



FISHER SCHOOL

LYNDEN SCHOOL DISTRICT

FAMILY HANDBOOK

FISHER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

501 N. 14th St., Lynden, WA 98264

Phone: 360-354-4291

FAX: 360-354-0952

Website: <https://lynden.wednet.edu/fisher-elementary/>

LYNDEN SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*Khush Brar, Tonya Hickman, Danny Martinez,
Ken Owsley & Jim Verborg*

ADMINISTRATION

Mr. David Vander Yacht, Superintendent	360-354-4443
Dr. Julie van Wijk Asst. Superintendent Teaching & Learning	360-354-4443
Mr. Ian Freeman, Principal of Lynden High School	360-354-4401
Mr. Vincent Riccobene, Principal of Lynden Middle School	360-354-2952
Mr. Tim Doering, Principal of Isom Elementary School	360-354-1992
Mr. Rex Fraser, Principal of Bernice Vossbeck Elementary	360-354-0488
Mrs. Christie Long, Principal of Fisher Elementary School	360-354-4291
Mrs. Ellie Meenk, Principal of Lynden Academy	360-354-6675
Mrs. Rebecca Morgan, Director of Special Education	360-354-2893
Mr. Shane Stanfill, Transportation Supervisor	360-354-5469
Mrs. Michelle Nilsen, Director of HR & Staff Development	360-354-4443
Mr. Ben Thomas, Director of Finance	360-354-4443
Mr. Tim Metz, Director of Student Services	360-354-4443

WELCOME TO FISHER SCHOOL!

Welcome to Fisher School. We are a TK through fifth grade school served by a caring and well-trained staff. Our goal is to work with the family in helping our students build a strong foundation in academic and social skills. Working with you makes our program even stronger. Helping Fisher students to be respectful and responsible citizens is a priority of each staff member. We have high expectations for ourselves and for our students, each of whom deserve our best every day.

There is important information contained in this handbook. It will be most helpful if you and your children know and understand our basic policies and procedures. Our entire staff considers it an honor to invest in your child's education. Fisher School is a great place to learn! Please use the Lynden School District and Fisher School websites to access information.

Sincerely,

Christie Long, Principal

Fisher Mission Statement:

Team Fisher ensures diverse and differentiated social/emotional and academic learning opportunities to meet the needs of each child. Our team provides the highest level of instruction to close the achievement gap.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Subject to change

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday: Student's Day: 8:55 AM to 3:05 PM
Most Wednesdays: 9:55 AM – 3:05 PM

Morning Recess

10:05-10:20 AM	2 nd Gr.
10:20-10:35 AM	ELRC
10:35-10:50 AM	1 st Grade
10:50-11:05	5 th Gr.
11:05-11:20	3 rd Gr

Lunch/Recess

11:00 AM-11:40 AM	Kinder.
11:20 AM-12:00 PM	2 nd Gr.
11:40 AM-12:20 PM	4 th Gr.
12:00 PM -12:40 PM	1 st Gr
12:25 PM -1:05 PM	3 rd Gr
12:25-1:05 PM	5 th Gr.

Afternoon Recess

1:20-1:35 PM	Kinder
1:35-1:50 PM	ELRC
1:50-2:05 PM	4 th Gr.

FISHER SCHOOL DIRECTORY

2025-26

Principal

Christie Long

Dean of Students

Open

Interventionists

Amy Miller

Holly Priestman

Admin Assistant

Cindy Huaracha

Wendy Kuplent

Megan Vopnford

Nurse

Katie Struiksmma

TK Launch

Megan Herwerden

Samantha Loza

Annette Salazar

Kenna Vandalen

Estela Van Werven

Kindergarten

Jacque Anderson

Danielle Ayres

Jessica Granstrom

Kacey Hersom

Marci Peterson

First Grade

Megan Burmeister

Tami Namminga

Katie Polinder

Bree Prosser

Second Grade

Amy Bocci

Jen Haugen

Mary Morrisen

Laura Munkres

Third Grade

Jamie Matheis

Dena Riccobene

Corinne Tomaszewski

Kelly Vargas

Fourth Grade

Julie Adams

Andrew Dickson

Christine Gish

Melissa Lindner

Fifth Grade

Open

Cory Clawson

Ruby Sandland

Brenna Veldman

STEAM

Laura Sebastiani

PE & Music

Mike Sebastiani

Rebecca Wright

Media Center

Diane Zediker

Kesley Stauffer

ELRC

Laura Landis

Chris Bento

Kaysha Ebergson

Coreen Ellsworth

Carrie Lyddan

Dan Putich

Kathy Vis

LRC

Lilly Rivera

Alexandra Strobin

Alexis Blalock

Rachel Putich

Kimberly Vanbeek

School Psychologist

James Scarborough

Counselor

Tausha Caldarella

OPEN

Speech

Gina Murakami

Anna Gregovich

OT/PT

Georgia Curran

Catherine Lynch

Shannon Lanskis

Paraeducators

TBD

Annajeane Dzialo

Estreya Lopez

Amy Maynard

Jessie Mendoza

Ellie Stewart

Cassie Uyttewaal

Christina VanderPloeg

Recess Supervisors

TBD

Beth Hodgins

Jill Sawka (Tyler)

Sheila Visser

Custodians

Keith Pine

Evelia Villa- Lopez

Food Services

Danita Branson

Debra Harris

Tricia Jager

FISHER WEBSITE

Fisher School has an active website with information about school events and other information. The web address is: lynden.wednet.edu/fisher-elementary/

PARENTSQUARE

The Lynden School District has partnered with ParentSquare, a proven technology for reliable communication between schools and student households. ParentSquare is a service to communicate absences, emergencies, weather-related closures/delays, early release notices, and meal balances. You will receive communication relating to your student via your phone # and email contact information on record at your child's school. Please make sure your contacts are up to date.

This program retrieves data from our school data program called Skyward. If your student is marked absent you will receive an automated phone call or a text, alerting you of their absence; the message advises how to proceed to excuse your student, if that has not been done. During inclement weather situations you will receive an automated phone call or a text at approximately 6:00 AM, and email alerting you of the district plan on late arrivals or closures. You may opt-out of early AM weather-related communication by contacting the district office. Also, Early Dismissal Day notices will be sent two days prior to an early release day. Communication regarding meal balances under \$3.00 will be sent via an automated phone call and email, alerting of the low fund balance.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL TIME

School begins at 8:55 AM and dismisses at 3:05 PM, except for most Wednesdays when we have a delayed start at 9:55 AM. **Your child should not arrive at school earlier than 8:40** as no supervision is provided before that time. If your child arrives after 8:55, please walk them to the school office to check them in. Please avoid, whenever possible, picking up your child before school dismisses. Additionally, please make sure to pick up your child at 3:05 PM.

Adult supervisors are on duty each recess and during the noon recess. No playground supervision is provided before in the morning or after the students are dismissed for the day and the buses have departed.

ATTENDANCE

The habit of regular and punctual attendance is strongly related to the success of every student. We ask that you help your child acquire this good work habit. **If your child will be absent or tardy due to illness or an appointment, please call our office at 354-4291 after 7:30 AM, or report their attendance via SKYWARD.** Students released for doctor or dentist appointments should check in and out through the office. Please send a written note when your child returns to school from an absence.

There are two periods in an elementary K-5 school day. Students who arrive **20 minutes or more past the start of a period or leave prior to 20 minutes before the**

end of a period will be marked absent for that period. The absence will be considered unexcused unless they have a signed note, or we receive a phone call from their parent/guardian with an explanation that fits the criteria for an excused absence. All late students must check into the office and receive a tardy pass to be admitted to class.

If you plan to take your student out of school for more than 3 consecutive days, an [Extended Absence Form](#) needs to be completed PRIOR to the absence.

RELEASE OF STUDENTS

Children will be released from the classroom, building, grounds or building function only to a parent having legal custody, a legal guardian, or a person designated by the parent/legal guardian and listed on school records. This person must present to the satisfaction of the school office staff, evidence of proper authority to remove the student from the school. All students must be picked up at the office and signed out.

To minimize disruption to learning, we ask that you try to avoid removing your child during the school day and avoid picking them up just before the end of the day. We understand that at times this is unavoidable.

Should your child become ill at school, the office will first attempt to contact a parent or guardian at home or work. If the office is unable to reach a parent, they will call your emergency contact names listed on your child's records.

Should a student need to be sent home due to discipline, suspension, or expulsion (except in emergency expulsion), the principal shall attempt to inform a parent or guardian about the school's action and will request the parent come to school for the child.

HOME A DIFFERENT WAY

Students are expected to go straight home by the usual means of transportation. If your child is to go home with a friend, on a different bus, or to be picked up early or by someone other than their parent/guardian, **written permission or a phone call from a parent is required.**

If we are not notified of a change in transportation by a note or phone call from the parent, we will send students home the usual way. Whenever possible, please try to avoid last minute decisions to change your child's plans concerning their way home. The office needs to be called before 2:30 PM with any transportation changes for the day. This will eliminate any confusion on your child's part and will ensure that he/she arrives safely at his/her destination. Also, the office should be informed of any changes in your child's daycare provider.

BUS RIDING

Most of our students ride the bus to and from school. We want the ride to be safe and pleasant. Bus drivers and teachers go over safety rules with the children and we would like parents to support these rules at home. Bus rules can be found on the district website. lynden.wednet.edu/departments/transportation/bus-conduct-2. If you would like a copy of the bus rules, please contact the office at 360-354-4291.

Riding the bus is a privilege. If a student consistently misbehaves on the bus, they may lose this privilege. Glass items, pets and medication are not allowed on school buses for safety reasons. Children should be extremely careful at bus stops and when crossing streets. Children should understand that bus stops become dangerous when pushing and shoving occur.

Concerns about the bus should be directed to your child's bus driver or the transportation supervisor who may be reached at the bus garage (360-354-5469).

BUS SCHEDULE/SEVERE WEATHER

Operation of buses during snow or ice conditions: ParentSquare will send an automated phone call and email alerting you of a school closure or delay at approximately 6:00 AM. (If parents opt-out of this by contacting the district office, they will need to check the district website or listen to the local radio stations. The school district will inform these stations by 6:00 AM of any delay in the bus schedules, cancellations of transportation for the day or cancellation of school. Please do not call the school office for this information.

Please listen to the following radio stations: KGMI 790 AM, KPUG 1170 AM, KWPZ 106.5 FM, KAFE 104.3 FM or KISM 92.9 FM, or check the district website for up-to-date information.

Operation of buses during a thaw and county-imposed road restrictions: Buses will run only on all-weather roads during a thaw following a long or severe freeze. The school district will be notified by the county commissioner, usually a day in advance, so notices can be sent home with students. It is recommended that you listen to the radio stations listed above for this information.

Parents are expected to get their children to all-weather roads and home again from the all-weather road drop-off point in the afternoon.

BICYCLE RIDERS and WALKERS

Students are permitted to ride their bicycles to and from school. Students need to have a note signed once a year by a parent giving permission for their child to ride their bike to and from school. Bicycles should be locked when parked at school for the student's own protection. The school is not responsible for personal property. Please instruct your child thoroughly on bicycle safety. All children should wear bicycle helmets.

Students who regularly walk to and from school need to have a note signed by a parent once a year giving permission for their child to walk.

PARKING

We ask that visitors use the parking lot if you plan to enter the building. Parking in the pick-up and drop-off lane is not permitted. Designated visitor parking spots are located close to the school and are to be used when you need to leave your vehicle.

USE OF THE SCHOOL PHONE

The school telephones are intended for school business use. The office staff will make every effort to deliver urgent messages from parents to students. Students will be allowed to use the telephone for calls of an urgent nature with permission by a school employee. Calls to see if one student can go home with another are not permitted; after-school “play-dates” must be pre-arranged.

INVITATIONS AND GIFTS

We want to be sensitive to the feelings and needs of our students and ask that you do not bring gifts or invitations for parties, get-togethers etc. to school. Please do not bring balloons to school for your child. Balloons are not allowed on the bus.

VISITING FISHER SCHOOL

You are always encouraged to visit or volunteer in your child's room. Volunteers must complete a [volunteer application packet](#). Please notify the teacher of your visit in advance. All visitors are asked to first stop by the school office to sign in and put on a “Visitor” badge. We ask that you contact the teacher whenever there is a concern or question. The best time to reach teachers by phone are 8:20 AM – 8:40 AM and 3:05 – 3:15 PM.

Visits to our school by other children are discouraged. Our program is set up to accommodate your child. Children not enrolled as part of our program take extra time from our staff, thus taking away from the education of our students.

VOLUNTEERING AT SCHOOL

For the safety of our students, anyone who volunteers in the classroom and/or accompanies field trips with students is required to pass a background check and complete an on-line training course. Forms are available online [volunteer application packet](#) or at the school office and need to be completed and returned to us at least five days before the event. Volunteering can occur after the forms have been processed. There is no cost involved and the certification is valid for two years.

STUDENT INFORMATION

The school is responsible for your children approximately six hours a day. It is important that we have up-to-date information such as address, current telephone numbers and emergency contacts. Please call the office if any information needs to be updated on your child's records. Inform the school as soon as possible if you are moving.

REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

Report cards are sent home three times per year. The first report card is covered in a parent-teacher conference in mid-November. The second report card is sent home in March, and the last one is sent home on the last day of the school year.

Please take time to go over progress reports with your child. This is an important part of their learning process as well. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your child's teacher.

PARENT – TEACHER CONFERENCES

Conferences regarding student progress are scheduled in November. Conferences are a very important part of the educational process for your child and Fisher Elementary School expects 100% parent involvement.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

A list of [student supplies](#) are posted on the website indicating the items teachers ask students to furnish. These supplies are the property of each child and are to be taken home at the end of the school year.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

Breakfast and lunch are eaten in the cafeteria. Students may bring a lunch or purchase meals. Elementary students will receive free breakfast and lunch due to HB1238 for the 25-26 school year. Meal prices will be sent home along with some additional information at the beginning of the school year. Applications for free and reduced meals are available in the office or on-line. It is beneficial to complete the form even though lunches are free, because the application may qualify you for other services. [Free and Reduced Meal Application](#)

Breakfast & Lunch prices: Free Universal Feeding for 2025-26



	<u>Breakfast</u>	<u>Lunch</u>
Full Price	Free	Free
Free K-5	Free	Free
Reduced	Free	Free
Milk/Juice Ala Carte		\$.50
Adults:	\$2.75(subject to change)	\$4.50 (subject to change)

CARE OF THE BUILDING

Good citizens will take pride in keeping our buildings, grounds and equipment neat and in the best condition. As parents and teachers, we can work together with our students to emphasize responsibility and respect for our facilities.

ITEMS NOT ALLOWED

Skateboards, roller skates, in-line skates, cell phones, iPads, radios, headphones, video games, trading cards and toys, toy guns and knives, cleated shoes, baseball bats and hard balls, golf balls, and gum are not allowed at school. Students in grades Pre-K-5 are discouraged from bringing ECDs (electronic communication devices) to school. Please see the LSD Board Policy for more detailed information regarding ECD's.

DRESS CODE

We want Fisher School to be a safe and friendly environment where students can excel in their learning. For this to work, we do have expectations for how students come to school in appropriate clothing.

Shoes: Please wear school appropriate shoes every day. Shoes need to enclose the heels and toes. Wearing flip-flops on the playground equipment area or in P.E. are not appropriate. Students wearing them can get injured more easily. If flip flops are worn to school, appropriate shoes need to be brought along for recess and P.E.

Shorts/pants: Shorts need to be modest and not too short. A rule of thumb would be a hand width above the student's knee. Pants should not have large tears on them and should be worn in a respectful manner.

Shirts: We do not allow any words or pictures that are inappropriate or disrespectful (i.e. violence, controlled substances, sexually explicit information, gang related material etc...). Students also need to have shirts that cover the body appropriately (no large tears, no spaghetti straps, no midriff shirts).

Hats: Hats are not to be worn in the buildings or on playground unless students are given permission (If it is severe weather, then hats, gloves and other warm clothing is important to wear). Any items like bandanas and other things that cover the face are not allowed.

Accessories: Any item worn that would suggest gang affiliation is not allowed. (This might include chains for wallets, clothing, necklaces or other items). If a student wears a hooded sweatshirt, the hood should only be worn in a respectful manner (not indoors and not used to hide the face).

LOST & FOUND

The school maintains a lost & found for unclaimed items. Students and parents are encouraged to check the lost & found for articles of clothing, jewelry, eyeglasses, and coats. Parents are expected to place suitable identification on all items to help us return these items to their owners. Unclaimed items will be donated to local charities at the end of each school year.

SAFETY DRILLS AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS:

Fire, earthquake, and lock-down drills are necessary for the safety of students and staff. Students are continually taught and reminded of Fisher Elementary safety drill procedures.

ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH

Sick Children: If your child has a fever or is obviously not well, we ask that you please keep him/her at home. This helps your child recover more quickly and helps to prevent other students and staff from becoming ill. A child that contracts a contagious disease or condition, such as pink eye, chickenpox, ringworm, impetigo, or pediculosis (head lice), will be sent home from school and must remain at home until the condition or the disease is treated.

Fever: No child with a fever should be sent to school. A fever is 100.4° or higher. If no thermometer is available, then feel the child's forehead with the back of your hand. If it feels hot, keep the child at home. A child needs to be free of fever for 24 hours, without medication, before returning to school.

Cold: A child with cold symptoms of a runny nose and/or a deep hacking cough belongs at home, even if they are not running a fever. Greenish discharge from the nose is a sign of a bacterial infection. Please have a doctor check this condition. If your child has a sore throat with a fever and/or white spots on the back of the throat, call your doctor.

Headaches: A child with a headache, stiff neck, and chills along with a high fever should be seen by a doctor.

Vomiting: Children who have vomited in the afternoon or evening should remain at home the following day especially if they have not been able to eat or drink other than clear liquids. They should remain at home until 24 hours have passed from the last time they vomited and they are able to eat and drink more than clear liquids.

Head lice: If head lice are discovered, the parent will be notified if possible, and information given related to detection and elimination of head lice. The student is not sent home from school unless the parent wants to pick up the student and classmates are not notified. Students need to be treated prior to returning to school.

MEDICATIONS AT SCHOOL:

Because of recent changes in Washington State Law regarding administration of oral medications at school, the following rules now apply.

- The medication must be furnished in the ORIGINAL container from the pharmacy, with the student's name, the name of the medication, and the dosage to be given. Non-prescription medication must be furnished in the original container from the manufacturer.
- All medication should be ready to be administered and must not require any preparation by building staff.
- It is the parent's responsibility to deliver and maintain an adequate supply (not more than one month supply) of medication at the school.

- The medicine MAY NOT be delivered by the child or school bus driver. If delivered by the student or bus driver, medication will not be dispensed and the parent will be contacted to come to school to verify medication and amount.
- An “Authorization for Administration of Oral Medications at School” form must be filled out prior to administration of any medication including Tylenol and MUST be signed by both a physician and parent or guardian.

VACCINATIONS

In accordance with Washington State Law WAC 246-100-166, your child must have the following immunizations completed before entering kindergarten.

- 5 doses of DTaP (last dose administered after 4th birthday).
- 3 doses of oral polio (OPV) or 4 doses of Inactivated Polio vaccine (IPV) with the last dose on or after the fourth birthday
- 2 doses of Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine on or after the first birthday
- 3 doses of Hepatitis B vaccine
- 2 varicella (chicken pox) vaccination

ACCIDENT INSURANCE:

School accident insurance is available for students at a very reasonable rate. Application forms are available in the school office.

SAVING FOR EDUCATION

There are ways that parents can help Fisher School receive materials and equipment for our students. We participate in the following programs and ask for your help in saving and turning in labels and receipts:

1. There are several stores that donate to schools such as Safeway and Target. Ask for information when you shop.

Thank you for your help!

The following handbook language is required by OSPI:

SCHOOL SAFETY : Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment Policy (District Policy 3207)

The District is committed to a safe and civil educational environment for all students, employees, volunteers, and patrons; free from harassment, intimidation or bullying. “Harassment, intimidation or bullying” (HIB) means any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, including but not limited to one shown to be motivated by any characteristic in RCW 9A.36.080(3), (race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender sexual orientation, or mental or physical disability), or other distinguishing characteristics, when the intentional written verbal, or physical act:

- Physically harms a student or damages the student’s property; or
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s education; or
- Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school

Nothing in this section requires the affected student to actually possess a characteristic that is a basis for the harassment, intimidation or bullying. “Other distinguishing characteristics” can include but are not limited to physical appearance, clothing or other apparel, socioeconomic status, gender identity, and marital status. Harassment, intimidation or bullying can take many forms including slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendos, demeaning comments, drawings, cartoons, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, threats or other written, oral or physical actions. “Intentional acts” refer to the individual’s choice to engage in the act rather than ultimate impact of the actions(s).

This policy is not intended to prohibit expression of religious, philosophical, or political views, provided that the expression does not substantially disrupt the educational environment. Many behaviors that do not rise to the level of harassment, intimidation or bullying may still be prohibited by other district policies or building, classroom or program rules.

This policy is a component of the district’s responsibility to create and maintain a safe, civil, respectful and inclusive learning community and is to be implemented in conjunction with comprehensive training of staff and volunteers, including the education of students in partnership with families and the community. The policy is to be implemented in conjunction with the Comprehensive Safe Schools Plan that includes prevention, intervention, crisis response, recovery and annual review. Employees, in particular, are expected to support the dignity and safety of all members of the school community.

Depending upon the frequency and severity of the conduct, intervention, counseling, correction, discipline and/or referral to law enforcement will be used to remediate the impact on the victim and the climate and change the behavior of the perpetrator. This includes appropriate intervention, restoration of a positive climate, and support for victims and others impacted by the violation, false reports or

retaliation for harassment, intimidations or bullying also constitute violations of this policy.

The district's HIB compliance officer is Mr. David VanderYacht, Superintendent. All formal and informal complaints should be directed to him at the District Office, 516 Main St., Lynden WA.

Non-discrimination

Lynden School District does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following employee(s) has been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination:

Civil Rights Coordinator – Tim Metz: metzt@lynden.wednet.edu 360-354-4443

Title IX Officer – Tim Metz: metzt@lynden.wednet.edu 360-354-4443

You can report discrimination and discriminatory harassment to any school staff member or to the district's Civil Rights Coordinator, listed above. You also have the right to file a complaint. For a copy of your district's nondiscrimination policy and procedure, contact your school or district office or view it online here:

<https://www.lynden.wednet.edu/board/board> documents

Sexual Harrassment

Students and staff are protected against sexual harassment by anyone in any school program or activity, including on the school campus, on the school bus, or off-campus during a school-sponsored activity.

Sexual harassment is unwelcome behavior or communication that is sexual in nature when:

- A student or employee is led to believe that he or she must submit to unwelcome sexual conduct or communications in order to gain something in return, such as a grade, a promotion, a place on a sports team, or any educational or employment decision or
- The conduct substantially interferes with a student's educational performance or creates an intimidating or hostile educational or employment environment.

Examples of Sexual Harassment:

- Pressuring a person for sexual favors
- Unwelcome touching of a sexual nature
- Writing graffiti of a sexual nature
- Distributing sexually explicit texts, emails or pictures
- Making sexual jokes, rumors, or suggestive remarks
- Physical violence, including rape and sexual assault

You can report sexual harassment to any school staff member or to the district's Title IX Officer, who is listed above. You also have the right to file a complaint (see below). For a copy of your district's sexual harassment policy and procedure, contact your school or district office, or view it online here: <https://www.lynden.wednet.edu/board/board> documents

Complaint options: Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

If you believe that you or your child have experienced unlawful discrimination, discriminatory harassment, or sexual harassment at school, you have the right to file a complaint.

Before filing a complaint, you can discuss your concerns with your child's principal or with the school district's Section 504 Coordinator, Title IX Officer, or Civil Rights Coordinator, who are listed above. This is often the fastest way to resolve your concerns.

Complaint to the School District

Step 1: Write Out Your Complaint

In most cases, complaints must be filed within one year from the date of the incident or conduct that is the subject of the complaint. A complaint must be in writing. Be sure to describe the conduct or incident, explain why you believe discrimination, discriminatory harassment, or sexual harassment has taken place, and describe what actions you believe the district should take to resolve the problem. Send your written complaint – by mail, fax, email or hand delivery – to the district superintendent or civil rights compliance coordinator.

Step 2: School District Investigates Your Complaint

Once the district receives your written complaint, the coordinator will give you a copy of the complaint procedure and make sure a prompt and thorough investigation takes place. The superintendent or designee will respond to you in writing within 30 calendar days – unless you agree on a different time period. If your complaint involves exceptional circumstances that demand a lengthier investigation, the district will notify you in writing to explain why staff need a time extension and the new date for their written response.

Step 3: School District Responds to Your Complaint

In its written response, the district will include a summary of the results of the investigation, a determination of whether or not the district failed to comply with civil right laws, notification that you can appeal this determination, and any measures necessary to bring the district into compliance with civil right laws. Corrective measures will be put into effect within 30 calendar days after this written response – unless you agree to a different time period.

Appeal to the School District

If you disagree with the school district's decision, you may appeal to the school district's board of directors. You must file a notice of appeal in writing to the secretary of the school board within 10 calendar days after you received the school district's response to your complaint. The school board will schedule a hearing within 20 calendar days after they received your appeal, unless you agree on a different timeline. The school board will send you a written decision within 30 calendar days after the district received your notice of appeal. The school board's decision will include information about how to file a complaint with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

Complaint to OSPI

If you do not agree with the school district's appeal decision, state law provides the option to file a formal complaint with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). This is a separate complaint process that can take place if one of these two conditions has occurred: (1) you have completed the district's complaint and appeal process, or (2) the district has not followed the complaint and appeal process correctly.

You have 20 calendar days to file a complaint to OSPI from the day you received the decision on your appeal. You can send your written complaint to the Equity and Civil Rights Office at OSPI:

Email: Equity@k12.wa.us / Fax: 360-664-2967

Mail or hand deliver: PO Box 47200, 600 Washington St. S.E., Olympia, WA 98504-7200

For more information, visit our [website](#), or contact OSPI's Equity and Civil Rights Office at 360-725-6162/TTY:360-664-3631 or by email at equity@k12.wa.us.

Other Discrimination Complaint Options:

Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education

206-607-1600 | TDD: 1-800-877-8339 | OCR.Seattle@ed.gov | [OCR Website](#)

Washington State Human Rights Commission

1-800-233-3247 | TTY: 1-800-300-7525 | [Human Rights Commission Website](#)

Threats/Harassment: Students may not threaten to hurt someone or property. This includes teasing, verbal abuse, sexual harassment, intimidation, threats or threatening statements. This also means on the way to or from school. (RCW 28A.300.285) (Board policy 3207, 3207P)

Weapons/Gun Free School Zone: It is against school board policy and state laws to carry or possess a firearm or dangerous weapon (as outlined in Board Policy 3200) on school premises or school-transportation. The penalty for this shall be expulsion from school (RCW 9.41.280 & Board Policies 4210 and 3200) for one year. This can be modified if deemed appropriate by the superintendent. If a weapon is brought to school, both parents and law enforcement must be notified.

Gang Activity: Any student enrolled in public or alternative school that is engaged in gang activity or is a member of a gang on school grounds, may be suspended or expelled from school. (RCW 28A.600.455& Board Policy 3200)

Drugs, Tobacco products, and Alcohol: It is against school board policy for a student to have illegal drugs, tobacco products, or alcohol at school. It is also against school board policy to have taken illegal drugs or alcohol before coming to school. Any medications brought on campus must be approved through the appropriate building authorities. Discipline for these actions could result in suspension or expulsion from school (RCW 28A.210.310 & Board Policies 4215 and 3200).

Right to Appeal process: If a student is accused of one of these incidents he or she will be afforded an appeal process that is outlined in Board Policy 3200.

The Lynden School District adheres to a “zero tolerance” policy concerning threats of violence, acts of violence and possession of dangerous items (i.e., knives, guns, etc.). It is against the school board policy and state laws for a student to have illegal drugs, tobacco products, or alcoholic materials at school. It is also against school board policy to have taken illegal drugs or alcohol before coming to school. Unless there is a doctor’s note on record, prescription drugs are also not allowed. (RCW28A.210.310)

This is a gun-free zone. Law enforcement will be notified of any violation.

Our Schools Protect Students from Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB)

Schools are meant to be safe and inclusive environments where all students are protected from Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB), including in the classroom, on the school bus, in school sports, and during other school activities. This section defines HIB, explains what to do when you see or experience it, and our school’s process for responding to it.

What is HIB?

State law defines HIB in **RCW 28A.600.477(5)(b)(i)** as “any intentional electronic, written, verbal, or physical act including, but not limited to, one shown to be motivated by any characteristic in **RCW 28A.640.010** and **28A.642.010** (discrimination based on a protected class) or other distinguishing characteristics, when the intentional electronic, written, verbal, or physical act:

- (A) Physically harms a student or damages the student’s property;
- (B) Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s education;
- (C) Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
- (D) Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school”

HIB may involve an observed or perceived power imbalance and is repeated multiple times or is highly likely to be repeated. HIB is not allowed, by law, in our schools.

How can I make a report or complaint about HIB?

Talk to any school staff member (consider starting with whoever you are most comfortable with!). You may use our [district's reporting form](#) to share concerns about HIB (but reports about HIB can be made in writing or verbally. Your report can be made anonymously, if you are uncomfortable revealing your identity, or confidentially if you prefer it not be shared with other students involved with the report. No disciplinary action will be taken against another student based **solely** on an anonymous or confidential report.

If a staff member is notified of, observes, overhears, or otherwise witnesses HIB, they must take prompt and appropriate action to stop the HIB behavior and to prevent it from happening again. Our district also has a HIB Compliance Officer (Tim Metz, Director of Student Services, metzt@lynden.wednet.edu, 360-354-4443) that supports prevention and response to HIB.

What happens after I make a report about HIB?

If you report HIB, school staff must attempt to resolve the concerns. If the concerns are resolved, then no further action may be necessary. However, if you feel that you or someone you know is the victim of unresolved, severe, or persistent HIB that requires further investigation and action, then you should request an official HIB investigation.

Also, the school must take actions to ensure that those who report HIB don't experience retaliation.

What is the investigation process?

When you report a complaint, the HIB Compliance Officer or staff member leading the investigation must notify the families of the students involved with the complaint and must make sure a prompt and thorough investigation takes place. The investigation must be completed within 5 school days, unless you agree on a different timeline. If your complaint involves circumstances that require a longer investigation, the district will notify you with the anticipated date for their response.

When the investigation is complete, the HIB Compliance Officer or the staff member leading the investigation must provide you with the outcomes of the investigation within 2 school days. This response should include:

- A summary of the results of the investigation
- A determination of whether the HIB is substantiated
- Any corrective measures or remedies needed
- Clear information about how you can appeal the decision

What are the next steps if I disagree with the outcome?

For the student designated as the "targeted student" in a complaint:

If you do not agree with the school district's decision, you may appeal the decision and include any additional information regarding the complaint to the superintendent, or the person assigned to lead the appeal, and then to the school board.

For the student designated as the “aggressor” in a complaint:

A student found to be an “aggressor” in a HIB complaint may not appeal the decision of a HIB investigation. They can, however, appeal corrective actions that result from the findings of the HIB investigation.

For more information about the HIB complaint process, including important timelines, please see the district's HIB webpage or the district's [HIB Policy 3207 and Procedure 3207P](#).

Our School Stands Against Discrimination

Discrimination can happen when someone is treated differently or unfairly because they are part of a **protected class**, including their race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, religion, creed, disability, use of a service animal, or veteran or military status.

What is discriminatory harassment?

Discriminatory harassment can include teasing and name-calling; graphic and written statements; or other conduct that may be physically threatening, harmful, or humiliating. Discriminatory harassment happens when the conduct is based on a student's protected class and is serious enough to create a hostile environment. A **hostile environment** is created when conduct is so severe, pervasive, or persistent that it limits a student's ability to participate in, or benefit from, the school's services, activities, or opportunities.

To review the district's Nondiscrimination Policy 3210 and Procedure 3210, visit <https://lynden.wednet.edu/school-board/board-policies-and-procedures/3000-students/>.

What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome conduct or communication that is sexual in nature and substantially interferes with a student's educational performance or creates an intimidating or hostile environment. Sexual harassment can also occur when a student is led to believe they must submit to unwelcome sexual conduct or communication to gain something in return, such as a grade or a place on a sports team.

Examples of sexual harassment can include pressuring a person for sexual actions or favors; unwelcome touching of a sexual nature; graphic or written statements of a sexual nature; distributing sexually explicit texts, e-mails, or pictures; making sexual jokes, rumors, or suggestive remarks; and physical violence, including rape and sexual assault.

To review the district's Sexual Harassment Policy 3205 and Procedure 3205, visit <https://lynden.wednet.edu/school-board/board-policies-and-procedures/3000-students/>.

What should my school do about discriminatory and sexual harassment?

When a school becomes aware of possible discriminatory or sexual harassment, it must investigate and stop the harassment. The school must address any effects the harassment had on the student at school, including eliminating the hostile environment, and make sure that the harassment does not happen again.

What can I do if I'm concerned about discrimination or harassment?

Talk to a Coordinator or submit a written complaint. You may contact the following school district staff members to report your concerns, ask questions, or learn more about how to resolve your concerns.

Concerns about discrimination:

Civil Rights Coordinator: Tim Metz, Director of Student Services,
metzt@lynden.wednet.edu

Concerns about sex discrimination, including sexual harassment:

Title IX Coordinator: Tim Metz, Director of Student Services,
metzt@lynden.wednet.edu

Concerns about disability discrimination:

Section 504 Coordinator: Tim Metz, Director of Student Services,
metzt@lynden.wednet.edu

Concerns about discrimination based on gender identity:

Gender-Inclusive Schools Coordinator: David VanderYacht, Superintendent,
vanderyachtd@lynden.wednet.edu

To **submit a written complaint**, describe the conduct or incident that may be discriminatory and send it by mail, fax, email, or hand delivery to the school principal, district superintendent, or civil rights coordinator. Submit the complaint as soon as possible for a prompt investigation, and within one year of the conduct or incident.

What happens after I file a discrimination complaint?

The Civil Rights Coordinator will give you a copy of the school district's discrimination complaint procedure. The Civil Rights Coordinator must make sure a prompt and thorough investigation takes place. The investigation must be completed within 30 calendar days unless you agree to a different timeline. If your complaint involves exceptional circumstances that require a longer investigation, the Civil Rights Coordinator will notify you in writing with the anticipated date for their response.

When the investigation is complete, the school district superintendent or the staff member leading the investigation will send you a written response. This response will include:

- A summary of the results of the investigation
- A determination of whether the school district failed to comply with civil rights laws
- Any corrective measures or remedies needed
- Notice about how you can appeal the decision

What are the next steps if I disagree with the outcome?

If you do not agree with the outcome of your complaint, you may appeal the decision to the School Board and then to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). More information about this process, including important timelines, is included in the district's Nondiscrimination Procedure (3210P) and Sexual Harassment Procedure (3205P).

I already submitted an HIB complaint – what will my school do?

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying (HIB) can also be discrimination if it's related to a protected class. If you give your school a written report of HIB that involves discrimination or sexual harassment, your school will notify the Civil Rights Coordinator. The school district will investigate the complaint using both the Nondiscrimination Procedure (3210P) and the HIB Procedure (3207P) to **fully resolve your complaint**.

Who else can help with HIB or Discrimination Concerns?

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

All reports must start locally at the school or district level. However, OSPI can assist students, families, communities, and school staff with questions about state law, the HIB complaint process, and the discrimination and sexual harassment complaint processes.

OSPI School Safety Center (For questions about harassment, intimidation, and bullying)

- Website: ospi.k12.wa.us/student-success/health-safety/school-safety-center
- Email: schoolsafety@k12.wa.us
- Phone: 360-725-6068

OSPI Equity and Civil Rights Office (For questions about discrimination and sexual harassment)

- Website: ospi.k12.wa.us/policy-funding/equity-and-civil-rights
- Email: equity@k12.wa.us
- Phone: 360-725-6162

Washington State Governor's Office of the Education Ombuds (OEO)

The Washington State Governor's Office of the Education Ombuds works with families, communities, and schools to address problems together so every student

can fully participate and thrive in Washington's K-12 public schools. OEO provides informal conflict resolution tools, coaching, facilitation, and training about family, community engagement, and systems advocacy.

- Website: www.oeo.wa.gov
- Email: oeoinfo@gov.wa.gov
- Phone: 1-866-297-2597

Our School is Gender-Inclusive

In Washington, all students have the right to be treated consistent with their gender identity at school. Our school will:

- Address students by their requested name and pronouns, with or without a legal name change
- Change a student's gender designation and have their gender accurately reflected in school records
- Allow students to use restrooms and locker rooms that align with their gender identity
- Allow students to participate in sports, physical education courses, field trips, and overnight trips in accordance with their gender identity
- Keep health and education information confidential and private
- Parents have the right under FERPA to request their student's educational records
- Allow students to wear clothing that reflects their gender identity and apply dress codes without regard to a student's gender or perceived gender
- Protect students from teasing, bullying, or harassment based on their gender or gender identity

To review the district's Gender-Inclusive Schools Policy 3211 and Procedure 3211, visit <https://lynden.wednet.edu/school-board/board-policies-and-procedures>. If you

have questions or concerns, please contact the Gender-Inclusive Schools

Coordinator:

David VanderYacht, Superintendent, vanderyachtd@lynden.wednet.edu

For concerns about discrimination or discriminatory harassment based on gender identity or gender expression, please see the section above on discriminatory harassment.

