Inspiring Excellence
LAKE STEVENS
School District

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS' REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
November 12, 2025

Board Members:
Mari Taylor, President
Nina Hanson
David Iseminger
Vildan Kirby
Paul Lund
Mary Templeton, Superintendent/Board Secretary

Student Advisory Council Officers:
Aashisri Bendalam
Afebia Aemere
Ginelle Sarpong

The Lake Stevens School District Board of Directors met in a Regular Session at the Educational Service Center. A Zoom option was available for this meeting that President Taylor called to order at 6:30 p.m. followed by the pledge of allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present: President Mari Taylor, Director Paul Lund, Director David Iseminger, Director Vildan Kirby, Superintendent Dr. Mary Templeton and SACo members Aashi Bendalam, Afebia Aemere and Ginelle Sarpong. Director Nina Hanson was unable to attend.

AGENDA/MINUTES

Director Iseminger made a motion to approve the November 12, 2025 Agenda. The motion was seconded by Director Lund and unanimously approved. Director Lund made a motion to approve the October 22, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Director Kirby and unanimously approved.

RECOGNITION OF STUDENTS, STAFF, AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Lake Stevens Middle School Principal Mike Randles and Associate Principal Jamie Sinning introduced the Lake Stevens Middle School Students of the Month for October: Abigail Gorhum, Iris Xiong, Oakoley Burns, and Aadya Yarlagadda. North Lake Middle School Principal Brad Ables and Associate Principal Kelly Goodsmansen introduced the North Lake Middle School Students of the Month for October: Justin Souder, Henry Wagner, Sofia Olson, and Emmanuel Udo-Imeh. Cavelero Principal Shannon Tarrach and and Associate Principal Raphil Hasegawa introduced the Cavelero Mid High School Students of the Month for October: Mason Allard, Shaylin Cross, Areen Elhassadi, and Leah Rubi. Mason Allard was unable to attend. Lake Stevens High School Principal Leslie Ivelia and Associate Principal Tonya Grinde introduced the Lake Stevens High School Students of the Month for October: Olivia Matheson, Lucas Sizemore, Tyrel Bates, Brayden Slezak, Tessa Anastasi, and Malik Parker. Lucas Sizemore and Tessa Anastasi were unable to attend. Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources John Balmer introduced the APPLE Award Recipients: Tami Arnsbarger, Brady Dykgraaf, Savannah Johnson, Joanna Leslie, and Kjerstine Loftus. SACo President Aashi Bendalam and SACo members presented the SACo Award to Custodian Jennifer Reynolds.

A break was taken approximately from 7:37 p.m. to 7:50 p.m. President Taylor welcomed everyone back.

REPORTS OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND PROGRAMS

HomeLink Principal and ALO Coordinator, Vicky Francois, presented information on Alternative Learning Options. She shared that their team believes in every scholar. In Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), their goal is to foster an inviting culture and create a sense of belonging for every scholar.

Their focus on learning centers around the PLC process, through which they have identified essential standards and are using tiered strategies to promote positive scholar outcomes.

Growth for both students and staff are supported by a commitment to monitoring and responding to student needs through data-informed inquiry and collaboration. By partnering with families and scholars, they celebrate successes and work together on areas for growth.

Ms. Francois shared that by the end of the 2025–26 school year (June 2026), at least 85% of students are expected to demonstrate proficiency in grade-level writing standards, defined as earning a score of 3 or "proficient" on the co-created rubric by using tier 1 strategies, utilizing pre-assessments to inform classroom instruction and collaboration with parents as well as their PLT. Additionally, students will strengthen their understanding of algebraic concepts, with a goal of achieving a 90% pass rate in OL Algebra. They are continuing monthly data cycles, establishing co-created norms with students and families as well as teaching student's self-advocacy.

For the 2024–2025 school year, 82% of students will score 3 or higher on the proficiency rubric. For the 2025–2026 school year, that percentage will increase to 85%. In the 2024–2025 school year, 70% of students passing OL Algebra, with the goal of increasing to 90% in the 2025–2026 school year.

Ms. Francois concluded by highlighting their positive partnerships with families, which include activities such as the Food Drive, an evening Board Game Event, and collaborative art projects.

Early Learning Center Building Coordinator, Matt Wyant reviewed the 2024–2025 Goals and Outcomes which were in Literacy in Spring 2025 89% met or exceeded standard (+57%), in Math Spring 2025 88% met or exceeded standard (+51%) and in Social Emotional Learning Spring 2025 90% met or exceeded standard (+38%). Mr. Wyant then presented the Early Learning Center's 2025 - 2026 Goals. For Social-Emotional Learning, their goal is to reach 90% proficiency, supported through the PLC intervention team process, building-wide expectations, and partnerships with Transportation (PBIS). For Mathematics, their goal is also to reach 90%, with a fall PLC focus on math, an October LID dedicated to math, and continued work revisiting essential standards and math progressions. For Literacy, the goal is to achieve 90% proficiency through year two of CKLA implementation, aligning scope and sequence, and using PLCs to unpack units and focus on essential standards.

Mr. Wyant outlined the Action Steps to support each goal, beginning with a focus on strong Tier 1 instruction through CKLA Year 2 implementation, alignment with Danielson Criterion 2, and revisiting essential standards. He emphasized Belonging and Culture Building, highlighting the development of new Mission and Vision statements and a collaborative approach to building the ELC PLC process. To strengthen PLC culture, the team will refine their practices - moving from "PLC Lite" to "PLC Right"—and explore creative scheduling to support this work.

Mr. Wyant concluded by sharing what he is most excited about, including the Summer Programming, full enrollment, completion of the three-year state rating, and CDHY training. He also highlighted the Play and Learn group, an earlier start for the kindergarten transition process, the kindergarten teacher survey, and ELC staff visits to Hillcrest Kindergarten. Additionally, he expressed enthusiasm for reviewing initial data through the PLC Data Cycle, fostering curiosity to identify best practices that support the highest learning outcomes for all students, and celebrating progress and achievements along the way.

Early Learning Center Building Coordinator, Matt Wyant, spoke about their dedication to partnering with families and the community to nurture a joyful love of learning in children while helping them develop the essential building blocks for life. Their new mission statement is, *"Everyone Learning Collaboratively - Play, Learn, Collaborate."*

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

President Taylor opened the floor for community comments. Hearing no comments, President Taylor closed this portion of the meeting.

DECISION ITEMS

Consent Agenda:

Director Kirby made a motion to approve the "Consent Agenda" items: Approval of the November 2025 vouchers and invoices have been examined, audited, and allowed by the Board of Directors; that the sum of said payroll and/or vouchers and invoices amounting to $2,094,198.11 is covered by warrants numbered 318905 to 319068 and manual warrants listed below, drawn on the General, Capital Projects & ASB Fund(s) (E:204/25). Approval of the November 2025 vouchers and invoices have been examined, audited, and allowed by the Board of Directors; that the sum of said payroll and/or vouchers and invoices amounting to $3,954.48 is covered by warrants numbered 9000010917 through 9000010952 and manual warrants listed below, drawn on the General Fund(s)

(E:205/25). Approval of the sum of said November 2025 voids have been examined, audited, and allowed by the Board of Directors; that the sum of said voids amounting to ($35,665.69) drawn on the General and Capital Fund(s) (E:206/25). Approval of the November 2025 Comp & Retail Tax vouchers and invoice have been examined, audited, and allowed by the Board of Directors; that the sum of said payroll and/or vouchers and invoices amounting to $2,631.16 is covered by warrants numbered 000000008 and manual warrants listed below, drawn on the General and ASB Fund(s) (E:207/25). Personnel Report: Certified Employment: Hope Taylor 1.0 STC 1st grade Lv. Rep-Non-Cont.; Classified Employment: Rebecca Loran PSE-Lake GLW Para – 1:1 Specialized Program, Alma Ramirez PSE-Lake GLW Para-Temp. 1:1 Elem support, Kelly Donaldson PSE-Lake HLD Para – Gen support, Sinead McLoughlin PSE-Lake HLC Para – 1:1 Specialized Program, Margaret Baldwin PSE-Lake SKY Para-Temp 1:1 Elem Support, Jennifer McIntosh PSE-Lake GLW Para – PBS (E:208/25); Approval of the Co-Curricular Report (E:209/25). Approval of the October 31, 2025 payroll sum of said payroll and/or vouchers and invoices amounting to $13,494,702.82 is covered by warrants numbered 318676 to 318680 and 318850 to 318901 and manual warrants listed below, drawn on the General Fund(s) (E:210/25).

Approval of a donation from the LSHS Band Booster Club to ASB Band Club in the amount of $481.52 to reimburse the cost of Transportation for MPMEA League Festival (E:211/25). Approval of a meal donation in the amount of $500.00 and $1,000.00 (E:212/25). Approval of a donation from Ember Management Services to the LSHS Pool in the amount of $300.00 for the purchase of items for Pumpkin Patch in the Pool (E:213/25). The motion was seconded by Director Lund and unanimously approved.

Director Lund made a motion to approve approximately 15 students to attend the Tri-State HS Wrestling Tournament in Coeur d'Alene, ID from December 18, 2025 – December 20, 2025. The motion was seconded by Director Kirby and unanimously approved (E:214/25).

Director Lund made a motion to approve Resolution No. 22-25: Certification of the 2026 Excess Property Taxes for General Fund, Debt Service Fund and Capital Projects Fund. The motion was seconded by Director Iseminger and unanimously approved by a roll call vote (E:215/25).

Director Kirby made a motion to approve the Final Acceptance of the Public Works Projects. The motion was seconded by Director Lund and unanimously approved (E:216/25).

- The Facilities and School Planning and Construction Departments have reviewed the work of the contractors listed below on the following public work projects for adherence to contract documents, specifications, and public work requirements.

  Projects

  Replace flooring at Highland ES (J&A Interior/Extra Pros LLC)
  Replace gym curtain assembly at Cavelero MHS (NWAP)

  Service Calls

  Replace window at the Early Learning Center (Pacific Glass and Door)

All items on the construction punch list have been completed and all the necessary paperwork to accept the projects has been received.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Gina Anderson discussed the review of Policy #6008: Instructional Materials and a new Policy #5463: Accommodating Students with Adrenal Insufficiency.

INFORMATION ITEMS

There were no information items at this time.

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Superintendent Mary Templeton shared her appreciation for the two board members she has had the privilege of getting to know—Dr. Nina Hanson and Vildan Kirby. She noted that many major accomplishments happened under their leadership: the current strategic plan, *Foundation for Excellence*; the successful passage of a bond that will support future generations; and the superintendent search itself. She thanked them for leading a process that engaged the community and focused on identifying what the district needed. She said she is thrilled to be here, and that their leadership played a significant role in that.

She highlighted that student voice and SACo were strengthened under their guidance. She reflected on the many qualities they brought to the board - caring, fairness, empathy, engagement, and positivity. She also acknowledged the advocacy work that both Ms. Kirby and Dr. Hanson have done through WSSDA and legislative efforts.

Superintendent Templeton reminded the community that in a school district of over 10,000 students, success requires commitment, passion, and volunteer service. She expressed that, as their superintendent and as their friend, she has great respect for both of them. She thanked them sincerely.

BOARD COMMENTS

Director Kirby shared that it has been an honor to serve with all of the board members and to get to know each one of them. These four years have meant so much to her. She said it has been an honor and a privilege, and the most rewarding experience of her life. She has been inspired by the dedication of her fellow board members and the passion and resilience of teachers and staff.

She noted that every Student of the Month, every meeting, and every challenge has been about shaping lives. She thanked everyone for their partnership, patience, and belief in her, saying they have taught her so much. As she steps away, her heart is full of gratitude.

Director Kirby said she is certain the district will continue to thrive, and she will be cheering - not from the sidelines, but from the front line. Service is part of her culture, and she will always find ways to serve this community. And, she added with a smile, she will always serve Turkish tea.

She also shared a message for students: she loves this community and its kids. If any student thinks they can't do math or English, or that something is too hard, she wants them to know they *can* do it. Every student should remember this: you are good at something - definitely good at something - and you do belong. She hopes each student carries that with them.

Director Iseminger congratulated the Students of the Month, APPLE Award winners, and SACo award recipients. He shared that it is always a fun adventure to hear what students will say - he is inspired not only by their words, but by the genuine reflection of the work the district is doing. You couldn't write a script that would capture it any better.

He thanked everyone for the presentations and the action items. He also noted, with a smile, that it was funny when Vildan said "approval of the FINAL ACCEPTANCE of Public Works Projects."

Director Iseminger added that it has truly been a pleasure serving on the board with Vildan and Nina, and he hopes Nina will play tonight's board video back. Director Iseminger said, "You have brought a unique perspective to the board and have been wonderful fellow board members. I have enjoyed becoming your friend. Expanding one's understanding of different cultures and experiences—and being open to them—is something that enriches us all, and you both have been a bright spot and a source of real insight." He thanked them sincerely, saying he has valued their perspectives and, most of all, their friendship.

Director Lund congratulated the Students of the Month, noting that their stories always highlight teachers - past and present - who have made a difference in their lives. He shared how meaningful it is to hear student voice.

He thanked the SACo team for taking the initiative to create the SACo awards and for valuing everyone who works in the schools. He also thanked staff for the reports. He expressed appreciation to Dr. Templeton, saying that the list of accomplishments she spoke about reflects the work they have all done together.

Director Lund said that having Vildan and Nina on the board has been a game changer. He acknowledged that he did not grow up the way Vildan did, and that the stories and perspectives she brings highlight things others may take for granted. The passion and dedication Vildan and Nina bring have greatly expanded the board's awareness and understanding. He told Vildan that her perspective has been a true gift and thanked her for her service. He added that he will take her up on the offer to teach him how to make sourdough.

He concluded by reflecting that change is good, but it can also be hard - and things will feel different but wonderful moving forward.

SACo President Aashi Bendalam thanked everyone for coming and congratulated the Students of the Month, as well as the APPLE and SACo award recipients. She gave a special shout-out to APPLE recipient Brady Dykgraaf, noting that he is an awesome teacher, and also congratulated Mrs. Reynolds.

She thanked everyone for the building reports and donations. She shared that she will miss Ms. Kirby. As an immigrant, she said, seeing representation truly makes a difference and is empowering. Ms. Kirby is always willing to talk with students, and Aashi expressed her gratitude, saying, "She is thankful for knowing her."

SACo Vice President Afebia Aemere congratulated all of the award recipients. She praised the presentations from HOMELINK and the Early Learning Center. Speaking to Director Kirby, she shared that Ms. Kirby helped students feel seen, recalling how she wrote their names in their home languages when they first met. She also thanked Mrs. Hanson for her service.

SACo Secretary Ginelle Sarpong congratulated all of the Students of the Month, as well as the APPLE and SACo award recipients. She gave a shout-out to the SACo members in the audience for attending and complimented the presentations from HOMELINK and the Early Learning Center. Addressing Director Kirby, she said they will miss her very much and thanked her for all she has done.

President Taylor thanked everyone for their time and attention and congratulated all of the award winners. She also expressed appreciation for the board presentations, noting that as they move through the many program reports, each component is so important. She said she is grateful for the process they follow, and for the recognition of each program, each building, and all of the work happening throughout the district - work that contributes to the overall excellence they see every day. She thanked everyone for a lovely evening.

President Taylor shared her deep gratitude to Vildan and Nina for the time they have spent together on the board and wished everyone a good night.

ADJOURNMENT

With no other objections from other directors, President Taylor adjourned the Regular Session at 8:53 p.m.

President

Secretary