

Lynden Academy
K-12 and Home Connect
Parent & Student Handbook 2026-27



ALTERNATIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCE (ALE)

A Parent Partnership Program
of the Lynden School District

Contact Info

School Phone 360-354-6675

Office & Classes 1986 Main Street, Suite A
Lynden, WA 98264

Website la.lynden.wednet.edu

Office Hours Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Principal
Ellie Meenk
Meenke@lynden.wednet.edu

Office Staff

Registrar
Wendy Neff
NeffW@lynden.wednet.edu

Parent Coordinator/Secretary
Sonja Haehnel
HaehnelS@lynden.wednet.edu

Finances & Library
Heidi Telling
TellingH@lynden.wednet.edu

High School Advisor
Heidi Covington
CovingtonH@lynden.wednet.edu

Attendance
LAC-Attendance@lynden.wednet.edu

Weekly Contact
LAC-Weeklycontact@lynden.wednet.edu

Teaching & Support Staff

Abigail Kope

KopeA@lynden.wednet.edu

Ashley Baer

BaerA@lynden.wednet.edu

Barb Watson

WatsonB@lynden.wednet.edu

Belinda Day

DayB@lynden.wednet.edu

Bridget Lebel

LebelB@lynden.wednet.edu

Heidi Petersen

PetersenH@lynden.wednet.edu

Jean-Jacques Tetu

TetuJ@lynden.wednet.edu

Julie Wyatt

WyattJ@lynden.wednet.edu

Kaitlin Jorgensen

JorgensenK@lynden.wednet.edu

Karen Jilk

JilkK@lynden.wednet.edu

Kari Olson

OlsonKa@lynden.wednet.edu

Katlyn Baker

BakerK@lynden.wednet.edu

Katie Lindstrom-Vis

lindstromk@lynden.wednet.edu

Kyle Hobbs

HobbsK@Lynden.wednet.edu

Lea Kope

KopeL@lynden.wednet.edu

Lona Smit

SmitL@lynden.wednet.edu

Marj Hendricks

HendricksM@lynden.wednet.edu

Mia Leland

LelandM@lynden.wednet.edu

Peter Binskin

BinskinP@lynden.wednet.edu

Sarah Farlow
FarlowS@lynden.wednet.edu

Scott Noteboom
NoteboomS@lynden.wednet.edu

Tina Miller
Millert@lynden.wednet.edu

Vanessa Gunderson
GundersonV@lynden.wednet.edu

WHO WE ARE

We are the K-12 Alternative Learning Experience (ALE) Program of the Lynden School District, and we are dedicated to assisting local homeschooling families in the education of their children. We provide support through on-site classes, group activities, community events, workshops for home educators, and support from certificated teachers. We have a few options available in our program:

- Middle School & High School Classes (6th-12th Grade)
- Elementary Enrichment Classes (Kindergarten-5th Grade)
- Electives (K-8) - Students can choose to participate in elective classes that take place onsite on Fridays.
- Lynden Academy's Home Connect (Remote Learning) - students communicate weekly with a certificated teacher on their learning plan at home with parental support.

OUR MISSION

The purpose of Lynden Academy is to partner with families who operate best in a non-traditional school setting; to meet individual needs through appropriate rigor; and to prepare our students to function as successful and responsible citizens.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Students enrolled in Lynden Academy meet with certificated teachers on campus one or more days a week, depending on student's grade level and family choices. Staff and families work together to create a Student Learning Plan (SLP) for both home and at school. This serves as a map for the student's learning each year. Parents are actively involved in Lynden Academy, overseeing their student's education as well as volunteering where needs arise. Parents have access to the Lynden Academy Library where they can borrow curriculum and resources to support learning at home. Families maintain a planner detailing learning, collect evidence of learning, track their student's hours and write goals for their student's academic achievement with the assistance of a certificated teacher.

STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

Home-based Instruction and enrollment in an ALE are different educational models. Homebased instruction includes the following: - Instruction is developed and supervised by the parent or guardian as authorized under RCW 28A.200 and 28A.225.010. - The parents have filed an annual Declaration of Intent with the district. - Students are neither enrolled nor eligible for graduation through a public high school unless they meet all district and state graduation requirements. - Students are not subject to the rules and regulations governing public school, including course, graduation, and assessment requirements.

The public school is under no obligation to provide instruction or instructional materials, or to supervise the student's education.

Alternative Learning Experience (ALE) includes the following: - Is a public education enrollment option authorized under WAC 392-550. - Subject to all state and federal rules and regulations governing public education. - Curriculum and instructional materials meet district standards and are free from sectarian control or influence. - Learning experiences are: Supervised, monitored, assessed, and evaluated by a certificated teacher. May be planned in collaboration with the student, parent, and teacher. Provided via a Written Student Learning Plan (WSLP). Provided in whole, or part, outside the regular classroom.

ENROLLMENT

HOW TO ENROLL IN THE PROGRAM

Families wishing to enroll in Lynden Academy should fill out our interest form found on our website. After filling in the form, families will be contacted by a staff member. Staff will help them with the next steps. Admission is dependent on understanding program responsibilities and subject to limited space and available staffing.

REGISTRATION

Registration is done on the Lynden School District Website. Online enrollment needs to be completed, and all necessary paperwork signed and turned in, the WSLP needs to be complete, and space availability must be determined prior to attending classes at Lynden Academy or participating in Home Connect.

WITHDRAWING FROM THE PROGRAM

A student can be withdrawn from Lynden Academy at the discretion of the parents. To withdraw from the program, the parents must do the following:

- Notify Registrar
- Return all non-consumable materials and unused consumable materials within 30 days of the withdrawal.
- Inform the resident school district of the change and complete appropriate paperwork. Sign another "Declaration of Intent to Provide Home-Based Instruction" with the resident school district (Revised Code of WA, Chapter 28A.225) or enroll in another public school.

FAMILY INFORMATION

SCHOOL CLOSURE/LATE START INFORMATION

Lynden Academy will observe Lynden School District's school closures or late starts due to inclement weather or emergencies. Information about school closures and/or delays due to inclement weather are communicated to families through ParentSquare, the district website, and district social media pages. This information is also provided to local media, though we cannot control what they elect to do with it.

In some cases, modified bus routes may need to be implemented. If so, the district will include that information in their communication to families.

The safety of our students and families is our top priority. If schools are open but road conditions make it unsafe for you to travel to school, we encourage parents and students to use their own discretion.

MEDICAL CONDITIONS

If a student has a serious medical condition and/or needs medication administered at school, a medication release form and/or health condition form must be filled out in the main office.

ANNUAL ASSESSMENTS

Lynden Academy takes the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) – a state assessment per WAC 392-121-182, Sec (9) (a). The SBA is administered each spring.

Lynden Academy also administers STAR screeners. This is a quick assessment used as a tool for both Lynden Academy Teachers and home educators to help determine the best course of instruction in the areas of math and reading.

DRIVING SAFETY

When driving, please be **extremely cautious** in and around the school. The yellow zone in front of the building is a loading zone and parking is not allowed there.

ARRIVAL

We do not open our doors until 5 minutes before classes start. The yellow zone in front of the building is a loading zone and parking is not allowed there. If you need to walk your student up to the door, please park in the designated parking area.

DISMISSAL

K-5 students are dismissed to parents, by a staff member in a pickup line from the glass doors near the RAC/Gym at 2:00 pm. If your student's schedule is unique to them, please pick them up near the entry. If someone other than yourself will be picking up your student, please notify the office.

6th-12th Grade students exit from the main LA entrance at 2:00 pm. Please let the office know if someone other than yourself will be picking up your student.

PARENTS ON CAMPUS/VOLUNTEERS

Lynden Academy has an area for parents to connect and visit with each other. You are welcome in this area during school hours. Please help us to keep this area clean and tidy. Please remember to check in at the front office and wear a "Visitor" badge while onsite.

Parents are encouraged to volunteer in many ways: lunch supervision (most needed), classroom help, bulletin boards, special activities, set up/take down, etc. All volunteers are required to fill out a Volunteer Packet. They must also sign in and wear a volunteer tag while on campus.

ATTENDANCE & WEEKLY CONTACT

ABSCENCES/TARDIES

Regular attendance is necessary for students to experience the full benefits of Lynden Academy. Failure to make weekly contact or attend classes will impede your student's ability to attend Lynden Academy. If a student is absent for any reason (including pre-planned trips), the parent must notify the office (360) 354-6675 and report that absence to our attendance secretary. You may also send her an email at LAC-Attendance@lynden.wednet.edu

Students who arrive at class 15 minutes late will be considered absent and will require an excuse.

Attendance is incredibly important to our Lynden Academy onsite program. If a student has been absent for 25% or more of their class days in any given semester, they may lose their onsite status and be moved to the Home Connect Program.

WEEKLY CONTACT

If your student does not attend any onsite classes Monday-Thursday, a teacher from Lynden Academy will reach out to make weekly contact. This is a state requirement to be enrolled in our program.

Kindergarten to 5th grade students must complete all at home hours if they are absent. Middle and High School, students are expected to make up all missed assignments and hours when they are absent.

- *One missing week: we inform you of the rules about missing contact via email.*
- *Two consecutive weeks or three cumulative missing weeks: you are now unsatisfactory and will attend a meeting with our principal to make a plan for success called a plan of improvement.*
- *Four Consecutive or five cumulative missing weeks: you are unenrolled from our program, and we work to place you in another program.*

EXTENDED TRAVEL AND ENROLLMENT

With approval of the principal, students may remain in the program for up to two weeks while they are on extended trips. During the extended absence, weekly contact with the students SLPC (certificated teacher) is required.

It is important to get approval for extended travel from the LA principal at least two weeks in advance.

SICKNESS

If your student is unable to attend school due to illness, contact our Attendance Secretary at LAC-Attendance@lynden.wednet.edu or at 360-354-6675 option #2.

Written Student Learning Plan & Monthly Progress Reporting

WRITTEN STUDENT LEARNING PLAN (WSLP)

Every student enrolled in Lynden Academy must have a Written Student Learning Plan. This is the roadmap that guides the student's education and is developed by the certificated teacher in collaboration with the parent and the student. The plan includes academic goals and objectives specific to the student that correspond to the Washington State Learning Standards, as well as a course description, minimum hours, and services essential to meeting the goals. The learning plan is a flexible, working document that can be changed to meet the needs of the students while continuing to meet state requirements. WSLPs must be completed and approved by a certificated teacher before a student is considered enrolled in the program.

Schedule or Learning Plan Changes

- If you want to change your schedule you MUST tell the registrar or High School Counselor. To drop courses onsite or offsite, you must fill out *the request to change schedule form* in the offices of LA. Always double check your Skyward account and make certain your learning plan is accurate.

REQUIRED NUMBER OF CLASSES/HOURS

The state requires the below classes for a full-time (K-8) student. For High School class and credit requirements, please see the HS Advisor or Principal. Students may participate in many other activities that could be elective classes, but most activities can be added to these categories.

Required Number of Offsite Classes:

K-8 (a combination of off and onsite classes):

1. Language Arts: communication, reading and writing
2. Math
3. Science
4. Social studies
5. Health and Physical Education

9-12 Students should have no more than 6 courses on their learning plan, unless they are participating in credit recovery (11th or 12th grade). These are a combination of their onsite and offsite courses. This plan will be developed base on their credit needs towards graduation.

Full-time student instructional hours:

Grades K-12 28 hours per week minimum

MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORTING

A Microsoft Form will be used to facilitate conversations between teachers, parents and students about home-based learning each month. All families will become familiar with this form and use it on a regular basis. Each student will also

be assigned a Written Student Learning Plan Consultant (WSLPC) who will oversee the Written Student Learning Plan (WSLP). Our Parent Coordinator and/or your WSLPC will be happy to answer questions and concerns about the use of Canvas and monthly reporting.

Parent/Student will:

- Document student Monthly Progress once a month between the 15th and 20th (except for the months of December or June when it could open earlier in the month to accommodate for breaks) on all courses.
- Read teacher comments on monthly progress (sent via email).
- 6th-12th Grade Students who come onsite will complete this in MS Elective (6th-8th) or HS Elective (9th-12th). If your student missed class the day it is completed, it is their responsibility to get it turned in.
- K-5 and Offsite Students/Parents will need to complete this task at home with their certificated teacher's support (WSLPC).

Lynden Academy local expectations for satisfactory progress.

- Students must make adequate progress in all their classes. They must be passing 50% or more of their courses onsite and offsite as determined by their certificated teachers.
- Students must complete their assignments. They must not have excessive missing assignments.
- Students must make weekly contact, every week.
- Attitudes and Behavior: students with excessive behavior issues will be given a behavior plan of improvement. If the student is unsuccessful in this plan, they may become unsatisfactory. If a student is involved in a dangerous or extreme behavior, they may be unsatisfactory prior to their behavior plan of improvement.

Lynden School Board Policy

- A. Students participating in ALE will be evaluated monthly by a certificated instructional staff, or, for students whose written student learning plans include only online classes, school-based support staff, to track student progress toward completion and to establish whether an intervention plan should be developed, in accordance with WAC 392-121- 182.
- B. The methods for determining satisfactory progress shall be outlined in the written student learning plan and may include:
 1. Progress grades;
 2. Assignment completion rates;
 3. Non-academic factors such as attendance, attitude, and behavior; and
 4. Local school expectations.

HOME CONNECT

Home Connect (Fully Remote-No Onsite Classes offered)- This option provides the support of a rich, authentic connection with a certificated teacher who will touch base weekly with the student to discuss progress towards academic goals, as well as having access to our resource library (This is not an online program) and assessments.

Weekly Contact Requirement – Students enrolled in Home Connect (Remote Learning) are required to make contact with their WSLPC **every week**. The certificated teacher will work with each family to determine a workable contact time and written student learning plan. According to WAC 392-121-182, Sec 4(b), students will have direct personal contact “for the purposes of instruction, review of assignments, testing, evaluation of student progress, or other learning activities or requirements identified in the Written Student Learning Plan (WSLP) and must at minimum include a two-way exchange of information between a certificated teacher and the student”.

Contact that occurs between the parent and the certificated teacher **does not** meet the requirement for weekly contact. The contact must be between **the student** and **teacher** but may be supported by parents.

Lynden Academy High School

Additional Requirements for High School

- Students are considered part of our Home Connect program when they have fewer than 2 onsite courses. They make mandatory weekly contact with their SLPC and their SLPC will determine their monthly progress from their weekly contact.
- All HS Students turn in their offsite work once a month at Lynden Academy. This is done around the 15th of each month. Failure to turn in their monthly work makes the student unsatisfactory in that course for that month.
- Students who do not submit their work to be graded will receive a fail “F” on their transcript in that course.
- Grades in any course are assigned by certificated staff who are employed by the Lynden School District.

Running Start

- Students in 11th and 12th grade may participate in Running Start.
- At the end of 10th grade students can sign up with their chosen institution.
- Courses can be taken at Bellingham Technical College, Whatcom Community College, or Northwest Career & Technical Academy.
- Reach out to the institution you are interested in and take their inquiry course to start the process.
- If you would like any support, please meet with Mrs. Covington.

Onsite Classes

Lynden Academy offers core classes and one elective for High School Students on Monday and Wednesday. All students must take some offsite courses to fulfill their graduation requirements.

Offsite Classes

Offsite courses are important to support graduating on time. Here are the guidelines.

1. Offsite courses must be on the learning plan and be on Skyward.
2. Students must report monthly on their offsite classes.
3. Learning plans may not include more than 6 courses (onsite and offsite courses combined).
4. While parents and students can pick from several board approved curriculums, offsite courses must follow the certificated teacher’s approved syllabus and learning targets. Please ask your SLPC (student learning plan coordinator) for the syllabus which outlines your courses.
5. All offsite core courses must be turned in at the end of each month for grading. Elective courses must be turned in at the end of each semester. Courses not turned in that are on the learning plan will earn an “I” for Incomplete. If the class work is not submitted by the last day of school in the same academic year, the “I” will be changed to an “F” for Fail.
6. If a student decides to change their offsite course, they need to indicate to the registrar and their SLPC that they are dropping the class. They must fill out a request to change schedule form in the office.
7. To check their full learning plan, please look on Skyward.

Credit Counseling, Graduation Requirements and HS & Beyond for all Lynden Academy and Home Connect Students

- Freshmen and Sophomore students must attend a credit counseling workshop in September.
- Juniors have two credit counseling workshops to help them decide on which classes to take and complete their HS and Beyond Plan.
- Seniors meet monthly during their senior year to complete their HS and Beyond plan and review credits.
- We encourage the parents to participate as well.

Grades and Credits

- Lynden Academy onsite and offsite classes are each worth a ½ credit per semester and a certificated teacher grades them.
- Credit will be granted based on completion of required work, quality of work, hours documented, and proper documentation.
- Running Start courses are graded by each institution, and they send us a transcript.
- Parents and office staff are not able to alter grades.
- Offsite courses on a student's learning plan that are not turned in by the last day of the academic year result in an F.
- Classes not on a student's learning plan are not eligible for grades and credit.

Summer Classes

- We do not support summer classes. Offsite hours may only be collected between the first and the last day of the school year, as shown on your learning plan.

High School and Beyond Plan

The High School & Beyond Plan is completed in our onsite elective class (grades 6–12). It is a state-required, seven-year process that helps students plan for life after high school and is required for graduation from LA.

Students begin their plan in 6th grade and update it each year as their goals and interests evolve. As they progress, they complete additional sections aligned with Lynden Academy's career and college readiness curriculum, working with staff to build their plan.

Lessons focus on three key questions: Who am I? What can I become? How do I get there?

Graduation

- Each senior class participates in crafting their own graduation experience within the Lynden Academy & Home Connect template.
- Seniors work with the Senior Class Coordinator all senior year to support them in graduating on time.

LYNDEN ACADEMY LIBRARY

MATERIAL & RESOURCES

Many materials & resources are available in the Lynden Academy Library. If the curriculum you are looking for is not available, a request for additional copies can be made by filling out our curriculum request form. The request form is open from August to October and again from January to March. It could take up to 4-6 weeks to receive the requested material. Curriculum needs to be district approved, educational, non-religious, supporting primary/core curriculum, connected to age level skill sets (standards) and directly supporting the Student's Written Learning Plan. All materials are the property of the Lynden School District.

LA is not able to provide all resources that a family may want for their home education experience – but will have a variety of choices that are solid educationally and have cleared the Lynden School Board's approval process.

TECHNOLOGY

SCHOOL EMAIL, USERNAME & PASSWORD

Every student has a Lynden School District email address, and it is used to log into most programs as well as any school computer. The email is made up of four parts:

1. The last two digits of your graduation year followed by
2. Your last name followed by
3. Your first initial followed by
4. @lynden.wednet.edu

Some apps only use your “username,” which is simply parts 1, 2, and 3 of your email without @lynden.wednet.edu. Your Lynden School District password is formatted as follows: L*****! In your password, the *’s will be replaced by your unique student ID (your lunch number) which is available on your printed schedule or in Skyward.

OFFICE 365

All students have access to Office 365 on their student laptops. Office 365 is a web-based version of the Microsoft suite including Word, Excel, Teams, PowerPoint, and more. To access these programs, go to www.office.com and use your school email and password.

CANVAS

Canvas is a web-based platform that provides students and families with access to important resources for each course like syllabus, assignments, readings and more. To log in, click the Canvas shortcut on the desktop of a school-issued laptop or go to lynden.instructure.com Log in using your school email and password.

SKYWARD

Skyward is where you can find grades, missing assignments and attendance. There is Family and Student Access for Skyward. If you need help with log-in information, please contact the registrar.

ONE-TO-ONE LAPTOPS

Upon request, all 6th-12th grade students can be issued a student laptop and charger. For students in K-5th grades, one laptop per family.

LOST OR DAMAGED

The Lynden School Board has adopted a laptop replacement fee for middle and high school students. There will be a \$300 fine when major damage or loss occurs by a student. Additionally, there will be a \$10 loss fee for unreturned power cords, and a \$75 fee for damaged display screens.

K-12 BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

LEAVING CAMPUS POLICY/STUDENT SUPERVISION

Once students arrive on campus in the morning, they are to stay on campus the entire day. At lunch, students must remain on the Lynden Academy campus. Vehicles and parking lots are off limits during lunch. Driving home or to town for lunch is not permitted. A Permission to Leave Campus Form is available upon request by a parent/guardian for Juniors and Seniors. Permission to Leave Campus must be approved by the principal (Permission to Leave Campus can be denied or revoked at the principal’s discretion). Students should check out at the main office if leaving campus for any reason. If they leave without permission, they are considered unsatisfactory for the month in which it occurs. Students are NOT to be in the following areas without permission or supervision:

- Parent Area
- Gym
- Foyer (West)

- Parking Lot
- Outdoor Areas
- Office Area

NON-STUDENT VISITATION

People who wish to visit Lynden Academy classrooms shall request permission from the principal with at least 24-hour notice.

BEHAVIOR

Lynden Academy uses progressive discipline to help students monitor their behavior. Depending on the severity of the issue and the frequency of their behavior, students may or may not have one or more of these options at the discretion of the school administration and their parents/guardians: a behavior plan, monthly unsatisfactory progress report, movement to Home Connect, unenrollment from program. Parents and/or guardians will always be contacted and actively participate in the discipline process.

NICOTINE

Nicotine and nicotine related devices (Juuls, e-cigarettes, vape pens or any nicotine related products) are not to be on school grounds (building, grounds and/or parking lot). This includes any student who is using them, possessing them, selling them, or participating with them in any way.

DRUGS & ALCOHOL

The use and/or distribution of any drug, alcohol or chemical on school property (building, parking lot or grounds) including any paraphernalia is prohibited. This includes any student who is using them, possessing them, selling them, or participating with them in any way.

PHYSICAL CONTACT

Students will not engage in any physical contact with staff and/or students on or around the school, regardless of intent.

VANDALISM

All acts of vandalism are prohibited. Guardians will be financially responsible for any repairs.

DRESS CODE

Students must dress in a manner that is safe and appropriate for school. Student dress will be regulated when, in the judgment of school officials, the student's dress presents:

1. A health or safety hazard including possible association or reference to a gang or hate group;
2. A material and substantial disruption of the educational process;
3. Lewd, profane, sexual, violent, drug-, tobacco-, or alcohol-related, or hate symbols; or
4. Visible undergarments or private parts.

Any student with clothing that violates these prohibitions, or which would reasonably intimidate another student, will be sent home and asked to correct their attire before being allowed to return to class.

Cell Phone/Electronics Policy

Personal technology can support learning and communication, but it can also distract from building strong, positive relationships. Classrooms should foster discussion, critical thinking, and a sense of belonging. To create a safer, more focused environment, LA is updating its cell phone and personal electronics policy.

During class, all phones, earbuds, headphones, smartwatches, and other devices must be silenced and kept completely out of sight. Any visible device—whether in use or not—will be a violation.

Staff will confiscate visible electronics without warnings. Students are expected to hand over devices promptly so learning can continue. Confiscated items will be sent to the office and returned at the end of the day. Repeated violations may lead to progressive consequences.

Teachers may allow devices for academic use when appropriate, and students may request permission for emergencies. Electronics are still allowed during passing periods, lunch, before/after school, and as required by health, 504, or IEP plans.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Cheating is seeking to obtain (or aiding another to obtain) credit or improved scores through the use of any unauthorized or deceptive means. Plagiarism, unauthorized study aids (math apps, ChatGPT or other AI language models) and buying or selling homework are some, but not all examples of cheating. When students are involved in any of these activities, they will meet with their parents and the teacher or principal for an appeals process. The first instance of this results in a 50% and an option to resubmit your work for a 65%. A second offence results in an unchanging 0%.

SKATEBOARDS, SKATES, ETC. NOT PERMITTED

Due to safety and insurance constraints, the Lynden School District has prohibited the use of skateboards, scooters, skates, rollerblades, skate shoes, etc. Bicycles are allowed only as transportation to and from campus during school hours.

DON'T BORROW, SOLICIT OR GAMBLE AT SCHOOL

Students are not permitted to borrow or solicit money from other students, staff, or the office for non-school related causes. No gambling.

RIGHT TO APPEAL PROCESS

If a student is accused of one of these incidents noted above, he/she will be afforded an appeal process that is outlined in Board Policy 3241.

THE RULES APPLY TO SCHOOL SPONSORED ACTIVITIES

Rules and policies for behavior and dress apply to students who attend any school-sponsored activity.

RESOURCES

Information about Student Rights and Responsibilities may be found at

<https://lynden.wednet.edu/school-board/board-policies-and-procedures/3000-students/>.

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 MetzT@lynden.wednet.edu, 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 Policy [3207] and Procedure [3207P]. 3207/3207P — Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying of Students

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 3210/3210P — Nondiscrimination

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.

Policy 3205 / Procedure 3205P — Sexual Harassment of Students Prohibited

Policy 5011 / Procedure 5011P — Sexual Harassment of District Staff Prohibited

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 Street, Lynden, WA 98264
MetzT@lynden.wednet.edu
360-354-4443, Ext. 3416

Concerns about sex discrimination, including sexual harassment:

Title IX Coordinator: Tim Metz
Director of Student Services
516 Main Street, Lynden, WA 98264
MetzT@lynden.wednet.edu
360-354-4443, Ext. 3416

Concerns about disability discrimination:

Section 504 Coordinator: Tim Metz
Director of Student Services
516 Main Street, Lynden, WA 98264
MetzT@lynden.wednet.edu
360-354-4443, Ext. 3416

Concerns about discrimination based on gender identity:

Gender-Inclusive Schools Coordinator: David VanderYacht
Superintendent
516 Main Street, Lynden, WA 98264
VanderYachtD@lynden.wednet.edu
360-354-4443, Ext. 3414

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 and Procedure or if you have questions or concerns about gender/sex discrimination, the primary Lynden School District board policy is Policy 3210 / Procedure 3210P — Nondiscrimination. If the issue involves gender identity or gender expression, 3210/3210P is also the key nondiscrimination policy or contact the Gender-Inclusive Schools Coordinator:

David VanderYacht

Superintendent

516 Main Street, Lynden, WA 98264

VanderYachtD@lynden.wednet.edu

360-354-4443, Ext. 3414

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