

# Lake Schools



**WINTER  
2024**

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Inspiring Excellence



**LAKE STEVENS**  
School District



# Lake Stevens superintendent to retire after 34 years of dedicated leadership



Dr. Ken Collins will retire this June. Details of the process to select a new superintendent are being finalized by the Lake Stevens School District Board of Directors.

Lake Stevens School District Superintendent Ken Collins will retire this June after dedicating 34 years of service to Lake Stevens—three as superintendent.

Since joining the district in 1990, Dr. Collins has fostered an educational environment where every student can thrive. Under his leadership, the district has continued to be one of the top academic performers in Snohomish County.

“Ken has been an extraordinary leader and advocate for our students, employees and families,” said Mari Taylor, President of the Lake Stevens School District Board of Directors. “Through his tenure, he has not only overseen notable academic growth, but also worked tirelessly to ensure our schools are inclusive, safe and supportive spaces. We are deeply grateful for his leadership and unwavering commitment to educational excellence.”

Dr. Collins will remain in his position through June 2024. Details of the process to select a new superintendent are being finalized by the Lake Stevens School District Board of Directors, and will be shared once complete.

“As I reflect on the past 34 years in Lake Stevens School District, I am filled with pride and gratitude,” said Dr. Collins. “Serving the Lake Stevens community has been more than a career; it has been a privilege and an incredibly rewarding journey. Together, we have faced challenges, celebrated successes,

and above all, we have worked tirelessly to create a nurturing educational environment for our students. As I move towards retirement, I am confident that the district will continue to flourish, and I look forward to seeing the ongoing positive impact our schools will have on future generations.”

## A legacy of educational leadership

Dr. Collins got his start as a high school social studies teacher at Marysville Pilchuck High School, where he worked for six years before transitioning to Lake Stevens High School (LSHS). After teaching and coaching at LSHS for 12 years, Dr. Collins became the high school principal for six years. From there he joined the district office as the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resource Services before becoming the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning, and finally the Superintendent.

Born and raised in Cashmere, Wash., Dr. Collins earned a Bachelor of Arts in History and Education from Washington State University. He also earned a Master of Education Administration from Central Washington University, his administrative credentials from City University, and his Doctorate of Education from the University of Washington. Dr. Collins and his family have strong ties to the Lake Stevens community—all three of his sons graduated from Lake Stevens High School.

In addition to his leadership within the school district, Dr. Collins is also a member of the Lake

Stevens Rotary Club and is a member of the WIAA Superintendent Advisory Council.

Under Dr. Collins’ leadership, Lake Stevens School District made numerous notable accomplishments, including:

- Renewal of the district’s educational programs and operations levy, and technology levy
- Finalization of the 2016 school construction bond projects, including:
  - ◊ Building of new Early Learning Center and Stevens Creek Elementary School
  - ◊ Modernization and expansion of Lake Stevens High School
  - ◊ Improvements to safety and security in all schools
  - ◊ Districtwide health, educational and infrastructure improvements
- Revitalization of the district’s strategic plan, the Foundation for Excellence
- Leadership and guidance of the Student Advisory Council (SACo)
- Formation of the Facilities Needs Advisory Committee to prioritize district facility needs on behalf of the Board of Directors
- Continued work and professional development opportunities around Trauma Informed Practices; Multi-Tiered Systems of Support; Social Emotional Learning; and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.



# JANUARY IS SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION MONTH



Our school district is governed by a Board of Directors who are elected to represent our community. Board members, together with our superintendent, Dr. Ken Collins, work to enhance the district mission and vision and to carry out the goals of the district's strategic plan, the Foundation for Excellence. The Board is also responsible for adopting an annual budget and for maintaining district policies and procedures.

Our board members are servant leaders who graciously dedicate their time to serve our district. We thank them for their service! From left, Dr. Nina Kim Hanson, Vildan Kirby, Dr. Ken Collins, Paul Lund, Mari Taylor and David Iseminger.

## Board members sworn in, reorganized for the new calendar year

Dr. Ken Collins swore in three returning school board members during the December 2023 meeting of the board. Then, the board reorganized its leadership roles—Mari Taylor will again serve as the President; David Iseminger will again serve as the Vice President; and Dr. Nina Hanson and Vildan Kirby will be co-Legislative Representatives.

*Paul Lund (standing, left), David Iseminger (standing, center), Mari Taylor, (standing, right) are sworn in by Dr. Ken Collins (standing, far right).*



## Community committee finalizes, presents recommendation for facility needs



*Members of the Facilities Needs Advisory Committee (FNAC) provide feedback during the group's final meeting in December. The FNAC presented its final facilities recommendations to the Board of Directors earlier this month.*

On Jan. 24, the Facilities Needs Advisory Committee (FNAC) presented its final facilities recommendations to the Board of Directors. The FNAC—composed of a diverse group of dedicated parents, caregivers, employees, and community leaders—began meeting in October to assess and address the growing needs of the district's facilities.

These recommendations are pivotal for the Board and district leaders as they plan future bonds to accommodate the district's growth and the aging of its facilities. In a parallel effort, technical experts continue to explore potential funding sources and solutions, and estimating the scope of work required to meet these needs.

Follow along in our facilities planning process by visiting our website: [www.lkstevens.wednet.edu](http://www.lkstevens.wednet.edu).



*FNAC members had the opportunity to tour district facilities as part of their work. Mollie Langum, Food & Nutrition Services Department Supervisor, took members through the Production Kitchen at North Lake Middle School, which supplies meals to our elementary schools.*

## Watch how we're benefitting from our 2016 bond projects

We are committed to providing safe and modern learning spaces for every student. In 2016, our community continued its investment in this important work by approving a school construction bond that allowed us to build a new elementary school and early learning center, modernize and expand Lake Stevens High School, and provide updates to safety and security and infrastructure systems at all schools.



We've created a video that highlights how our students, employees and families are benefitting from these projects. Your support has made a difference, and we are delivering on our promises. Together, we're shaping a bright future for Lake Stevens. Thank you!



## Empowering our students— the value of personal finance education



LSHS and CAV students took over the Lake Stevens Safeway store to job shadow employees. Here, two students put their creativity to the test in the bakery.

### Students take over Safeway to put their knowledge to work

In December, more than 35 students from Cavelero Mid High School and Lake Stevens High School participated in the annual DECA Safeway Takeover.

In partnership with Rob Jones, Safeway Manager, students were given the opportunity to participate in a two-hour job shadow. Students worked in three different departments during their shifts, spending about 30 to 40 minutes in each location. Partnered with a Safeway employee, students had the opportunity to learn about various positions in the grocery industry and ask questions about the skills needed in those jobs. Work locations included the deli, bakery, floral department, fulfilling online orders, checkout stands, Starbucks, meat/seafood—and even shadowing the store manager himself!

DECA is a Career & Technical Student Organization offered at both schools. It was founded in 1946 with a mission to prepare emerging leaders and entrepreneurs for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality and management in high schools and colleges around the globe. A core belief of DECA is to provide students with opportunities to learn outside of the classroom, and utilize the knowledge gained in classes in the “real world.” Special thanks to Safeway for this amazing experience!



Students had the opportunity to shadow employees in three different departments during their visit. Here, students helped the florist fulfill orders and organize departmental merchandise.



David Marques (standing) teaches Personal Finance at Lake Stevens High School. The class is a Career and Technical Education elective that covers a wide range of topics that are crucial for financial independence and responsibility.

“I wish I had the opportunity to learn that in high school...” the most common response David Marques receives when he tells people that he teaches Personal Finance at Lake Stevens High School. This is Marques’ 11th year teaching in Lake Stevens. He teaches five periods of Personal Finance, which is a Career and Technical Education elective. The course can also satisfy a third year of math for high school seniors, and provides qualifying students with five college credits.

From budgeting and saving to understanding credit and investments, the class covers a wide range of topics that are crucial for financial independence and responsibility.

“I believe in the importance of financial literacy,” said Marques. “The knowledge and skills students gain in this class are not just academic; they are tools for life. I use interactive and engaging scenarios to help students understand, retain and apply their knowledge.”

As part of the class, students are assigned a simulated life scenario—challenging them to create a detailed monthly budget across 15 to 20 different expense categories. The exercise not only fosters financial literacy, but also encourages critical thinking and planning skills.

To deepen their understanding of financial markets, students engage in an online investment simulator. This tool forms the basis of a class-wide competition, allowing students to apply investment strategies in a risk-free environment while learning the fundamentals of the stock market.

Students are also guided through the tax preparation process by completing a 1040 tax return. This hands-on approach covers various scenarios, including a teenager’s first tax return, a young adult’s filing, and a family’s complex tax situation.

To further enrich the curriculum, Marques hosts guest speakers from key government agencies like the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

“These experts provide invaluable insights into worker and consumer rights and protections, offering students a broader perspective on economic and financial responsibilities in society,” explained Marques.

During a recent class, students started the period with an entry task where they answered the question “Give two reasons that an online checking account balance might not match up with your check register.” This led to a robust discussion about outstanding checks, peer-to-peer payments using tools such as Venmo, and accounting for the withdrawal of automatic payments.



Then, students transitioned to a role play activity where they had to justify reasons for keeping money in a bank or a credit union. This task was modeled after a DECA financial literacy project. DECA is an international organization dedicated to preparing high school students in marketing, finance, hospitality and management.

During the role play students had just 10 minutes to prepare their talking points, which they then presented to a partner. In the role play they reviewed two types of checking accounts from different financial institutions and explained the differences. They also explained how bank statements can be verified for accuracy. Following the role play the students provided peer feedback on key performance indicators and the overall presentation.

“The things I’ve learned in Personal Finance are going to help me with my money after high school, and will help me be smart about debt,” said Tanner Woll, a senior who has also taken DECA classes. “I am interested in a career in the music industry, so it’s important that I learn how to safely save my money. This class is preparing me for my future.”

Financial literacy is not just about immediate benefits. It creates a foundation that prepares students for adult responsibilities, such as managing student loans, buying a home, or planning for retirement.

This class goes beyond traditional academics by focusing on real-world skills that prepare our students for the future.



*Personal Finance students paired up and role played by presenting the benefits and considerations of two types of checking accounts from different financial institutions.*

## Special Education services in Lake Stevens School District

The Lake Stevens School District is focused on meeting the needs of all students. Toward this end, the district is committed to locating, evaluating and identifying students from birth to age 21 who are suspected of having a disability for the purpose of determining whether they are in need of special education and related services. This extends to students residing in the district, whether or not they are enrolled in the public school system. This also includes highly mobile children (such as migrant or homeless students) who are suspected of having a disability and in need of special education, even though they are advancing from grade to grade.

A student eligible for special education means a student who has been evaluated and determined to need special education because of having a disability in one of the eligibility categories, and who, because of the disability and adverse educational impact, has unique needs that cannot be addressed exclusively through education in general education classes with or without individual accommodations, and needs specially designed instruction. The eligibility categories are hearing, vision, speech,



language, orthopedic or health impairment, intellectual disability, an emotional behavioral disability, autism, traumatic brain injury, deaf-blindness, multiple disabilities, a specific learning disability or for students, ages three through nine, a developmental delay.

For more information, visit the school district website and click on “Departments” and “Special Services” or call 425-335-1660.



## Hillcrest fourth-grader dominates Seahawks Summer Reading Challenge

The excitement was palpable as Dr. Katy Rudolph, principal of Hillcrest Elementary School, addressed the gym full of fourth-graders. One of them was the winner of the Seattle Seahawks Summer Reading Challenge. And the winner was... Luka S! He spent his summer reading the most minutes in the entire state—19,000!

The celebration included Luka’s family, Blitz, and a group of Seahawks Dancers. In addition to the fun, Luka received a personalized Seahawks jersey. Congratulations, Luka! Keep on reading and inspiring us all.

## Holiday Maker Fair brings together community, supports food bank

On Dec. 2, we held our 35th annual holiday craft fair. Formerly called the Dickens Fair (which we learned was trademarked, forcing the name change) the Holiday Maker Fair drew more than 1,500 shoppers and featured more than 120 vendors selling their handcrafted items.

Shoppers donated non-perishable food items and monetary donations to support the Lake Stevens Community Food Bank. Once again, our community was extremely generous, donating more than 1,800 pounds of food and \$1,200 in cash donations.

We greatly appreciate our student and community volunteers, our vendors, our student musicians from the Cavelero Mid High School Bands who performed. And, of course, everyone who came to shop!

Mark your calendars for next year’s fair—Saturday, Dec. 7. Vendor applications will be posted to the district website in early August 2024, [www.lkstevens.wednet.edu/fair](http://www.lkstevens.wednet.edu/fair). Proceeds from the event support the district’s employee and volunteer recognition activities.







## High school student athletes finish impressive fall sports season

### Cross Country

The Boys and Girls Cross Country Teams finished third in WESCO and five athletes qualified for state.

### Football

For the second year in a row the Football Team is the 4A State Champion! The Vikings were the WESCO 4A Champions for the 11th year in a row.

### Soccer

The Girls Soccer Team were the WESCO 4A Champions and placed fourth in the WES-KING Tournament.

We are incredibly proud of our Lake Stevens High School student athletes for their hard work and dedication in the classroom, and in competition. We congratulate the teams and their coaches participating in this school year's fall sports season. A special note of thanks to their families and to our enthusiastic fans for their unwavering support!

### Swimming & Diving

The Girls Swimming & Diving Team placed second in WESCO 4A and five athletes qualified for state.

### Tennis

The Boys Tennis Team qualified for the district tournament.

### Volleyball

The Volleyball Team were the WESCO 4A Champions for the seventh year in a row. They placed second in the WES-KING Tournament and fourth in state



### CROSS COUNTRY





# A Message from Your Superintendent

Welcome to 2024! While we finish the first month of this new year, our educational journey actually began in September. This past semester has not just been successful; it has been a testament to the dedication and perseverance of our students. I am proud of their accomplishments and the unwavering support of our educators and families.

Earlier this month I announced my plans to retire at the end of this school year. After 40 years of service in education, the time has come. Over these years, I have had the privilege of watching generations of students grow, learn and achieve remarkable things.

During my time in Lake Stevens, I am grateful for the wonderful relationships I have forged with students, staff, parents, and community members—these connections are my most cherished accomplishments. Lake Stevens is truly one of the best communities in the state.

As I prepare to step into this new chapter, I do so with gratitude for having had the opportunity to serve this community. Rest assured, the transition will be smooth, and the focus on providing high-quality education for our children will remain the district's top priority.

I happily congratulate our student athletes and their families for their achievements in fall athletics. I also greatly appreciate the work of our coaches, school employees, band and cheerleaders, volunteers—and you—our amazing fans and community.

For the second year in a row, our Lake Stevens High School Football team is the 4A State Champions. Congratulations to Coach Tri and his team. I am also incredibly proud of our volleyball team and their journey to the state tournament, culminating in a 4th place finish. This powerhouse team continues to dominate WESCO 4A and make an impact statewide. These accomplishments go well beyond athletic talent. The teamwork, dedication, grit and camaraderie will take these students far in life.

This fall, our students and employees once again raised an astonishing amount of food, gifts and monetary donations for local families and organizations. I'm hopeful that this spirit of giving and generosity will stay with our students throughout their school careers and adult life. Thank you to our employees who organize and support these endeavors.

January was School Board Appreciation Month and I want to thank our board of directors for their leadership and dedication to our district and community. Board members are volunteers who work incredibly hard to make our district the excellent place that it is.

As we welcome the second half of the school year, I encourage you to reach out with any questions or thoughts about our schools. Please feel free to contact me at 425-335-1500 or [tellus@lkstevens.wednet.edu](mailto:tellus@lkstevens.wednet.edu).



Sincerely,

Ken Collins, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

## Kindergarten enrollment for next school year begins March 19

Kindergarten enrollment for the 2024-25 school year begins on Tuesday, March 19. Each elementary school will share kindergarten information the week of March 11. Enrollment packets for the 2024-25 school year will be available on the school district website at the beginning of March. Paper copies will also be available at all elementary schools, and at the Educational Services Center.

Children must be five-years-old by Aug. 31, 2024 to enroll in kindergarten for the 2024-25 school year. When enrolling your child, please bring the completed enrollment packet, an official copy of the child's birth certificate, proof of immunization, and proof of residence in Lake Stevens School District. Enrollment is limited to those students who live within school district boundaries.

In mid-August, we'll host our annual three-day Ready for Kindergarten event at each elementary school. Ready for Kindergarten offers a safe and welcoming introduction to elementary school for families and students, relieving many first-day anxieties (for students and their caregivers!). Children must be enrolled in kindergarten in Lake Stevens School District to participate. More information will be shared this spring.

### IMPORTANT DATES

#### January 2024

29 No school, Learning Improvement Day for staff

#### February 2024

16-19 No school

#### March 2024

4-7 Preschool to Seventh-Grade Family Conference Week, 2.5 hour early release, no preschool

#### April 2024

1-5 Spring Break

Dates are subject to change. Please confirm dates and times on the district website calendar.

## Be prepared for inclement weather

When winter weather hits, our top priority is the safety of students and staff. Our district's geography is taken into account when the decision is made. One part of our area may be clear while other areas are struggling with snow or ice.

### How the decision to close schools is made

To help make the best possible decision, weather forecasts are monitored throughout the process. District staff members drive the roads beginning at 3 a.m. checking schools and routes that are frequently impacted and report road conditions to the superintendent by 5 a.m. A decision and announcement is made as quickly as possible. This process sometimes changes based on weather conditions.

### Information is shared using these communication channels:

- FlashAlert, [www.flashalert.net](http://www.flashalert.net). Local TV, radio and newspapers pull information from FlashAlert. You can subscribe to receive text and email alerts from FlashAlert.
- Social media
- Text message
- District mobile app
- Email to families
- District website

We do not use our automated calling system for school delays and closures due



to weather. If no messages are posted, schools are open and operating on normal schedules.

### Delay and closure options

- Schools start on time (no message will be shared).
- Schools start on time with limited bus service or buses on snow routes. Afternoon bus service will also be on snow routes. (See district website for snow routes).
- Schools start two hours late (no a.m. preschool, no out-of-district transportation, no morning Sno-Isle bus).
- Schools are closed (no after school activities, athletics or facility use).
- Options are subject to change depending on weather conditions.

EDDM

# Class of 2037

Kindergarten enrollment for  
the 2024-25 school year begins

## MARCH 19

Enrollment packets will be available online  
and at each elementary school in early  
March. Learn more at:

[lkstevens.wednet.edu/kindergarten](http://lkstevens.wednet.edu/kindergarten)

## ECRWSS

Current Resident

## FAMILY CONFERENCES ARE MARCH 4 TO 7

Family conferences for preschool through seventh-grade are Monday, March 4 through Thursday, March 7. Families will receive information about conferences from their child's school or teacher(s). Elementary and middle school students will be released 2.5 hours early Monday through Thursday. Lunch will be served at school. There will be no preschool during conference week.

Friday, March 8 is a standard Friday schedule with an 85-minute early release.

Lake Stevens School District is

# HIRING!



**Substitute Teachers**



**Bus Drivers and Sub. Drivers**



**Paraeducators and Substitute Paraeducators**



**Food Services and Substitute Food Service**



Visit: [www.lkstevens.wednet.edu/jobs](http://www.lkstevens.wednet.edu/jobs)

## SWIMMING LESSONS



For the latest dates and times,  
call (425) 335-1526 or visit:

[www.lkstevens.wednet.edu/pool](http://www.lkstevens.wednet.edu/pool)

## REGISTER TO VOTE OR UPDATE YOUR REGISTRATION

Are you a registered voter? Have you moved or changed your name? Registering to vote, or updating your registration, is quick and easy! Visit [vote.wa.gov](http://vote.wa.gov) to get started. Paper registration forms are available at the Educational Services Center or your neighborhood school.

**SUPERINTENDENT**  
Ken Collins, Ed.D.

**EDITOR**  
Jayme Taylor

**DESIGN**  
Jonathan Sulzbach

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
Mari Taylor, President • David Iseminger, Vice President • Paul Lund, Director • Dr. Nina Kim Hanson & Vildan Kirby, Co-Legislative Representatives

In accordance with RCW 49.60, the Lake Stevens School District does not discriminate in employment and schools. The Lake Stevens School District provides Equal Educational and Employment Opportunity without regard to race, creed, color, national origin, sex, handicap/disability, sexual orientation including gender expression or identity, creed, religion, age, veteran or military status, use of a trained dog to guide or service animal by a person with a disability, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and designated youth groups. The district complies with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations to include, but not limited to, Title IX, Title VI of the Civil Rights Acts, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, RCW 49.60 "The Law Against Discrimination," and RCW 28A.640 "Sex Equity," and covers, but is not limited to, all district programs, courses, activities, including extracurricular activities, services, access to facilities, etc. Inquiries regarding compliance procedures should be directed to Lake Stevens School District, 12309 22nd St. NE, Lake Stevens, WA 98258, Attention: Title IX and Civil Rights Coordinator, John Balmer, (425) 335-1500, [John\\_Balmer@lkstevens.wednet.edu](mailto:John_Balmer@lkstevens.wednet.edu) or ADA Compliance Coordinator and Section 504 Compliance Coordinator, Miriam Tencate, (425) 335-1500, [Miriam\\_Tencate@lkstevens.wednet.edu](mailto:Miriam_Tencate@lkstevens.wednet.edu).