

FOUNDATION FOR EXCELLENCE 2023-2028



MISSION STATEMENT

Our students will be contributing members of society and lifelong learners, pursuing their passions and interests in an ever-changing world.



VISION STATEMENT

To inspire a community-wide culture of belonging, growth, and excellence, where each individual is supported and challenged, engaged and empowered and valued for their unique contributions.



LAKE STEVENS
School District



DEAR LAKE STEVENS SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMUNITY,

I am honored to be your superintendent!

Our community has worked diligently to craft and begin implementing the Foundation for Excellence—a plan that clearly aligns with my deep commitment to fostering safe, inclusive environments and providing equitable learning opportunities for all students.

This strategic framework is guiding our efforts to ensure that each student in our district is empowered to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally.

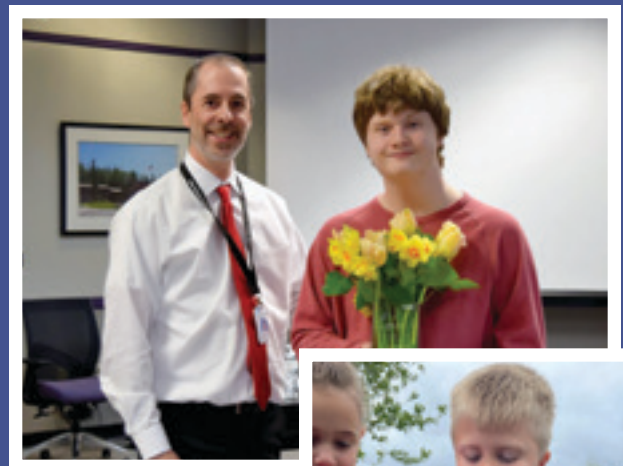
Though I was not here when this plan was first adopted, I fully embrace its goals and am energized by the progress already underway. I look forward to collaborating with all of you—students, staff, families, and community members—as we continue to build on this important work. Together, we will create opportunities for our students to grow, thrive, and make meaningful contributions to an ever-changing world.

Thank you for embracing me, and for your partnership in supporting the success of every student in Lake Stevens.

With gratitude,

Mary Templeton

Dr. Mary Templeton
Superintendent





FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

Foundational Principles are the building blocks of student, staff and family success in the Lake Stevens School District. These principles provide a durable framework for our practices, programs and systems. Because of these principles, our goals are possible.

1

EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

Providing engaging and effective instruction is the core of everything we do. We are responsive to each student's unique strengths and needs in their academic, behavioral, and social and emotional growth within a multi-tiered system of supports. By utilizing effective and innovative practices, and technology tools from pre-K through graduation, we identify and disrupt systemic barriers to learning and are able to achieve equitable outcomes for students.

2

SAFE, EQUITABLE, AND INCLUSIVE CLIMATE AND CULTURE

Our collective responsibility is to create and foster environments that are welcoming, safe, nurturing, and inclusive. We welcome and honor our diversity and are committed to creating a culture of dignity that is inclusive, culturally responsive, and grounded in equitable practices. We solicit and value student, staff, family, and community voices to bring out the personal best in students and staff in both academics and character.

3

THOUGHTFUL TRANSITIONS

Transitions in our district are planned, focused, collaborative and intentional. Whether transitioning within a building, between buildings, across curricula or to post-graduate endeavors, we actively facilitate a path to success for each student and adult. Thoughtful and familiar transitions foster systemic coherence, and a sense of belonging and ownership for students, staff, and families.

4

RESPONSIBLE RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP THAT PROMOTES TRUST

Stewardship means developing, protecting, and caring for our people, finances, facilities, and intellectual property. We allocate resources in a manner that is transparent and responsive to our students, schools, and community. We utilize approaches that are data-informed, needs-based, and collaborative, and in the service of equitable outcomes for each student.

5

COLLABORATIVE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We create and maintain strong relationships with our students, employees, families, and community. We consistently engage with our diverse community using communication tools that are responsive to their preferences, enabling us to partner in decisions about the future of our schools.

OUR GOALS



Our Goals will be focused on creating systemic conditions for equitable outcomes and growth for each student.



STRENGTHEN MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

Each student will benefit from a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), a framework for improving outcomes in academics, social and emotional learning, and behavior through a flexible system of instruction.

Strategies for MTSS

- Ensure the alignment of standards-based tier 1 curriculum and instruction for every student.
- Increase working knowledge of MTSS, including applying classroom-based tier 2 and tier 3 instruction and intervention.
- Strengthen the understanding and implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS).
- Teacher teams will regularly collaborate to review student learning data and to plan and deliver tier 1 and tier 2 instruction and interventions.

SAFE AND INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENTS

Our students and staff cultivate and experience safe, inclusive, culturally-responsive and sustaining environments of respect and rapport every day.

Strategies for safe and inclusive environments

- Increase opportunities for inclusion of all students in the general education setting.
- Leaders will create systemic opportunities for students to engage in social and emotional learning and will attend to the social and emotional well-being of all.
- Each building will develop a collaborative culture for continuous improvement in meeting the diverse needs of each student.
- Continuously and intentionally incorporate students' cultures, voices and identities into classroom, building, and district activities.

CONTINUOUS GROWTH FOR EACH STUDENT AND STAFF MEMBER

Students and adults practice a growth mindset as they explore ways to engage in teaching and learning. Each student will continuously grow in all subjects while making progress toward graduation and beyond.

Strategies for continuous growth

- Recruit, retain, develop, and support an exceptional workforce that reflects our student population.
- We will each advance and grow in our cultural competency.
- Leaders will design and lead professional learning grounded in data-rich cycles of inquiry and collaboration, leading to improved individualized instruction.
- Staff will monitor and respond to the growth of each student by utilizing multiple formative and summative assessments.



INNOVATIVE AND INTEGRATED APPROACHES TO LEARNING

We plan innovative learning experiences that promote critical thinking skills in our college and career-ready graduates. Technology is thoughtfully integrated and utilized to facilitate learning for each student.

Strategies for innovation and integration

- Technology will be current, relevant, and forward-thinking.
- We encourage and support staff in taking purposeful risks with instructional strategies to increase student collaboration and engagement.
- We ensure that students engage regularly in meaningful High School and Beyond planning beginning in middle school.
- We develop staff, student, and family proficiency with integrated technology tools and applications across the system, attending to critical transitions.
- Leaders and staff integrate inquiry, problem-solving, and creativity into learning experiences.

NEEDS-BASED FACILITIES IMPROVEMENT

We create safe, secure and healthy learning environments. We provide facilities that support excellence in teaching and learning. We demonstrate stewardship for our public facilities, and work diligently to address the impacts of residential growth.

Strategies for facilities improvement

- Regularly review facilities for safety, support for program, condition, and capacity.
- Evaluate and prioritize needs in line with the district's Mission, Vision, and Goals.
- Engage our community for input when considering major facilities additions or improvements that address our growing population and changing program needs.

GLOSSARY

CULTURAL COMPETENCY

The ability of individuals or organizations to effectively interact, understand, and communicate with people from different cultures or cultural backgrounds. Cultural competency goes beyond mere awareness of different cultures; it involves developing a deeper understanding of the values, beliefs, customs, and behaviors of diverse groups.

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE

Being culturally responsive means recognizing, respecting, and valuing the diversity of individuals and communities and what they bring to our schools. It involves acknowledging and responding to the unique cultural backgrounds, experiences, and needs of individuals and communities. Culturally responsive individuals and organizations strive to create inclusive environments that promote equal opportunities for all—regardless of cultural differences.

CYCLES OF INQUIRY

In education, cycles of inquiry are a structured and ongoing process used by educators to improve teaching and learning. These cycles are designed to analyze student learning data, and then make informed decisions about how to grow that learning within the classroom.

EQUAL VS. EQUITABLE

“Equal” refers to treating everyone exactly the same, without any differentiation or consideration of individual circumstances or needs. It assumes that everyone starts from the same position and requires identical resources, opportunities, or support.

“Equitable” acknowledges and addresses the unique needs and circumstances of individuals or groups. It recognizes that people have different starting points, and may require varying levels of resources, opportunities, or support to achieve fairness.

FORMATIVE AND SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS

Formative assessments are frequent, low-stakes assessments conducted throughout units of instruction to gather information about students’ progress towards the learning goals of that unit.

Summative assessments are less frequent assessments designed to measure students’ learning over a longer time period. These could measure students’ learning and growth over a unit, a semester, or an academic year and are used to

evaluate students’ learning outcomes, knowledge, and skills over that time. These are also used to help educators choose appropriate placements for students (for example, used to decide which class a student registers for in the future). Lastly, these are used by educators to evaluate the effectiveness of our instructional programs.

HIGH SCHOOL AND BEYOND

The High School & Beyond Plan is a graduation requirement that helps students get the most out of high school and think about their future. Students work with school counselors and advisors to create their own individual plan, their “personalized pathway,” throughout high school. Students revise their plans annually to accommodate changing interests or postsecondary goals for what they plan to do in the years following graduation from high school.

INCLUSIVE/INCLUSION

Inclusive refers to the practice or principle of ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their background, abilities, identities, or characteristics, are valued, respected, and provided with equal opportunities and access. Inclusion promotes diversity, equity, and belonging by recognizing and embracing the uniqueness and worth of every individual. In practice, inclusion could look like students who in the past may have been in specialized programs outside of the general education classroom receiving parts or all of their instruction in the standard classroom.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) is a comprehensive framework used in education to provide various levels of support and interventions to meet the diverse needs of students. It is a data-driven approach that aims to promote student



success by integrating academic, behavioral, and social-emotional supports. Learn more about what MTSS could mean in practice for your student.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION AND SUPPORTS

Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) is an evidence-based, three-tiered framework to create safe, positive and equitable schools where every student can feel valued, connected to the school community and supported by caring adults. PBIS is one of the most widely used behavior and

climate tools in schools, because it reduces problem behaviors and increases student and staff well-being. The framework helps staff teach and reteach student expectations with consistent responses and procedures when expectations are not met. It’s a prevention strategy, not a punishment.

There are three tiers to the PBIS framework:

► Tier One

Practices and systems establish a foundation of regular proactive support designed to prevent unwanted behaviors. The school provides these universal supports to all students, school-wide.

► Tier Two

These are research-based interventions for students who need more targeted support with behavior or social/emotional needs. These supports help students develop the skills they need to benefit from core programs at school.

► Tier Three

Students receive more intensive, individualized support to improve their behavioral and academic outcomes. At this level, schools rely on formal assessments to determine a student’s need.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Social-emotional learning (SEL) is an educational framework that focuses on developing students’ social, emotional, and interpersonal skills necessary for their overall well-being, success in school, and positive engagement in society. SEL recognizes the importance of nurturing students’ emotional intelligence, self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Strong social/emotional skills in students results in higher academic growth and achievement.

SYSTEMIC COHERENCE

Systemic coherence is the effective functioning and collaboration of different departments, teams, and stakeholders to work together towards a shared vision or mission.

SYSTEMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Systemic opportunities enable positive change, growth, and improvement for all. They represent possibilities for systemic-level advancements, innovations, or transformations that can benefit the entire system. They are often identified through careful analysis, assessment, or examination of the system’s strengths, weaknesses, and potential areas for improvement.