

Lake Washington School District

2021 Legislative Platform

Mission: Each student will graduate prepared to lead a rewarding and responsible life as a contributing member of our community and greater society.

Vision: Every Student Future Ready: Prepared for college, Prepared for the global workplace, and Prepared for personal success.

The Lake Washington School District Board of Directors represents 31,000 students residing on the Eastside of Lake Washington. Our legislative priorities are focused on addressing urgent and pervasive challenges to ensure Lake Washington is able to continue providing high-quality programs and services for our diverse student body. By addressing these legislative priorities, we will address individual student needs while also addressing school systems that have led to marginalization of specific populations. Our Strategic Plan identifies Academic Success, Well-Being, Community Connected, Excellent Staff, and Effective Use of Resources as the fundamental goal areas of focus. These legislative priorities align with our Strategic Plan while maintaining a focus on support for the growth and development of our students.

VITAL:

- ❑ **Special Education Programs and Services:** Fully fund the cost of special education. OSPI estimated the cost of fully funding special education to be an increase of \$308 million per year or \$616 million per biennium.
- ❑ **School Employees Benefits Board (SEBB):** Fully fund the cost of SEBB. There are a number of outstanding issues with the new program, including unfunded costs, coverage for substitutes, and ending program participation when premiums are not paid.
- ❑ **Social Emotional Learning:** Update the prototypical school model, provide more funding for counselors at all grade levels, and work with districts on additional pilot programs that could help to promote social-emotional learning which enhances school safety.
- ❑ **Attract, Recruit and Retain High-Quality, Diverse Staff:** A commitment to hiring a high-quality and diverse workforce is in alignment with our commitment to student success. Promoting state-to-state reciprocity, eliminating additional testing and state level promotion/programming can lead to increased high-quality and diverse staff.

URGENT:

Due to the impact of COVID-19, Districts across the state are addressing critical learning, fiscal, and liability issues. The 2021 Legislature has the opportunity to take swift and decisive action to maintain K-12 districts.

- ❑ **Hold Districts Harmless:** Keep districts whole in the 2020-21 school year budget. Funds have already been budgeted and/or apportioned to districts. Do not implement mid-year budget cuts to districts given the significant costs associated with COVID-19 and remote learning.
- ❑ **Emergency Liability Response:** Districts have taken on significant fiscal, civil, and labor liability. Take action to provide emergency funding to fill the gap between federal emergency funds and the actual costs associated with COVID-19 and remote learning.

Lake Washington Board of Directors:

Eric Laliberte, President
Mark Stuart, Vice President
Cassandra Sage, Legislative Representative
Siri Bliesner, Director
Chris Carlson, Director

Lake Washington School District Superintendent:
Dr. Jon Holmen

ONGOING:

- ❑ **Technology Funding:** School districts rely on technology infrastructure for student learning and district operations. Currently, districts receive negligible MSOC funding for technology. Funding should be increased.
- ❑ **School Construction Funding:** Rapid enrollment growth in the Puget Sound area and new class size mandates have created significant demand for new school facilities. Update the school construction funding formula so that the state pays a fair share of the cost of building schools.
- ❑ **Simple Majority for School Bonds:** Advance a constitutional amendment that authorizes simple majority for school bonds.

