at those mailing times.	✓					
	• Soften language in formal letters to show more understanding of human challenges.						✓
• Align policies and performance measures with all partners.	✓						

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current policies seem to be based mostly on isolated and frequently changing measures driven solely by budget targets. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have open communication between agencies that serve the same person. Use common language at each agency to help participants to better navigate the system. 	✓					
Local Planning Areas					✓	
Miscellaneous					✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market WorkFirst success stories to the general public. 	✓	✓			✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a WorkFirst Advisory Group. 						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite Dr. Donna Beegle, www.combarriers.com from Oregon to consult on the redesign. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite Division of Child Support (DCS) staff to participate in the WorkFirst re-examination process to help us identify types of fraud they see and to help us find ways to prevent fraud. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change the culture at DSHS about TANF: more emphasis on how things are done and less on performance measures. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not allow Quest EBT cards to be used at horse tracks and casinos. 	✓					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase funding for the Emergency Food Assistance Program, providing additional resources to food banks struggling to keep up with rising demand. 					✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect funding for the local asset building coalitions, which provide assistance so that families and individuals can build assets and access credit. Fund the IDAs program with a minimum of \$1,000,000. 					✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit use of credit scoring for property and automobile insurance. 					✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase access to low-cost auto insurance. 					✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate the co-payment or fees for school lunches for low-income children in grades K-6. (Currently only children in K-3 do not pay a co-payment). 					✓	

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• Offer flexible office and phone hours: evenings and weekends.					✓	
• Improve wait time for the call center.		✓				
• Staff the call center with people who can work on the case.		✓				
• Washington’s foster care system is called Children First and Washington’s TANF system is called Work First – children always need to be the priority. We need large system change.		✓				
• Ask for a federal waiver to increase the state’s portion of money that can go to child abuse and neglect prevention and family reunification – system is faulty because current funding makes it more productive to remove children from their families. Most children removed for neglect – which if closely investigate is often just due to situations inherent poverty.		✓				
• DSHS implements a lot of staff to take care of programs – would be better to refocus on the families.		✓				
• It is very difficult to replace the jobs people lost; they do not exist. Many jobs, especially those commonly associated as women’s work, are now outsourced.		✓				
• Eliminate use of social workers as EBT issuers	✓					