We, as a community, make a collective commitment to Bellingham's children. We will empower every child to discover and develop a passion, contribute to their community, and achieve a fulfilling and productive life.  

We collectively commit that our students are cared for and respected, and that they will graduate from our schools prepared for success. All students will be exceptional in their own way, with strong character, a passion for learning, and ready for the widest range of educational and vocational options to support a diversity of life choices.

We believe:

- all children should be loved,
- the whole child is important,
- every child can learn at high levels,
- early learning and development are critical,
- learning is lifelong and essential to a high quality of life,
- compassion and service build community,
- teaching children to do their best involves self-reflection and reaching higher,
- diversity enhances a strong and healthy community, and
- together we achieve more than alone.
We develop students and graduates who are:

- readers and writers,
- scientists and mathematicians,
- historians and global thinkers,
- artists and performers,
- artisans and technicians,
- multilingual readers and speakers,
- skilled users of technology and information,
- leaders, collaborators and team players,
- dependable and responsible people,
- confident individuals who continuously challenge themselves,
- respectful and compassionate humans,
- honest and ethical citizens who act with integrity,
- healthy, active individuals,
- critical thinkers and problem solvers,
- effective communicators,
- innovators and creators, and
- well-rounded community members engaged with the broader world.

We will accomplish this through:

- **Innovation and Flexibility**
  - At all levels, but with particular attention to our middle and high schools, we promote innovation and flexibility to ensure we are meeting the needs of all students.

- **Early Childhood Education**
  - We invest in a strong early childhood (prenatal to third grade) program because of its powerful long-term return for our students and community.

- **Great Teaching with Strong Support**
  - High quality instruction occurs in every classroom, every day, resulting in high levels of learning. This is supported by purposeful and ongoing professional development of all staff and effective leadership throughout the organization.

- **Student, Family, and Community Engagement**
  - Authentic partnerships are essential in order to deliver upon our promise. We actively seek input from and work together with all stakeholders to cultivate both existing and new partnerships.

Strategic Planning

The Bellingham Promise emerged from an extensive community engagement process with staff at all 22 schools, the Student and Parent Advisory Committees, the Bellingham Public Schools Foundation Board, employee association leaders, and a variety of other parent and community groups. Thousands of comments were collected at meetings and through an online survey. Themes were identified from those comments and that feedback helped build The Promise. The Promise reflects our School Board’s policy governance policies, which set desired outcomes for current students and graduates. The School Board meets regularly with parent, community and staff groups through linkages to gather additional input on our future direction. Every school year, school and district leaders use input to develop a work plan called Priorities for Progress that support the five key strategies of The Promise. This is also a living document that is continuously updated and improved based on feedback. It helps drive resource allocation through our budget process. Staff are currently working on how to share and gather evidence and measures of The Bellingham Promise in action with an emphasis on the whole child.

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