

***Policy Type: Governance Culture***

**Ferndale School Board Social Contract**

**We will stay true to our purpose by...**

- Putting public good ahead of personal agendas, either our own or those of others.
- Understanding and respecting the role of the School Board to make policy decisions, not management decisions.
- Bringing constituents' concerns forward for discussion, but always maintaining a lens of what's best for students.
- Regularly revisiting and recommitting to our Strategic Commitments.
- Never forgetting that our primary purpose is to improve the lives of the young people entrusted to the School District's care.

**We will work to communicate effectively with one another by...**

- Respecting different backgrounds, different teachings, and different modes of communication.
- Respecting opinions that differ from our own as well as the people who express those opinions.
- Respecting confidentiality.
- Sharing talk time so that everyone has a chance to say his or her piece.
- Actively listening and asking questions in order to understand.
- Listening with our eyes and hearts as well as with our brains and ears.

**We will each carry our weight by...**

- Sharing the work load, while taking into account one another's strengths.
- Attending meetings regularly and representing the Board at events when possible.
- Notifying the Board President, Superintendent, and/or other Board members when we cannot attend a meeting.
- Sending one another supportive reminders when we suspect a meeting may have been forgotten.
- Doing our homework and coming to meetings prepared.
- Taking initiative to follow up on missed meetings.
- Taking an active role in staying informed about the business of the School District.

**We will make and honor sound decisions by...**

- Thoroughly exploring all options.
- Trying to look at as many solutions as possible for every problem before we decide on one.
- Taking time to consider who will be impacted by our decision(s) and how they will be affected.
- Whenever possible and appropriate, soliciting input from those who will be impacted by the decision.
- Whenever possible and appropriate, basing our decisions on data.
- Once they are made, actively supporting and working to implement Board decisions in a united manner no matter what our personal positions.

**We will support one another by...**

- Valuing other Board members as teammates who balance and complement one another.
- Always assuming positive intent.
- Speaking positively of one another to all people in all settings.
- Building on one another's strengths.
- Encouraging one another's hearts.
- Maintaining a commitment to "no surprises."

**We will handle disagreements by...**

- Acknowledging that disagreement is not a bad thing but rather an opportunity for learning.
- When the disagreement is about a personal matter, going directly to the person to talk it out.
- When the disagreement is about a professional matter, continuing to discuss the issue in question until we have all achieved deep enough understanding to frame an acceptable compromise.
- Sometimes respectfully agreeing to disagree.

Adopted:

**Monitoring Method:**        **Board self-assessment**  
**Monitoring Frequency:**   **Annually**

Ferndale School District, Ferndale, WA

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