Inspiring Excellence
LAKE STEVENS
School District

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS' REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
September 10, 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 Yostina Mosa

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, Superintendent Dr. Mary Templeton and SACo members Aashi Bendalam, Afebia Aemere and Yostina Mosa. Director Hanson and Director Kirby were unable to attend.

AGENDA/MINUTES

Director Lund made a motion to approve the September 10, 2025 Agenda. The motion was seconded by Director Iseminger and unanimously approved. Director Iseminger made a motion to approve the August 27, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Director Paul and unanimously approved.

RECOGNITION OF STUDENTS/ STAFF, AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

SACo members Tavisha Srivastava, Jane Vellinga, Ritisha Srivastava and Lael Kim were given their Oath of Office.
The Oath of Office was administered to the new SACo members: Tavisha Srivastava, Jane Vellinga, Ritisha Srivastava and Lael Kim. Kirsten Lao was unable to attend. Superintendent Templeton invited each student to step forward and take their oath. Dr. Templeton expressed her appreciation for the contributions of the SACo members and emphasized her commitment to ensuring that SACo continues to provide a strong student voice in the district. She thanked and congratulated all of the members for their dedication.

REPORTS OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND PROGRAMS

Highland Principal Ryan Henderson shared the school's Academic Promises of Progress, with a goal of having 80% or more of students in grades 3–5 meet or exceed standards on the spring SBA in ELA and Math, up from the current average of 67%. Planned actions include strengthening PLC processes in 2025 - 26, continuing i-Ready personalized pathways with active teacher involvement, using student goal-setting folders, and strategically implementing WIN time with classroom-level interventions and strongly aligned Tier 1 practices (guaranteed, viable curriculum). Additional efforts focus on job-embedded professional learning, such as Building Thinking Classrooms and effective fluency practices.

Principal Henderson outlined SEL goals to raise regular attendance from 85% to 90% and increase student sense of belonging from 91% to 95%. Strategies include stronger Tier 1 instruction, timely interventions, family collaboration, more frequent family group meetings, and expanded survey measures.

Principal Henderson emphasized strengthening behaviors aligned with *The Highland Way*, aiming to increase the percentage of students with 0–1 referrals from 69% to 80%. This will be supported through school-wide PBIS strategies with a focus on data-driven practices.

Principal Henderson concluded by highlighting the work of Building a Professional Learning Community. Principal Henderson read his poem, Worthy of We. He spoke about a strong foundation including guaranteed, viable curriculum, systems for schedules for intervention, strong instructional and assessment materials and a collaborative culture.

Principal Henderson recognized School Improvement TOSA Sonja Abels and Associate Principal Heidi Christensen as key partners in instructional leadership.

Sonja Abels shared her passion for science and reading and noted that her next focus and passion is math. She expressed excitement about expanding leadership team roles, professional learning, PLC and data cycle support, targeted interventions, a math focus, kindergarten literacy support, and leading paraeducators who provide interventions.

Heidi Christensen spoke about building a culture of inclusion. She looks forward to supporting special education through PLC work, expanding the SLC program, increasing inclusion opportunities, extending "can do" meetings from ML to Special Education, and continuing to ask, *"What is the impact on student learning?"*

Cavelero Principal Shannon Tarrach shared the school's mission: to provide an exceptional learning environment that empowers every student to succeed now and in the future. She reviewed improvement goals in SBA ELA, SBA Math, WCAS, and Panorama, as well as the 9th grade on-track rate - 87% in spring 2025 with a goal of 90% by spring 2026.

To strengthen students' and staff's sense of belonging, Principal Tarrach highlighted building on Cavelero's strong culture and teacher leadership through innovative engagement strategies. These include hosting an 8th Grade/Family Night, fostering positive parent interactions, rebranding the school's public image, and emphasizing staff connections, Colt spirit, and student ownership and voice.

Principal Tarrach spoke about becoming a professional learning community. They will collaboratively develop the school mission, vision, values and goals to align with the three big ideas of a PLC. To change culture and results, they will use the cycle of inquiry to implement action research for continuous improvement leading to higher levels of learning for all students. Principal Tarrach concluded by highlighting the key components of a PLC: collaboration, essential standards, common formative assessments (CFAs), data analysis, and RTI/MTSS. Additional action steps will be guiding Coalition PLC Implementation Training, evidence of student learning at all meetings, all staff on Professional Learning Teams and focus on Math – Tier 1 Instruction.

Glenwood Principal Jen Johnson presented "Gatorific Together: Kindness in Action!" She shared school goals of reaching at least 80% proficiency in Reading/ELA, supported by iReady and SBA data. To achieve these targets, the school will implement action steps such as increasing paraeducator support, prioritizing 4th grade in the WIN schedule, utilizing the UFLI curriculum to strengthen tiered supports, and providing training for classroom teachers. In Math additional action steps would be use of high leverage concepts to support interventions and Math Interventionist at each grade level.

Assistant Principal Lisa Sanchez emphasized building student self-efficacy and a strong sense of belonging. Action steps include daily affirmations and goal setting, monitoring and reflecting on academic progress, continuing the "Gatorific Together: Kindness in Action" campaign, and enhancing Step lessons with Random Acts of Kindness activities focused on character development.

Principal Johnson outlined plans to support academic growth through the implementation of the PLC framework, focusing on the four guiding questions to drive instructional planning and reflection. She emphasized leveraging the role of the SIP TOSA to ensure fidelity to the core curriculum, alignment within grade levels, adherence to pacing guides, use of common assessments and progress monitoring, and the elevation of effective instructional practices.

She also highlighted the importance of utilizing the new Associate Principal role to strengthen classroom-based PBIS/MTSS systems by providing observation, coaching, and feedback to address tiered student needs. In addition, Principal Johnson stressed prioritizing social-emotional learning (SEL) with greater intentionality during the school week, supported by the introduction of the new Gator Kindness Club.

School Improvement TOSA Naomi Baker highlighted that they are committed to revisiting their mission to nurture the full potential of every child - empowering them as confident learners, compassionate individuals, and future-ready leaders. She shared the school's vision of creating a safe, inclusive environment where every student is valued and supported to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

Principal Johnson spoke about Big Ideas and Critical Questions, along with Common Formative Assessment, describing it as "a toolkit for Professional Learning Communities at Work."

Glenwood Counselor Kaitlyn Dawes invited everyone to the Glenwood Unity Day Celebration & Family Night on Tuesday, October 21, from 6:00–7:00 p.m. The event will feature Brian Williams as the speaker at both the assembly and Family Night. She encouraged participants to wear orange in recognition of Unity Day and to celebrate *Gatorific Together: Kindness in Action.*

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

President Taylor opened the floor for community comments. Tom Glynn community member and grandpa to LSSD students spoke about student wellness and his passion and concern for mental health awareness. Hearing no other comments, President Taylor closed this portion of the meeting.

DECISION ITEMS

Consent Agenda:

Director Iseminger made a motion to approve the "Consent Agenda" items: Approval of the September 12, 2025 sum of said payroll and/or vouchers and invoices amounting to $2,586,789.50 is covered by warrants numbered 318268 to 318367 through and manual warrants listed below drawn on the General, Capital Projects & ASB Fund(s) (E:159/25). Approval of the September 12, 2025 sum of said payroll and/or vouchers and invoices amounting to $2,842.56 covered by ACH numbers 9000007847 through 9000007869 and manual warrants listed below, drawn on the General Fund (E:160/25). Approval of the sum of said September 12, 2025 Voids amounting to ($1,972.82) drawn on the General and ASB Fund(s) (E161:/25). Approval of the September 2025 Comp & Retail sum of said payroll and/or vouchers and invoices amounting to $1,752.81 is covered by warrants 000000005 and manual warrants listed below, drawn on the General and ASB Fund(s) (E:162/25). Personnel Report: Certified Employment: Sayeh Azarpay 1.0 SUN Elementary Intermediate Teacher, Patricia Bartok 1.0 NLMS Beep Program Teacher, Catherine Duffy 0.5 HML K-5 Teacher, Jared Gibson 1.0 CMHS Counselor, Mary "Cindy" Ruefenacht 0.4 HLC Resource Rm. Teacher Non-Cont.; Classified Employment: McKinley Wilde PSE-Lake ELS DD Para, Sharon Riedy PSE-Lake GLW 1:1 Elementary Support Para, Alexander Stouder, PSE-Lake ESC Tech Field Technician, Phillip Silvia PSE-Lake CMHS 1:1 Specialized Program Para, Jessi Elliott PSE-Lake SUN Temp. 1:1 Elementary Support Para, Taylor Douglas PSE-Lake GLW Temp. 1:1 Elementary Support Para, Beth Morrison PSE-OP ESC Office Pro-Dept A/P Support, Nyssa Weidman PSE-OP GLW Temp. OP-Elementary Attendance, Natalie Dickson NonRep LSHS Non-Rep Registered Nurse, Rebecca Nunes PSE-Lake SKY Specialized Program Para; Resignations: Zayna Salameh Classified LSMS 8/20/25; (E:163/25). Approval of the Co-Curricular Report (E:164/25). Approval of the August 29, 2025 Payroll with the sum of said payroll and/or vouchers and invoices amounting to $12,983,954.23 is covered by warrants numbered 318210 to 318267 and manual warrants listed below, drawn on the General Fund (s) (E:165/25). The motion was seconded by Director Lund and unanimously approved.

Director Lund made a motion to approve the revision to Policy #5462: ANAPHYLAXIS PREVENTION AND RESPONSE. The motion was seconded by Director Iseminger and unanimously approved (E:166/25).

Director Iseminger made a motion to approve Resolution No. 16-25: Waiver of the three school days at the K-5 level for elementary conferences. The motion was seconded by Director Lund and was approved by a roll call vote (R: 16-25).

Director Lund made a motion to approve the Final Acceptance of the Public Works Projects. The motion was seconded by Director Iseminger and unanimously approved (E:167/25).

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

Installation of induction transformers for generator monitoring at multiple schools (Quality Electric)

Service Calls

Monthly pool maintenance for July at Lake Stevens HS (Aquatic Specialty Services)

Monthly pool maintenance for August at Lake Stevens HS (Aquatic Specialty Services)

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

Director Iseminger made a motion to approve to award contracts for architectural, engineering and construction – related to services for capital projects. The motion was seconded by Director Lund and unanimously approved (E:168/25).

INFORMATION ITEMS

Assistant Superintendent of Business and Operations Teresa Main presented 2025-2026 enrollment data, including FTE comparisons by school (2025 vs. 2024), FTE Enrollment Comparison by School Historical, and FTE Enrollment Comparison by grade level (2025 vs. 2024). She concluded with September 2025 FTE compared to projections.

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Superintendent Mary Templeton shared that she has been fully present in classrooms and borrowed a strategy from Executive Director of Elementary Schools, Steve Burleigh. He began the school year by visiting every kindergarten classroom, celebrating and reflecting on learning, and then continued into other grade levels. During her visits, Superintendent Templeton observed students who were fully engaged, joyful, inquisitive, and excited to learn - including one class where the teacher pressed a button on the whiteboard to kick off a 30-second dance party, a simple moment of enjoying being human beings.

She also attended the Friday night football game at LSHS, where the team celebrated a win. Superintendent Templeton praised Principal Ivelia and her team for hosting Lake Stevens' largest community event, noting their ability to create a safe, energetic, and well-organized gathering that reflects both enthusiasm and excellent teamwork. She highlighted the event as a wonderful community tradition and a strong return on investment for taxpayers, with the band giving a standout performance.

BOARD COMMENTS

Director Iseminger thanked everyone for being there tonight and for the building reports. He welcomed the new Lake Stevens folks, sharing how happy he is to have them here. He expressed excitement for another great year, noting that Lake Stevens is a wonderful place to live, learn, teach, and grow. From a 30-second classroom dance party to a last-second win over former state champions, to celebrating SACo members and the broader community, there is so much to appreciate. He concluded by saying it was a great kickoff to the year and that he looks forward to the fun ahead.

Director Lund welcomed the new SACo team, expressing his excitement for their journey and gratitude for their dedication. He also extended a warm welcome to Cavelero Principal Shannon Tarrach and Highland Associate Principal Heidi Christensen. He thanked Principal Henderson for his touching poem, noting how meaningful it is when people put their heart into their work. Director Lund also expressed appreciation for the building reports, acknowledged Assistant Superintendent Main for her presentation, and thanked Mr. Glynn for his comments, adding that he appreciates engaged grandpas.

SACo member Aashi Bendalam thanked everyone for attending, welcomed the new SACo members, and expressed appreciation for the building reports. Aashi thought the reports were ambitious and well thought out. She shared her excitement for the new year and gave a special thank you to Assistant Superintendent Main for her presentation.

SACo member Afebia Aemere thanked everyone for the board reports and shared her excitement to get to know the new SACo members. She commended Principal Tarrach for setting high goals to keep 9th grade students on track and noted that Cavelero represents a challenging transition age.

SACo member Yostina Mosa shared that she is transitioning into a new role as the Choice and Alternative Programs Liaison. She noted this is new territory for everyone and asked for patience as she gets started. In this role, she will gather student voice from Running Start, Skills Center, and Alternative Learning students, reporting quarterly. She expressed excitement for this new opportunity.

President Taylor welcomed the new SACo members, describing the journey ahead as exciting and meaningful. She emphasized the value of strong connections with everyone and thanked all for the building reports, noting that the board is here to address every issue - even the difficult ones. She highlighted the importance of being vulnerable and honest when discussing SIP plans, hopes, and goals, acknowledging there is always room to improve. She also expressed gratitude to Mr. Glynn for his community comments.

ADJOURNMENT

With no other objections from other directors, President Taylor adjourned the Regular Session at 8:41 p.m.

President _____

Secretary _____