

BOARD MEMBERS' CODE OF GOVERNANCE

POLICY:

The Lake Stevens School District Board of Directors holds that the values, knowledge, and skills of effective school board members are based on adherence to basic positive principles such as honesty, integrity, and respect for human dignity.

As publicly-elected officials, they recognize and accept the responsibility of their roles as independently-elected officials and their authority to act only within the structure of the School Board. They commit to taking the time necessary to understand the beliefs, acquire the knowledge, and develop the skills necessary to be effective school board members.

Beliefs

The Lake Stevens School District Board of Directors believes it must:

- Be fully prepared and work within the Board's structure;
- Make decisions to ensure equal access to public education as the best way to sustain the democratic way of life;
- Acknowledge that an effective Board must be composed of members who respect its processes and recognize dissenting viewpoints;
- Respect the professional expertise of district staff as necessary for the operation of effective schools;
- Recognize that schools thrive in a community where there is an atmosphere of mutual respect;
- Support actions taken by the Board and clearly differentiate personal opinions from Board decisions when speaking in the minority;
- Make decisions to ensure the rights and welfare of all children;
- Ensure that schools are free of bigotry and racism;
- Maintain independent judgment free of special interests and partisan political groups and avoid the use of schools for personal gain;
- Create educational environments that meet the individual needs of all students;
- Recognize that effective internal and external communications are an essential part of our public schools and their roles as school board members;
- Utilize educational research and practices as a basis for making decisions;

- Be accountable for their actions;
- Cooperate with other board members, the staff, and community, and;
- Exercise self-control by confining their actions to policy making, monitoring, and evaluation of educational policies.

Knowledge and Skills

They will acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to:

- Understand the State's laws and regulations and their district's policies and procedures and contractual obligations which govern the operation of schools;
- Recognize that School Board authority to act can be exercised only when participating in an official meeting of the Board;
- Hold confidential from the public, including families and friends, all matters discussed in Executive Sessions;
- Know and accept the appropriate roles of the Board and the Superintendent in the operation of the school district;
- Know how to strategically plan for the schools' short, intermediate, and long-range futures and enact policies to ensure fair, efficient, and effective operations, monitor—not manage—the implementation of plans and policies, and evaluate the District's educational effectiveness;
- Recognize that the Board must devote adequate resources to staff development for the professional growth of the district;
- Know that interdependent relationships based on collaboration with other school board members, boards, other educational policy makers, and appropriate agencies will improve public education; and
- Keep abreast of important developments in educational trends, research, and practices.

Board Development

The Board believes that board orientation and continuing education are essential to effective boardsmanship. The Board will allocate funds and participate in workshops/training sessions, self studies, and conferences to assure a high level of competency.