



FISHER ELEMENTARY

FISHER STUDENTS ARE SAFE, RESPONSIBLE, AND RESPECTFUL

FISHER SCHOOL • FAMILY HANDBOOK • LYNDEN SCHOOL DISTRICT

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

*Danny Martinez, Jim Verburg,
Khush Brar, Danielle Ingham, & Nick Sawka*

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Mr. David VanderYacht, Superintendent	360-354-4443
Dr. Julie van Wijk, Asst. Superintendent Teaching & Learning	360-354-4443
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Mr. Vincent, Riccobene, Principal of Lynden Middle School	360-354-2952
Mr. Tim Doering, Principal of Isom Elementary School	360-354-1992
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Mrs. Christie Long, Principal of Fisher Elementary School	360-354-4291
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Mr. Tim Metz, Director of Student Services	360-354-4443

WELCOME TO FISHER SCHOOL

Dear Fisher Families,

Welcome to Fisher Elementary School!

It is my pleasure to welcome you to another exciting year at Fisher. We are honored to partner with you in your child's educational journey and look forward to the opportunities we will share together throughout the year.

At Fisher, we believe every child deserves to feel valued, supported, and challenged to reach their full potential. Our dedicated staff is committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and engaging learning environment where students can grow academically, socially, and emotionally. We celebrate the unique strengths each child brings to our school community and strive to provide meaningful learning experiences that inspire curiosity, confidence, and a love of learning.

Strong partnerships between home and school are essential to student success. We encourage open communication and collaboration as we work together to support each child. Whether you are new to Fisher or returning for another year, we want you to know that you are an important part of our school community.

This handbook is designed to provide information about our school procedures, programs, and expectations. Our goal is to ensure that students, families, and staff have a shared understanding of the practices that help us maintain a positive, safe, and productive learning environment. We encourage you to review the handbook and refer to it throughout the year as questions arise.

Thank you for entrusting us with your child each day. We are grateful for the opportunity to serve your family and are excited to partner with you in making this a successful and memorable school year. Together, we will continue to build a caring school community where every student can learn, grow, and thrive.

Welcome to Team Fisher!

Sincerely,

Christie Long
Principal
Fisher Elementary School

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.

FISHER SCHOOL DIRECTORY 2026-27

Principal

Christie Long

Dean of Students

Lisa Perigo

Interventionist

Holly Priestman

Admin Assistant

Cindy Huaracha

Jamie Palmer

Megan Vopnford

Nurse

Katie Struiksmas

ITK

Megan Herwerden

Annette Salazar

Kenna Vandalen

Kindergarten

Danielle Ayres

Jessica Granstrom

Jacque Harmon

Kacey Hersom

Marci Peterson

First Grade

Megan Burmeister

Tami Namminga

Katie Polinder

Second Grade

Amy Bocci

Jen Haugen

Laura Munkres

Third Grade

Jamie Matheis

Bree Prosser

Dena Riccobene

Kelly Vargas

Fourth Grade

Julie Adams

Christine Gish

Sam Loza

Diane Zediker

Fifth Grade

Cory Clawson

Melissa Lindner

Ruby Sandland

Brenna Veldman

STEAM

Aimee Hardenbrook

PE & Music

Mike Sebastiani

Deanna Marshall

Media Center

Kim Barber

Kesley Stauffer

ELRC

Laura Landis

Andrea Bates

Kyle Daugherty

Kaysha Ebergson

Coreen Ellsworth

Kelci Paulis

Kathy Vis

John Randolph

LRC

Lilly Rivera

Alexandra Strobin

Alexis Blalock

Ellie Carhuff

Rachel Putich

Nina Todd

Kimberly Vanbeek

School Psychologist

James Scarborough

Counselor

Tausha Caldarella

Speech

Gina Murakami

Anna Gregovich

OT/PT

Georgia Curran

Catherine Lynch

Shannon Lanskis

Paraeducators

Chris Bento

Bethany Lopez-Villa

Beth Hodgins

Amy Maynard

Ellie Stewart

Thelma Tejeda-Mejia

Cassie Uyttewaal

Maggie VanderVelden

Christina VanderPloeg

Recess Supervisors

Tricia Jager

Jill Sawka (Tyler)

Sheila Visser

Miranda Davis

Aubrey McDevitt

Custodians

Keith Pine

Evelia Villa- Lopez

Food Services

Danita Branson

Sara Serad

Open

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	ELRC
10:20-10:35 AM	2 nd Grade
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/TK
12:20 PM -1:00 PM	3 rd Gr
12:40-1:20 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.

PBIS at Fisher

At Fisher Elementary, we use Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to help create a safe, respectful, and positive learning environment for all students. PBIS focuses on teaching, modeling, and recognizing positive behaviors so students know what is expected in different areas of the school. By working together with families, we help students develop responsibility, respect, and safety skills that support both academic success and positive relationships. Our behavior expectations, which are outlined below in our Behavior Matrix, are clearly taught and reinforced throughout the school year to help every student thrive.

Fisher Elementary Behavior Expectation Matrix

	Hallway/Stairs Voice Level 0 in line Voice level 1 otherwise	Cafeteria Voice level 0-2	Pod Voice level 0 Voice level 1-2 otherwise	Bathroom Voice level 0-1	Office Voice level 0-1	Recess Voice level 3-4	Classroom Voice level 0-2
Be Respectful	• Calm body • Use kind & respectful language	• Calm body • Use kind & respectful language	• Calm body • Use kind & respectful language • Respect learning	• Calm body • Use kind & respectful language • Respect privacy	• Calm body • Use kind & respectful language • Stay in assigned space	• Safe body • Use kind & respectful language	• Calm body • Use kind & respectful language • Stay in personal space
Be Responsible	• Walk on the right side directly to destination • Walk in single file line	• Clean up after yourself • Walking feet	• Appropriate use of materials • Clean up after yourself	• Go, flush, wash, leave • Clean up after yourself	• Clean up after yourself	• Line up quickly, quietly, directly and in correct line	• Ready to learn • Appropriate use of materials • Follow directions
Be Safe	• Walking feet • Eyes watching • Hands, feet & objects to self	• Eat own food • Hands, feet, & objects to self	• Hands, feet, & objects to self	• Hands, feet, & objects to self • Stay in personal space	• Hands, feet & objects to self • Follow equipment expectations	• Hands, feet, & objects to self	• Hands, feet & objects to self

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 Qmlativ/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. Communication regarding low meal balances will also be sent via ParentSquare.

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. Students should arrive no earlier than 8:40 AM as staff supervision begins at that time. This helps ensure all students are safely supervised while on campus. 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. Regular attendance supports academic growth, classroom participation, and strong school routines. 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. Extended absences will only be approved if your student has not had absences totaling more than 18 days (including the absence you are requesting).

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. These procedures help ensure student safety and allow us to accurately account for all students throughout the school day.

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 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. Advance notice allows staff to communicate changes clearly and helps ensure students arrive safely at their intended destination. Calling before 2:30 PM is best. This will eliminate any confusion on your child's part and will ensure that he/she arrives safely at his/her destination. 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 every bus ride to be safe, respectful and enjoyable for all students. 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.

Following bus expectations helps create a positive experience for everyone. 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: School closures and/or delays due to inclement weather will be communicated to families via ParentSquare and posted on the district website and social media pages. We also provide this information to local media, though we cannot control what they elect to do with it. In some cases, modified bus routes will need to be implemented. If so, the district will include that information in their communication to families.

The Lynden School District encourages families and staff to use their best judgement when traveling to and from school on inclement weather days.

BICYCLE/SCOOTER RIDERS and WALKERS

Students are permitted to ride their bicycles and scooters 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 are required to dismount and walk their bike/scooter once they arrive on campus.

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. You may find the permission slip on [Parentsquare](#)

Please click the below link to review the district policy on E-Bikes and Personal Mobility Devices.

[E-Bike and Personal Mobility Devices on School Property](#)

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. Keeping the pick-up and drop-off lane clear helps maintain traffic flow and student safety during busy arrival and dismissal times. 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

To minimize classroom interruptions and maximize instructional time, students may use school phones for urgent needs with staff permission. The office staff will make every effort to deliver urgent messages from parents to students. 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

To help ensure all students feel included, we ask that invitations, gifts, and party items be distributed outside of school. 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.

Because our programs are designed for enrolled students, we generally discourage visits from non-enrolled children during the school day.

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 we strongly encourage all families to participate, as conferences provide valuable opportunities to celebrate growth and discuss student goals.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

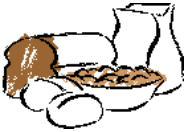
A list of [student supplies](#) are posted on the website indicating the items teachers ask students to furnish for the following school year.

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 2026-27

	<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

To minimize distractions, protect instructional time, and maintain a safe learning environment, certain items should remain at home.

Skateboards, roller skates, in-line skates, wheelies, radios, headphones, video games, trading cards and toys, toy guns, knives, (and any other toy that resembles a weapon), cleated shoes, baseball bats and hard balls, golf balls, gum, energy drinks, soda, and all telecommunication devices (watches, phones, ipads, etc.) are not allowed at school.

Students in grades TK-5 are discouraged from bringing telecommunication devices to school. If they are brought to school, telecommunication devices (such as cell phones and smart watches) are to be kept in backpacks at all times. Students who violate telecommunication expectations will be required to check them in with the front office until the end of the school day. Keeping devices stored during the school day helps students remain engaged in learning and social interactions. See LSD Board Policy 3245 for more detailed information regarding Telecommunication Devices.

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 because 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.

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 asked to include student 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:

Evacuation, Secure, Hold, Lockdown, and Shelter in Place drills are necessary for the safety of students and staff. Students are continually taught and reminded of Fisher Elementary safety drill procedures. Regular practice helps students and staff respond calmly and confidently in an emergency.

ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH

When students are healthy and ready to learn, everyone benefits. These guidelines help reduce the spread of illness and support student well-being.

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. This guideline aligns with public health recommendations and helps protect the health of our school community.

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. This guideline aligns with public health recommendations and helps protect the health of our school community.

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. This guideline aligns with public health recommendations and helps protect the health of our school community.

Head lice: If head lice are discovered, the parent will be notified. Information will be 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 remaining pages include required language prescribed by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI):

Our School Protects Students from Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB)

We strive to make our school a safe and inclusive environment 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 explains what HIB is, what to do when you see or experience it, and how our school responds to it.

What is HIB?

State law (RCW 28A.600.477(5)(b)(i)) defines HIB 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 status) 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 often involves one student having, or appearing to have, more power than another student. While HIB often appears as repeated behaviors, it is important to take single serious incidents seriously. It usually happens more than once or is very likely to happen again. HIB is against the law in our schools.

HIB policy only applies to actions between students. It does not cover harassment, intimidation, or bullying of an employee, volunteer, parent/legal guardian, or community member.

How can I make a report about HIB?

Talk to any school staff member, start with whoever you feel most comfortable with, such as a teacher, counselor, coach, or other school staff. You can report HIB by telling school staff in person or in writing (written reports can be made in your home language; please ask your school or district for support with translation). You can make your report anonymously/without giving your name or confidentially (asking that your name not be shared with other students or parents/caregivers involved). No student will be disciplined based only on an anonymous or confidential report.

If a staff member learns about, sees, or hears HIB happening, they must act quickly to stop the behavior(s) and keep it or them from happening again. Our district also has a HIB Compliance Officer (Tim Metz, Director of Student Services metzt@lynden.wednet.edu, 360-354-4443) who helps prevent and respond to HIB.

What happens after I make a report about HIB?

When you report HIB, school staff must act quickly to stop the behavior and prevent it from happening again. If you and the school agree the problem is resolved, then no further action may be needed. But, if you feel that you or someone you know is facing HIB that is unresolved, severe, or keeps happening, you should ask for an official HIB investigation by completing an [Incident Reporting Form](#).

The school must also make sure that students who report HIB are not treated badly for speaking up. This is called retaliation, and it is not allowed.

What is the investigation process?

The HIB investigation begins if you submit the [HIB Incident Report Form](#), and the incident meets the definition of HIB toward a student. When you submit the Incident Reporting Form, the HIB Compliance Officer or the staff member leading the investigation must notify the families of the students involved that a complaint was received. They must make sure a prompt and thorough investigation takes place. The investigation is usually finished within five school days. If it takes longer, the school will keep you updated, generally once a week, until it is done.

When the investigation is complete, the HIB Compliance Officer or the staff member leading the investigation must share the results with you within two school days.

This response should include:

- A summary of what the investigation found
- A decision about whether the HIB was substantiated (found to have happened)
- Any steps the school will take to address the problem
- Clear information about how you can appeal the decision

If HIB is confirmed, the school will address it.

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

For the student named as the “targeted student” in a complaint:

If you disagree with the school district’s decision, you may appeal. To appeal, send a written request asking the superintendent (or the person they’ve assigned) to review the investigation. They will send you a written decision.

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

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

What information may I have about other students?

Student privacy laws limit what the school can tell you about any intervention or discipline given to another student. You will be told whether HIB was found to have happened and that steps were taken, even if the details of those steps impacting all students involved cannot be shared.

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](#).

How do I make a HIB complaint about a staff member?

This process is for concerns about one student harassing, intimidating, or bullying another student. If your concern is about a staff member’s behavior, ask your school for information on how to report it.

Our School Stands Against Discrimination

Discrimination can happen when someone is treated differently or unfairly because of a **protected status**, including their race, ethnicity, color, national origin, immigration or citizenship status, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, homelessness, religion, creed, disability, neurodivergence, 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 behavior that is threatening, harmful, or humiliating. It happens when the behavior is based on a student’s protected status and is serious enough to create a hostile environment. A **hostile environment** is created when behavior 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 3210P](#), visit [3000 – Students – Lynden School District](#)

What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment is unwelcome behavior or communication that is sexual in nature and seriously 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 accept unwelcome sexual behavior or communication to receive something in return, such as a better grade or a place on a sports team.

Examples of sexual harassment include:

- Pressuring a person for sexual actions or favors.
- Unwelcome sexual touching.
- Written, graphic, or electronic messages that are sexual in nature.
- Sharing sexually explicit texts, emails, or pictures.
- Making sexual jokes, spreading sexual rumors, or making suggestive comments.
- Physical violence, including rape and sexual assault.

Our school does not discriminate based on sex. We prohibit sex discrimination in all education programs, activities, and employment, as required by Title IX and state law.

To review the district's Sexual Harassment Policy [3205](#) and Procedure [3205P](#), visit [3000 – Students – Lynden School District](#)

What should my school do about discriminatory and sexual harassment?

When a school learns about possible discriminatory harassment or sexual harassment, it must investigate and take steps to stop the unwanted behavior. The school must address any effects of the harassment on the student at school, including eliminating the hostile environment, and prevent the harassment from happening 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 to report your concerns, ask questions, or learn more about how to resolve your concerns. If English isn't your first language, you can request an interpreter or prepare the complaint in your language. If you have a disability and need accommodations to make a complaint, let the school know your disability needs.

Concerns about discrimination:

Civil Rights Coordinator: Tim Metz, Director of Student Services, (516 Main St., Lynden, WA 98264, metzt@lynden.wednet.edu, 360-354-4443)

Concerns about sex discrimination, including sexual harassment:

Title IX Coordinator: Tim Metz, Director of Student Services, (516 Main St., Lynden, WA 98264, metzt@lynden.wednet.edu, 360-354-4443)

Concerns about disability discrimination:

Section 504 Coordinator: Tim Metz, Director of Student Services, (516 Main St., Lynden, WA 98264, metzt@lynden.wednet.edu, 360-354-4443)

Concerns about discrimination based on gender identity:

Gender-Inclusive Schools Coordinator: David VanderYacht, Superintendent, (516 Main St., Lynden, WA 98264, vanderyachtd@lynden.wednet.edu, 360-354-4443)

To **submit a written complaint**, describe the behavior or incident that you believe may be discriminatory. 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 so the school district can investigate it promptly. You must submit your complaint within one year of the behavior 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 will make sure your complaint is investigated promptly and thoroughly. The investigation will be completed within 30 calendar days unless you agree to a different timeline. If exceptional circumstances require more time, the Civil Rights Coordinator will notify you in writing and tell you the expected date for the response.

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

- A summary of the investigation results.
- A determination of whether the school district failed to comply with civil rights laws.
- Any corrective actions or remedies that are needed.
- Information about how to appeal the decision.

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

If you disagree with the decision about your complaint, you may appeal the decision to the School Board. You may then file a complaint with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). For more information about this process, including important deadlines, see the school 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 be discrimination if it is based on a protected status. 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 address your concerns.

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, whether or not they have legally changed their name.
- Update students' gender designation so they accurately reflected in school records.
- Provide students with access to restrooms and locker rooms that align with their gender identity.
- Ensure students can participate in sports, physical education classes, field trips, and overnight trips consistent with their gender identity.
- Keep students' health and education information private and confidential.
- Allow students to wear clothing that reflects their gender identity and enforce dress codes without regard to a student's gender or perceived gender.
- Create an inclusive, respectful environment and 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 [3211P](#), visit [3000 – Students – Lynden School District](#). If you have questions or concerns, please contact the Gender-Inclusive Schools Coordinator: David VanderYacht, Superintendent, (516 Main St., Lynden, WA 98264, vanderyachtd@lynden.wednet.edu, 360-354-4443)

For concerns about discrimination or discriminatory harassment based on gender identity or gender expression, please see the information above on page 15.

Our School is Committed to Students and State Law

Students have the right to learn in schools that follow state law and protect their rights. Willful noncompliance happens when a school district leader or school board member does something—or fails to do something—that they knew, or reasonably should have known, would violate state law. Under ESHB 1296, OSPI is responsible for investigating complaints about willful noncompliance and working to find fair solutions.

These laws include requirements related to:

- Civil rights and nondiscrimination (RCWs 28A.640 and 28A.642)
- Harassment, intimidation, or bullying (RCW 28A.600.477)
- Curriculum requirements and instructional materials policies (RCWs 28A.150.230, 28A.300.475, 28A.320.170, 28A.320.230, and 28A.320.235)
- Use of restraint or isolation (RCW 28A.600.485)
- Student discipline (chapter 28A.600 RCW)

How do I make a complaint about willful noncompliance with state law?

You must first use available complaint processes to try to resolve your concern. This means the available complaint processes start with your school district, even if the school district superintendent or a school board member is the subject of your complaints. School personnel are not allowed to retaliate for making a formal complaint.

If no available complaint processes are available, you must check OSPI's website for other OSPI complaint procedures at [How to File a Complaint](#), and follow any applicable processes. If none exist, or you have completed all other processes, you must send written notice to the district superintendent at least 30 calendar days before filing a complaint with OSPI.

Complaints to OSPI must be submitted within 30 calendar days after a final decision in the local complaint process, when one applies. The complaint must be in writing and include enough information to describe the concern and the actions or failures to act that may be willful noncompliance. You may send the complaint by mail, email, or hand delivery to OSPI.

When OSPI receives a complaint that meets the requirements for investigation, it will open an investigation. OSPI will send you written notice of the allegations under investigation. After the investigation is complete, OSPI will issue written findings to you and your school. These findings will state whether noncompliance occurred and may require the school to take actions to fix the issue.

Who else can help with HIB, Discrimination, or Willful Noncompliance Concerns?

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

All reports must start locally at the school or district level, even if the complaint involves the school or school district. School personnel should not retaliate against students or families for making a formal complaint.

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, as well as complaints alleging willful noncompliance with state law under ESHB 1296.

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

OSPI Office of Legal Affairs (For more details on the willful noncompliance complaint process)

- Website: ospi.k12.wa.us/educator-support/educator-conduct/state-law-noncompliance-complaints
- Email: OLA@k12.wa.us

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

The Washington State Office of the Education Ombuds works with families, communities, and schools to help solve problems so every student can fully participate and thrive in Washington's K-12 public schools. OEO provides informal conflict resolution, coaching, facilitation, and training on family and community engagement and systems advocacy.

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

U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR)

The U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) enforces federal nondiscrimination laws in public schools, including those that prohibit discrimination based on sex, race, color, national origin, disability, and age. OCR also has a discrimination complaint process.

- Website: www.ed.gov/
- Email: ocr@ed.gov
- Phone: 800-421-3481

