

CCW Cross-Agency Work Group (CAWG) Meeting Agenda
Thursday, December 18, 2025 | 9:00 AM- 10:30 AM

Meeting Purpose:

This CAWG meeting will include agency and legislative updates and professional development on Tribal Relations in Education.

Time	Agenda Topic	Speaker
9:00-9:05 AM	Welcome & Overview	Kimberly Hetrick (WSAC)
9:05-9:25 AM	Agency Introductions and Updates: <i>Opportunity for agencies to provide brief updates and share areas for collaboration and partnership.</i>	All
9:25-9:30	Tribal Relations Sovereignty Pre Assessment.docx	All
9:30-10:15 AM	Shandy Abrahamson, <i>Tribal Relations in Education.</i> Shandy will discuss Tribal Sovereignty in Education, Native Education Historical Timeline, WA State (Centennial Accord & Millennium Agreement), and Our Roles. The presentation will be shared after the meeting.	Shandy Abrahamson, (qʷuɫxn̓málqs) Director Office of Native Education Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) shandy.abrahamson@k12.wa.us
10:15 - 10:25 AM	<i>Questions and Comments</i>	Jessica Murillo-Davis
10:25-10:30 AM	Closing Upcoming Meeting Dates and Possible Topics Feb 19, 2026 - What should CCW look like to fill the secondary/postsecondary gap? April 16, 2026 - FU Gov to Gov impact on CAWG; 2025 Rural Recommendations - Healthcare Pathways June 18, 2026 Recommendations for CCW SFY 27	Jessica Murillo-Davis

For your information:

[Government-to-Government](#) training for State employees - highly recommended!

[American Indian Endowed Scholarship](#) - WSAC The [American Indian Endowed Scholarship](#) benefits eligible students who have close social and cultural ties to an American Indian tribe or community in Washington State.

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["The economic & community impact of tribes in Washington."](#)

Weaving Futures in Relationships

https://ospi.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/2025-10/tribal-education-leaders-summit-witnessing_0_0.pdf

[Teachers for the People](#) - CCW Funded - At the Northwest Educational Service District (NWESD) 189, we believe that diversifying the education workforce starts with preparing teachers who understand the power of community, identity, and belonging. The [Teachers for the People](#) (TPP) Project is one way we're doing just that — by designing learning experiences that center Indigenous knowledge, relationships, and ways of teaching.

[AI Literacy for Civic Engagement](#) - OSPI Approved Framework

[Teach Welding](#) - MAC Framework

[Building a better future for Arizona | Community Cares](#)

SB 5790 2025-2026

<https://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=5790&Initiative=false&Year=2025>

Meeting summary

Quick recap

The final COG meeting of 2025 focused on tribal sovereignty and government-to-government relations, featuring a presentation by Shandy Abrahamson, Director of the Office of Native Education at OSPI. Shandy provided an introduction to tribal sovereignty, discussing its contemporary applications and importance in education, workforce development, and economic growth. She highlighted Washington state tribes' significant contributions to the economy and emphasized the need for proper consultation and partnership when working with tribes. The meeting also covered tribal government structures, economic development, and potential partnerships for Career Connect Learning programs. Participants discussed strategies for engaging with tribes effectively and strengthening tribal partnerships. The session concluded with a reflection on the role of tribal sovereignty in various sectors and encouraged attendees to take action in their own work to support tribal nations.

Next steps

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- [All participants: Complete the pre-assessment that was sent out to help Shandy understand where to meet participants in future sessions](#)
- [All participants: Put name, agency, title, and email in the chat/meeting materials so others can easily contact them](#)
- [Kimberly/Jessica: Send out the recording, notes, and Shandy's presentation after the meeting](#)
- [Kimberly/Jessica: Add the Senate Bill 5790 link to the chat/agenda](#)
- [Shandy: Send Kimberly the PowerPoint presentation and the WIGO report](#)
- [All participants: Within the next 30 days, take one specific action to strengthen tribal partnerships in their CCW network](#)
- [All participants: Reflect on the "I used to think... now I know/am learning..." prompt from the pre-assessment document](#)
- [All participants: If interested in having Shandy return to focus on a specific area, let Kimberly know for future engagements](#)

Summary

CAWG Meeting: Training and Scholarships

The CAWG meeting of 2025 concluded with a reminder from Kimberly about the importance of government-to-government training and the American Indian Endowed Scholarship, which WASAC oversees. Jessica highlighted the need for attendees to be aware that the meeting was being recorded. The agenda was shared, and Kimberly noted the presence of additional participants. The meeting was set to begin with a presentation by Shandy, which had been rescheduled previously.

Agency Updates and Workforce Initiatives

The meeting began with introductions and updates from various agencies, including Lisa Wheeler from the Department of Services for the Blind, who discussed tribal partnerships and workforce initiatives. Marie Bruin from the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges provided updates on federal funding stability and enrollment trends. The group discussed Senate Bill 5790 and its implementation in Washington State. Participants were encouraged to share additional resources and information via chat. The conversation ended with a brief introduction of Shandy from OSPI, who was scheduled to be the main speaker but was unable to attend due to a scheduling conflict.

Tribal Sovereignty and Government Relations

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Shandy Abrahamson, Director of the Office of Native Education, introduced the concept of tribal sovereignty and its significance in government-to-government relations. She explained that tribal sovereignty is the inherent right of tribal nations to self-govern and ensure the well-being of their citizens, lands, and resources. Shandy highlighted the importance of understanding tribal sovereignty beyond its legal definition, emphasizing its relevance in everyday life and the need for continued learning. She also discussed the historical context of tribal relations in Washington state, including the Centennial Accord and Millennium Agreement, which establish frameworks for collaboration between tribal nations and state government.

Formal Tribal Consultation for Career Connect

The group discussed the importance of formal tribal consultation rather than just community input when developing Career Connect Learning programs for tribal students. Jessica and Lisa emphasized the need for retention and recognition, as well as cultural consciousness, while Lisa highlighted the historical exclusion of tribal input and the importance of formal consultation. Shandy shared her experience working with tribal governments and emphasized the complexity of tribal structures, noting potential partnerships in areas such as education, healthcare, and economic development. The group also discussed the importance of understanding government-to-government relationships and the distinction between tribal nations as sovereign governments versus other community groups.

Tribal Sovereignty and Consultation Practices

The meeting focused on tribal sovereignty and consultation practices. Shandy and Kimberly discussed the importance of working directly with tribal counterparts and understanding the unique governance structures of each tribe. They highlighted examples of contemporary tribal sovereignty, including the Office of Native Education's role, state-tribal education compacts, and tribal language certification programs. The discussion also covered historical and legal contexts of tribal sovereignty, such as the Sinixt case and the Indian Child Welfare Act. Participants were encouraged to reflect on how to incorporate these principles into their own work with tribes.

Tribal Economic Development Partnerships

Shandy presented on tribal economic development in Washington state, highlighting tribes' significant contributions to the economy and workforce. She emphasized the importance of partnering with tribes on Career Connect Learning initiatives, discussing workforce alignment, economic sectors for partnership, and unique partnership assets. The group discussed strategies for engaging with tribes, including identifying the correct contacts and understanding tribal sovereignty.

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Jessica announced her transition back to the Washington Student Team and Council Adult Pathways, while Kimberly thanked her for her contributions to CCW. The conversation ended with a review of upcoming meeting dates and topics for the new year.

Office of Native Education

Cross-Agency Work Group (CAWG) Professional Development Tribal Sovereignty in Education

DECEMBER 18, 2025

OFFICE OF NATIVE EDUCATION

SHANDY ABRAHAMSON, DIRECTOR

WASHINGTON OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION



Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Office of Native Education



Office of Native Education Vision

Indian education dates back to a time when all children were identified as gifted and talented. Each child had a skill and ability that would contribute to the health and vitality of the community. Everyone in the community helped to identify and cultivate these skills and abilities. The elders were entrusted to oversee this sacred act of knowledge being shared. That is still our vision for Indian education today.

[From Where the Sun Rises: Addressing the Educational Achievement of Native Americans in Washington State \(2008\)](#)

Office Native Education in Statute **[RCW 28A.300.105](#)**



Discussion Overview

- **Introductions**
- **Tribal Sovereignty Overview**
 - [Tribal Relations Sovereignty Pre Assessment.docx](#)
- **Tribal Government Structures**
- **Tribal Economic Development**
- **What is your role?**
- **Next Steps**
- **Questions, Comments, and Ideas**



Way' inca i'skwist....

- **Name, family, place**
- **What do you hope to gain from today? Long term?**
- **What is your favorite meal during the holidays?**



What is Tribal Sovereignty?





Tribal Relation Foundations

Historical
Trauma

Tribal
Sovereignty

Tribal
C(c)onsultation

Family/
Community
Engagement

Recognition

Continued
Learning





Tribal Sovereignty

Is the **inherent right** of tribal nations to self-govern and ensure the well-being of their citizens, lands and resources.

The relationship between tribal nations and other governments (including other tribal nations, nations, federal, state, local) is government to government.

The identity, historical and legal rights of American Indian and Alaska Native learners are as citizens and descendants of sovereign tribal nations, *not through the socially constructed designation of race or ethnicity*.

The U.S. Constitution explicitly acknowledges four sovereigns: the federal government, state governments, foreign nations, and ***Indian tribes***. Today, treaties and U.S. law give shape to tribal powers.



Sovereignty in Washington State

Centennial Accord

" Accord dated August 4, 1989, is executed between the federally recognized Indian tribes of Washington signatory to this Accord and the State of Washington, through its governor, in order to better achieve mutual goals through an improved relationship between their sovereign governments. This Accord provides a framework for that government-to-government relationship and implementation procedures to assure execution of that relationship.

Each Party to this Accord respects the sovereignty of the other. The respective sovereignty of the state and each federally recognized tribe provide paramount authority for that party to exist and to govern. The parties share in their relationship particular respect for the values and culture represented by tribal governments. Further, the parties share a desire for a complete Accord between the State of Washington and the federally recognized tribes in Washington reflecting a full government-to- government relationship and will work with all elements of state and tribal governments to achieve such an accord. "

<https://goia.wa.gov/relations/centennial-accord>

Millennium Agreement

"Agreement To Institutionalize The Government-to-Government Relationship In Preparation For The New Millennium."

This agreement, between the State of Washington and the Tribal Nations, is an affirmation of the 1989 Centennial Accord, as well as a compact to implement the terms of the Accord on a day-to-day basis.

The undersigned leaders of American Indian Nations and the State of Washington...in the spirit of understanding and mutual respect of the 1989 Centennial Accord and the government-to-government relationship established in that Accord, and desiring to strengthen our relationships and our cooperation on issues of mutual concern, commit to the following:

<https://goia.wa.gov/relations/millennium-agreement/agreement>



Sovereignty in Washington State

Washington State Tribal Relations Act (RCW 43.376):

- This state law formally establishes the government-to-government relationship between the State of Washington and Indian Tribes within the state.
- It sets forth principles and mandates for state agencies regarding their interactions with tribes, including the need for ongoing, early consultation.
- The law requires state agencies to coordinate with the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs to ensure compliance and develop policies that adhere to the spirit of the Accord and state law.

<https://goia.wa.gov/relations>



Knowledge Check (Tribal Sovereignty)

Reflection Question: "When developing career connected learning programs for tribal students, why is formal tribal consultation required rather than simply 'community input' or 'stakeholder engagement'?"



Knowledge Check (Tribal Sovereignty)

Knowledge Check Assessment

This question should prompt thinking about:

Government-to-Government relationships

Legal and treaty obligations

The distinction between tribal nations as sovereign governments vs. other community groups



Tribal Government Structure



Tribal Government

Tribal governments determine their own governance structures, pass laws, enforce laws, exercise jurisdiction and *deliver programs and services*.

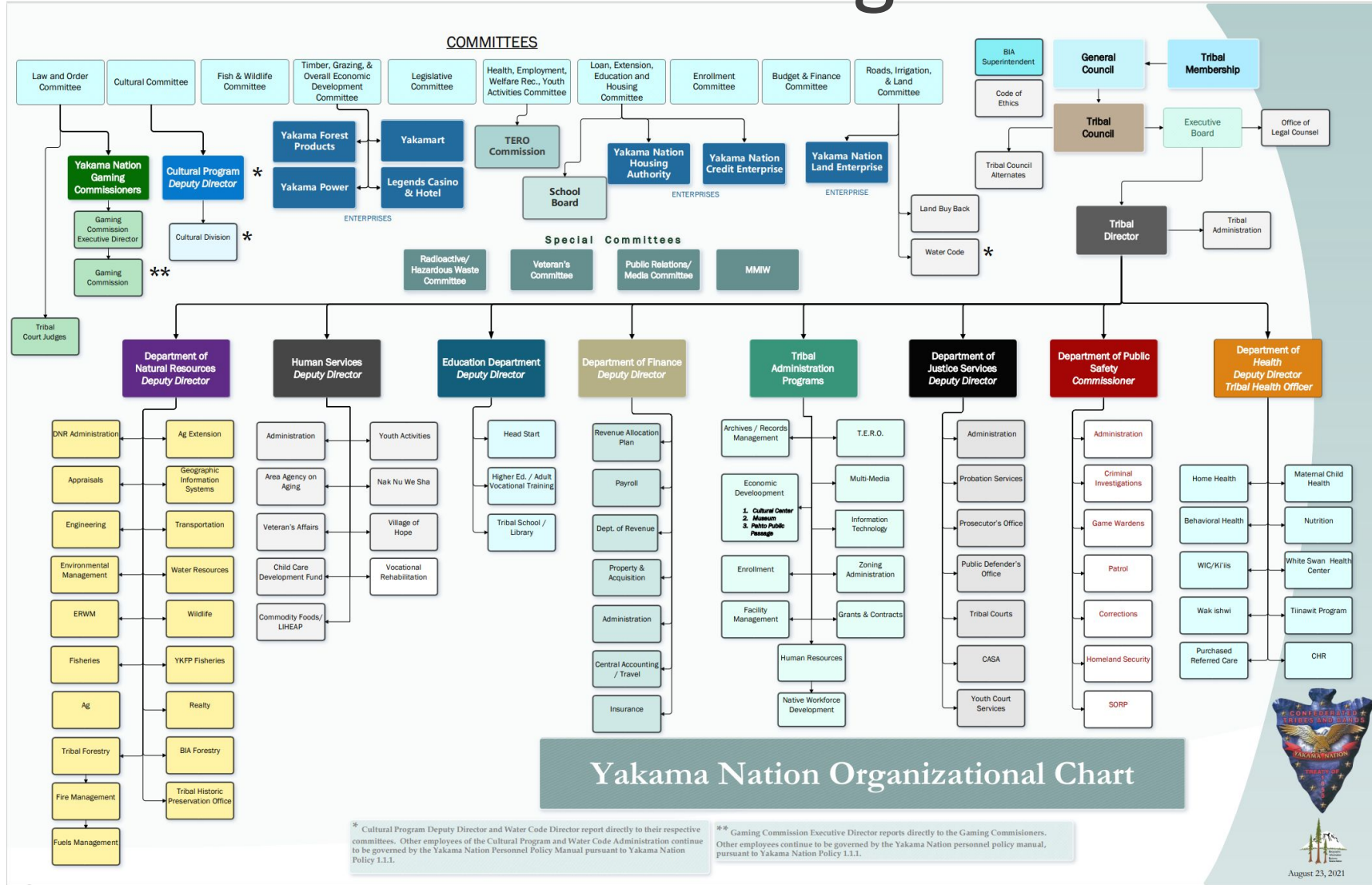
Led by a body of elected officials, tribal governments are responsible for healthcare, **education**, housing, public safety, courts, transportation, natural resources, environment, culture and **economic development**.

Tribal governments *collaborate* with state and local jurisdictions on a multitude of issues, from taxation to transportation improvements to natural resource management to emergency services.

Source: WIGA_NewsInsert2022_Final

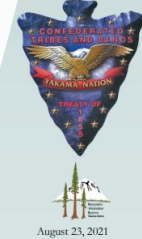


Yakama Nation Org Chart



* Cultural Program Deputy Director and Water Code Director report directly to their respective committees. Other employees of the Cultural Program and Water Code Administration continue to be governed by the Yakama Nation Personnel Policy Manual pursuant to Yakama Nation Policy 1.1.1.

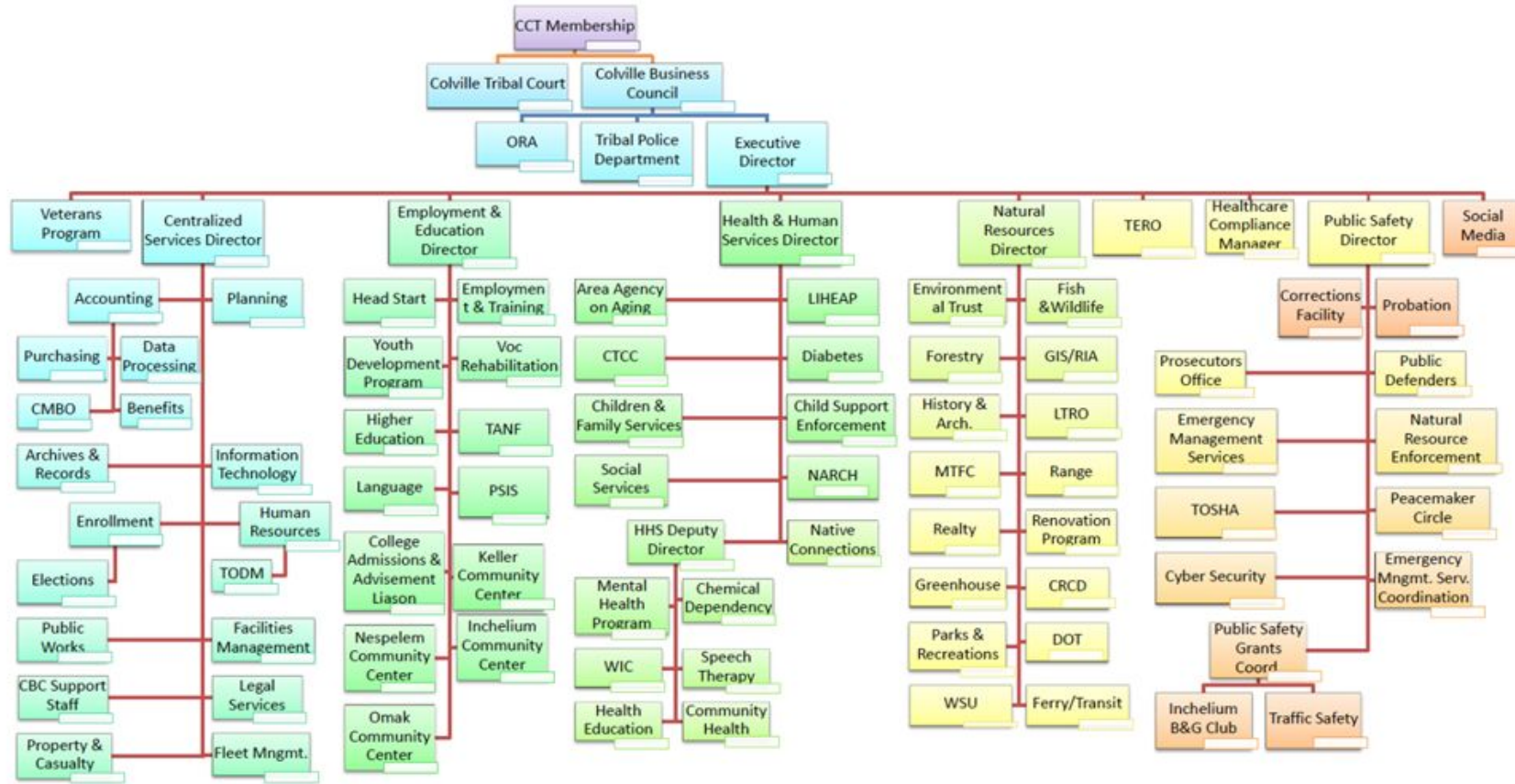
** Gaming Commission Executive Director reports directly to the Gaming Commissioners. Other employees continue to be governed by the Yakama Nation personnel policy manual, pursuant to Yakama Nation Policy 1.1.1.



August 23, 2021



Colville Tribal Government Structure



Colville Tribal Organization



Knowledge Check (Tribal Government Structure)



Scenario-Based Question:

"You receive an email from a 'Tribal Education Director' expressing interest in a CCW program. Before moving forward, what do you need to confirm about this contact, and why does it matter?"



Knowledge Check (Tribal Government Structure)

What this scenario assesses:

Understanding that tribes have formal governmental structures

Recognition that proper authority/authorization matters

Awareness of government-to-government protocols

Follow-up Discussion Points:

Who has authority to commit tribal resources or represent tribal interests?

How do tribal council structures differ from school district boards?

Why might a well-meaning staff person not have authority to enter agreements?



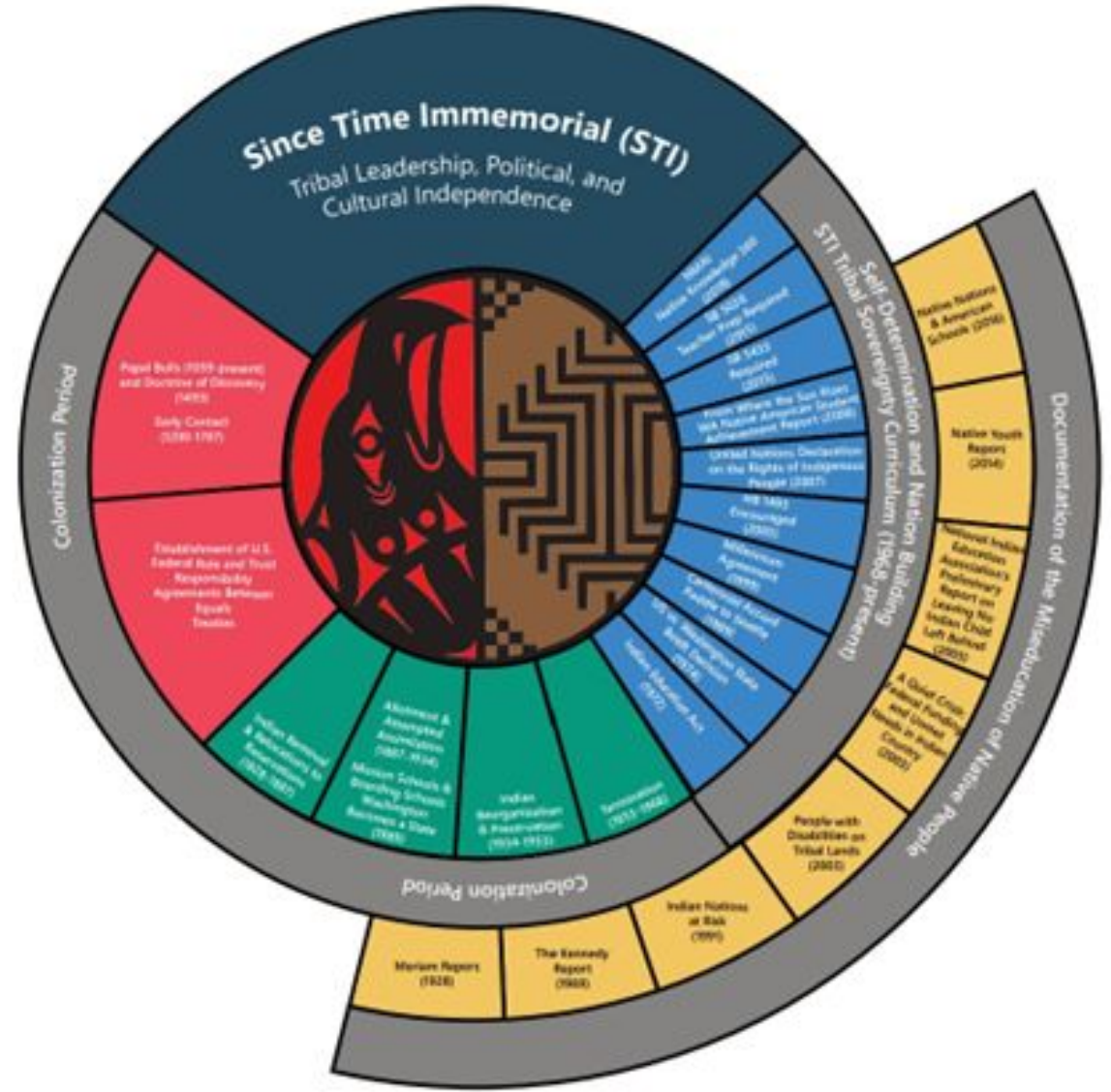
Tribal Sovereignty in a Contemporary Context



Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction Office of Native Education

In honor and recognition of tribal sovereignty through the Centennial Accord and Millenium Agreement OSPI supports

- Office of Native Education [RCW 28A.300.105](#)
- STI Curriculum
- State Tribal Compact Schools HB 1134
- 1st Peoples 1st Language Certificate
- G2G Training & Tribal Consultation
- Expansion of Office of Native Education supports and staff
- Tribal Education Leaders Summit
- Washington State Native American Advisory Committee



Knowledge Check (Sovereignty in a Contemporary Context)

"Which of these reflects contemporary tribal sovereignty in action? (Select all that apply)"

- A tribe operates its own health clinic system serving 15,000 patients annually
- A tribe requires consultation before a state program launches in their service area
- A tribe collects and controls data about their own students' educational outcomes
- A tribe develops its own Career Launch programs aligned with tribal workforce needs
- A tribe enters into a compact with the state for education services



Knowledge Check (Sovereignty in a Contemporary Context)

Answer: *ALL* of them

Bonus Discussion Prompt:

"Someone says: 'We already consulted with tribes 20 years ago when we developed our CTE programs—we're good, right?' What's your response?"



Tribal Economic Development in Washington State



Tribal Economic Development

\$7.4 billion in economic activity generated by Washington tribes

\$1 out of every \$100 in Washington's economy is from tribal activity

29 federally recognized tribes driving economic growth

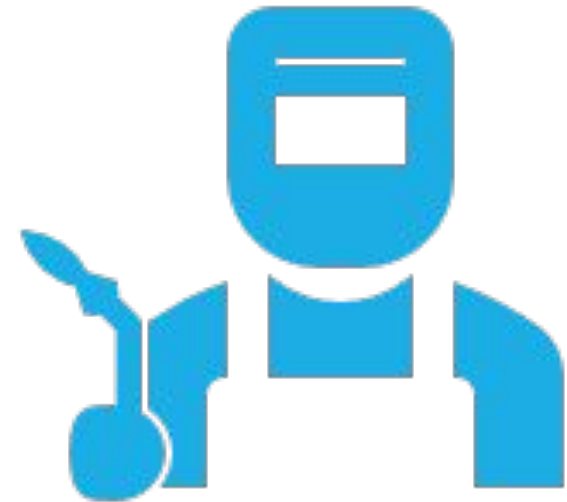
8th largest employer group in Washington state

Unlike corporations, tribes **never relocate**—firmly rooted in Washington lands and waters



Tribal Economic Development

- **52,333 jobs** created in Washington
- **29,421 direct tribal employees** (61% non-Indian)
- **\$1.9 billion** in annual employee compensation
- **\$3.9 billion** in wages and benefits
- **\$1.5 billion** in annual state and local taxes



Washington Tribal Economic Development Community Contributions and their Impacts

Economic Progress Since 1990:

Income risen **59%** for Indians on WA reservations

Unemployment declined **47%** (to 11.8%)

Educational attainment grown **98%**

Community Reinvestment Examples:

Cowlitz Indian Tribe: \$6.6M donated in 2023; \$28M since 2016 to nonprofits

Confederated Tribes of Colville: Wildfire management services protecting entire region

Swinomish Tribe: Didgwálič Wellness Center - national model for opioid treatment, serves Native and non-Native community members



Why Partner w/Tribes on Career Connect Learning?

1. Workforce Development Alignment

- Tribes need skilled workforce across all sectors
- Strong interest in developing tribal member talent pipelines
- Existing tribal education and workforce programs to build upon

2. Economic Sectors for Partnership

- Gaming & Hospitality
- Healthcare (tribal clinics & wellness centers)
- Natural Resources & Environmental Management
- Construction & Infrastructure
- Government Services
- Manufacturing & Technology

3. Unique Partnership Assets

- Stable, long-term employers
- Commitment to community investment
- Wraparound support services for students/employees
- Cultural integration models



Knowledge Check

(Tribal Economic Development)

Strategic Thinking:

"Your CCW Regional Network is developing Career Launch programs in healthcare. There are two tribal health clinics in your region. What opportunities exist, and what's your first step?"

Systems Impact:

"The Cowlitz Tribe donated \$6.6M to charitable organizations in 2023, including workforce development. How does this change your understanding of tribes' role in the CCW ecosystem?"



Knowledge Check (Tribal Economic Development)

Strategic Thinking Assessment:

Recognition of tribes as employees (not just communities to serve)

Understanding of tribal enterprises as career pathway sites

Application of consultation principles

Strategic partnership thinking

Systems Impact Assessment:

Recognition of tribes as funders/investors not just funding recipients

Alignment of tribal economic development of with CCW goals

Tribes as anchor institutions in regional economies



Case Study Analysis

The Colville Tribes employ approximately 60 wildfire management professionals who protect communities across the region. The tribe coordinates with state and federal agencies, and most fires are suppressed within 24 hours.

Meanwhile, your CCW Regional Network is developing Career Launch programs in Environmental Sciences and Emergency Management.



Case Study Analysis

Questions:

Identify 3 partnership opportunities between CCW and this tribal operation

What barriers might exist to tribal students accessing these career pathways, even though the jobs are in their own community?

How could CCW investments support both tribal workforce needs AND tribal students' career goals?

Who should be at the table when designing these programs?



"Based on what you've learned today, what is ONE specific action you will take in the next 30 days to strengthen tribal partnerships in your CCW work?"

- Schedule a consultation meeting with a tribal government
- Review our current programs for tribal partnership opportunities
- Audit our data collection for tribal sovereignty compliance
- Connect with the CCW Tribal Liaison for technical assistance
- Identify tribal employers as potential Career Launch sites
- Other: _____



Reflection Opportunity

- “I used to think...now I know (or am learning) that...”
 - Notice your assumptions, reactions, comfort/discomfort
 - Process over outcome



Way' Lim Imtx',

The Office of Native Education would like to extend our gratitude to you all for allowing us in this space to share our voices and ideas in working together to enhance the opportunities for our tribal students and families statewide.



Resources

[Office of Native Education](#)

[Governors Office of Indian Affairs \(GOIA\)](#)

[Washington Tribes](#)

[Washington Indian Gaming Association](#)

[Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians](#)

[National Indian Education Association](#)

[ILLUMINATIVE](#)

[AISES](#)

[United National Indian Tribal Youth](#)

