

# WASHINGTON



## Secretary of State Productivity Board

# ADOPTED SUGGESTIONS 2023-2024

1 July 2024

### Summary

This report contains key information about all adopted suggestions approved by the Productivity Board from 1 January 2024 to 30 June 2024, as required by RCW 41.60.020 (3). It also provides context for the reader to better understand the current state of the Productivity Board.

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## Introduction

The Productivity Board was first established in 1982 and saved the State of Washington well over 50 million dollars until it lost funding in 2011. After being reinstated in 2023, the Productivity Board has developed a solid framework for processing new cost-saving and revenue-generating ideas.

Core objectives include:

- ❖ Foster an environment where management embraces new ideas and makes use of the abilities and insights of state workers;
- ❖ Stimulate creative and innovative suggestions through recognition and cash awards;
- ❖ Provide an equitable and impartial evaluation; and
- ❖ Ensure that adopted suggestions are properly implemented.

Eligible state employees may submit proposals to one of two incentive programs and receive cash awards and/or recognition for their contributions. The **Employee Suggestion Program**, our most popular incentive program, grants awards and recognition for specific, practical ideas that can save money, generate revenue, or otherwise offer intangible benefits. The **Teamwork Incentive Program** rewards teams of employees for developing and executing process improvement projects that save money or generate revenue.

The Productivity Board has received a total of 75 suggestions since it began accepting suggestions on 1 January 2024. Of those suggestions, two have been adopted. Seven more await board approval after receiving adopt recommendations from their respective agencies. 15 suggestions are still being evaluated by agency subject matter experts.

## Adopted Suggestions

### Suggestion 2410018

**Problem Identified:** Mental health assessments (MHA) performed during the intake process for incarcerated individuals at Washington Correction Centers (WCC) were time-consuming to perform.

**Proposed Solution:** A clinician at WCC created writing/diagnostic support tools in JavaScript and Phrase Express. By applying those tools, the MHA backlog was reduced by 80% in just a few months. Aside from being a more streamlined process, these tools also improved assessment quality and brought assessments more in line with the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5<sup>th</sup> Ed.

**Evaluating Agency:** Department of Corrections

**Recommendation:** Adopt

**Summary:** “[The suggester] developed a unique application of available technology to improve routine work completed by him and his peers. This has been introduced to other staff who have expressed strong desire to adopt these tools.”

**Tangible First Year Savings:** \$0

**Tangible First Year Revenue:** \$0

**Recommended Award:** Recognition

## Suggestion 2410044

**Problem Identified:** Retiring state employees are faced with a significant amount of paperwork, requirements, options, etc. Navigating this process is difficult and confusing.

**Proposed Solution:** A ranger for the Parks and Recreation Commission suggested a comprehensive retirement guide be developed. Such a guide would have concrete steps to aid any state employees in their retirement process and would be given preemptively to all state employees once they turn 65. The suggesting employee noted that retirees who receive this assistance may be more likely to volunteer in the future and depart state service with positive attitudes.

**Evaluating Agency:** Parks and Recreation Commission

**Recommendation:** Modified Adopt

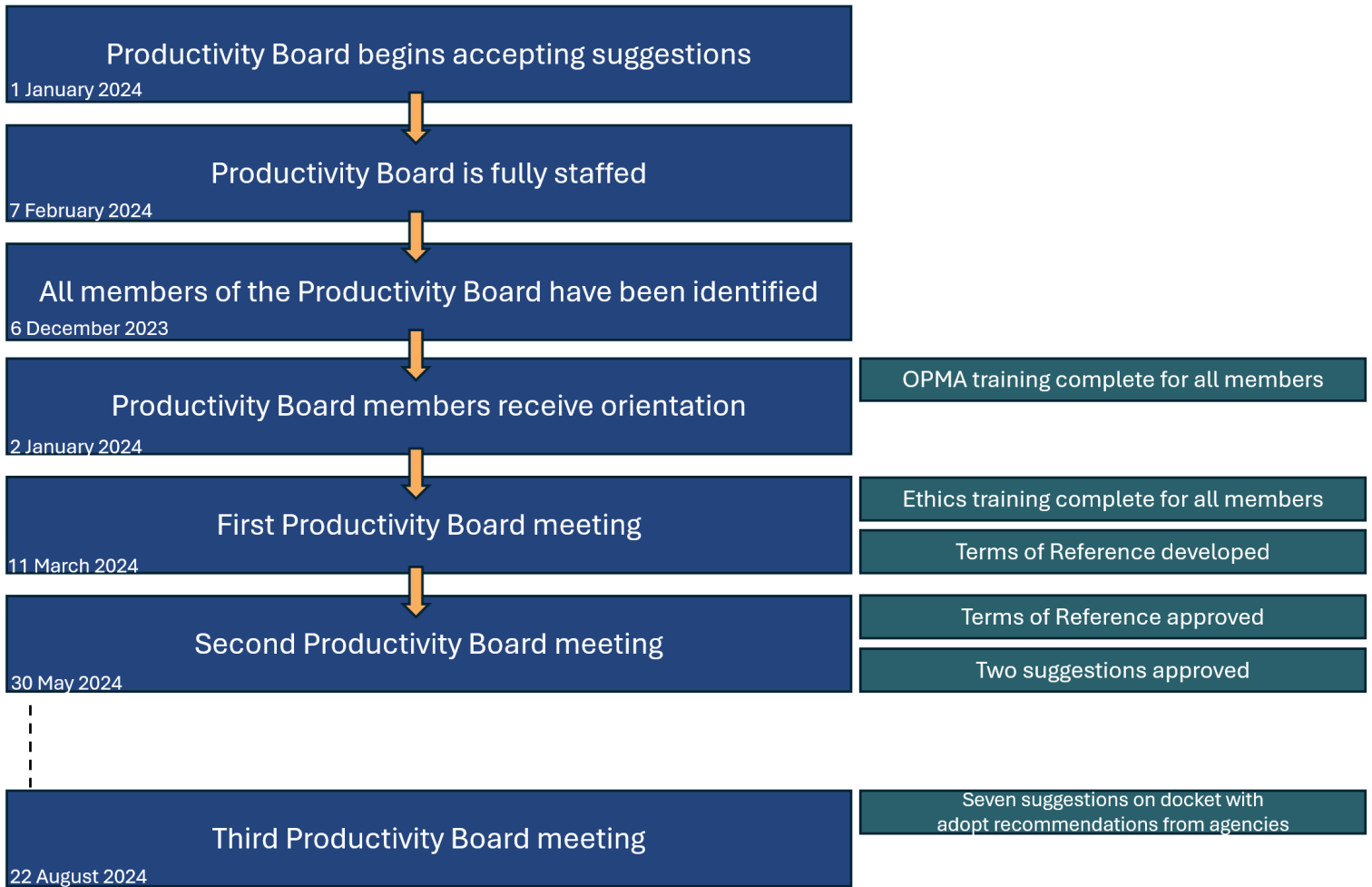
**Summary:** “[...] Unfortunately, the employee must deal with multiple state and federal agencies all with varying requirements and protocols which require the employee to make personal choices. While I believe there is merit to this employee's proposal, I can only address what Parks is willing to do and cannot speak to the whole of state government. Parks HR & Payroll unit will put together information [...] for employees who are preparing for retirement. We will provide instruction to the employee concerning the internal steps they need to take when retiring. We will provide an overview of other things they need to do outside of Parks with links to those external state and federal resources where they can get information and instruction directly from those entities.”

**Tangible First Year Savings:** \$0

**Tangible First Year Revenue:** \$0

**Recommended Award:** Recognition

## Productivity Board Milestones



## Productivity Board Members

Board members include agency heads from the Office of Financial Management and the Department of Enterprise Services, and members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor, House Speaker, and Secretary of State's Office. Appointed members include civil service employees, higher education employees, bargaining unit representatives, and a number of members are chosen for their experience administering employee incentives. Secretary Steve Hobbs is the Chairperson of the Board.



**Shad Bell** is the Assistant Director of Operations and Communications for the Washington State Board of Nursing. Shad plays a pivotal role in the efficient functioning of the board and in facilitating effective communication strategies.

With a career in the public sector spanning over a decade, Shad has been an instrumental figure in the dynamic landscape of Washington State. Originating from a foundation in the Productivity Board as a Program Coordinator, Shad witnessed firsthand the unwavering dedication of the state workforce to streamline government operations. This decade-long transition from the Productivity Board to the Board of Nursing reflects Shad's commitment to contributing to critical sectors of public service.

A proud alumnus of Western Washington University, Shad earned a Bachelor of Science in Public Administration, which laid the groundwork for a career marked by a deep commitment to public service. Having spent nearly five decades in Washington State, Shad possesses an intrinsic understanding of the local culture, community, and the unique challenges and opportunities that shape the Evergreen State.

Beyond Shad's professional endeavors, Shad is a nature lover and enjoys the outdoors, camping, hiking, and road trips.



**Miranda Cavender** (she/her/hers) has worked in State Government for nearly a decade. Currently serving as the Customer Service Manager for Washington State Consolidated Mail Services, a section within the Business Resources Division of the Department of Enterprise Services. She started her state career as an entry level Office Assistant III in 2014 at the Department of Labor & Industries innovating and promoting process improvements.

Later, she joined the Department of Retirement Systems as a Retirement Specialist. There, she developed expertise in assisting Public Employees with all stages of their retirement benefits, including if a member became disabled or passed away. Supporting public employees during times of grief or life changing disability made Miranda even more passionate about the success and well-being of public employees.

Miranda was first introduced to the Productivity Board when she was just a kid. Her Dad, Dave Cavender, worked for the Department of Natural Resources for over 20 years. He helped staff submit ideas to the Productivity Board and one saved the state so much money that the person who had the idea was paid the maximum \$10,000. When the ask came from DES Executive Team for a volunteer of course Miranda volunteered.



**Amanda Doyle** has been working in federal and state government roles for over 20 years. She joined Washington state government and Office of the Secretary of State in January 2023 as the Chief of Staff, where she oversees office-wide support divisions, to include the Operations, Information Technology, External Affairs, and Legislative & Policy Divisions.

Serving in various leadership positions in the U.S. Army and the Washington National Guard for the past 20+ years, Amanda brings a wealth of small team leadership, organizational leadership, and staff management to her role in OSOS, as well as with the Washington State Productivity Board.

Amanda earned a bachelor's degree from Gonzaga University and a Master's degree in Business and Organizational Security Management from Webster's University. She is currently working on a second Master's in Strategic Studies from the Army War College in Carlisle, PA.



**Ashley Fueston** has been with the Employment Security Department for over eight years as a WorkSource Specialist. She finds fulfillment in helping people find new career paths after significant life challenges. Ashley Fueston was also elected to her second term as Vice President at the 50th Biennial AFSCME Council 28/WFSE Convention.

Prior to becoming a public employee, Fueston helped community members access job resources at WorkSource, where she received several professional awards in recognition of her contributions. She also served in AmeriCorps.

Born and raised in Thurston County, Fueston lives there with her wife and four of their kids, as their oldest is currently attending EWU. She enjoys supporting her children in sports, band, and all the activities they participate in.



**Jen Gilliard** (she/her/hers) has worked in higher education since 2001. For over 20 years, she served as a Professor of Early Childhood Education and director of several federally-funded-grant projects that supported collaborative and innovative teacher education programs designed specifically for Native American students who lived and worked on Montana's American Indian Reservations.

Prior to her career in higher education, she worked for two mental health agencies, providing therapy to children, supervising clinical staff in three counties, and collaboratively developing creative children's mental health programs for children, adolescents, and their families.



Since August 2022, Jen is a dean at South Puget Sound Community College where she continues to focus on instruction, curriculum, and the delivery of degree programs that support equity and inclusion.

Dr. Gilliard holds a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania, a Master's Degree in Child and Family Studies from The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and a Ph.D. in Family Studies (Marriage and Family Therapy) from The University of Tennessee, Knoxville.



**Sybill Hyppolite** (she/her) was named Government Affairs Director of the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO in November 2022 after serving as Legislative Director since October 2019. In this role, she works alongside WSLC Legislative Director John Traynor to advance the policy agenda of the largest labor organization in Washington state, its affiliated unions and allied community organizations. Hyppolite also promotes the AFL-CIO's legislative and policy objectives among Washington's congressional delegation, serves on several internal and external policy committees, and works with affiliated unions and community partners to improve the lives of Washington's working families.

Prior to joining the WSLC, Hyppolite served for five years as the Healthcare Policy Specialist at SEIU Healthcare 1199NW, where she worked with labor and community partners to advance legislation and co-create policies to improve access to health care. She also has supported union members to bargain strong contracts.

Hyppolite's career has centered on social justice, empowerment and self-determination. As an organizer at the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, she worked on a labor-community campaign to advance hospital accountability. She also brings international experience, having conducted policy research in Haiti funded by a Harvard Kennedy School program. At Partners In Health, she coordinated multi-national logistics and partnerships to help patients access medical treatment abroad. Hyppolite holds a Master of Science in Society, Human Development and Health from Harvard University.

She has firsthand experience of the importance of labor unions in marginalized communities. Raised by Haitian parents in a union household, Hyppolite learned organizing strategies from her mother, an administrative assistant committed to the struggle for equity. Today, she maintains a commitment to her local community as a yoga facilitator exploring collective healing for collective action.



**Mandeep Kaundal** joined the Results Washington team in December 2017. He loves working with colleagues across various state agencies to develop and implement a data-driven approach to track performance for the Governor's priorities.

Prior to Results Washington, Mandeep had the privilege to serve people with disabilities through his work in few different positions within the Department of Social and Health Services for five years. Before joining the state services, Mandeep served people with disabilities through his various roles with not-for profit and private businesses. Mandeep was

appointed Chair for the Governor’s Committee of Disability Issues and Employment by Governor Jay Inslee and proudly served on that committee from March 2017 through March 2020.

He earned a Masters in Business Administration from Eastern Washington University and a Masters in Agricultural Economics from Punjab Agricultural University, India, and is currently pursuing a Doctorate in Business Administration.



**Pete Kmet** (pronounced Kamet) is a retired environmental engineer, and former Mayor and City Councilmember for the City of Tumwater.

During his 30 years as an elected official, he represented Tumwater on numerous committees and task forces providing policy oversight on a wide range of issues including growth management, public works infrastructure, parks and recreation programs, and public safety. While holding these elected positions Pete also worked as an environmental engineer for the WA State Department of Ecology. In this role he oversaw the cleanup of numerous contaminated sites and developed related technical guidance, policies and rules.

Pete has a Bachelor of Science in civil engineering from Norwich University, and a Master of Science in environmental engineering from the University of Wisconsin in Madison. He is a registered professional engineer in Washington State.

Over the years, Pete has volunteered for a wide variety of City and nonprofit events and projects and is currently on the Board of Rebuilding Together Thurston County.



**Mia Navarro** (she/her/hers) has been working in public administration and nonprofits for over 20 years. She joined OFM on March 1, 2023, as the Deputy Chief Cultural Officer with State Human Resources, and her portfolio includes carrying out SHR’s strategic priorities, and championing the work of the Workforce Strategies and HR Analytics sections.

Prior to joining the State, Mia served as the Assistant Director of the City of Tacoma’s Office of Equity and Human Rights, Community Engagement Manager for the City of Tukwila, Associate Director of Community Services for the Tacoma Housing Authority, helped to implement the Systems Change Initiative to End Family Homelessness in Pierce County, and worked in several roles, including Executive Director, for the Washington State Coalition for the Homeless.

Mia holds a Bachelors Degree from the University of Southern California, a Master in Business Administration from Western Governors University, and is currently working on a PhD in Leadership Studies at Saint Martin’s University in Lacey, where her research focus is the intersection of leadership and DEIB work.