

LEAGUE OF DEMOCRATIC SCHOOLS (LODS)



A program of the Institute for Educational Inquiry involving elementary, middle, and high schools in various configurations located in three geographic areas: Western Region, Rocky Mountain/Plains States Region, and Eastern Region.

BACKGROUND

The League of Democratic Schools, a project of the Institute for Educational Inquiry, began in 2004 with 12 charter member schools. Presently, there are 21 schools engaged in efforts to model **What Schools Are For**, based on over 40 years of research and inquiry around schools and schooling.

PURPOSE OF THE LEAGUE

- To promote professional development focused on the growth of students as individuals who are successful members of a democratic society; and
- To help preserve schools which successfully advance the Agenda for Education in a Democracy (AED). Please see the Institute for Educational Inquiry website at <http://www.ieieseattle.org/>.

CHARACTERISTICS OF LEAGUE SCHOOLS (all League schools strive to be exemplars in the following characteristics)

- **Democratic Purpose**—developing in young people the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for successful participation in our nation’s social and political democracy;
- **Student Achievement**—students are successful academically and socially;
- **Ongoing Professional Development**—members of the school community engage in continuous learning;
- **Approaches to Learning**—schools use a variety of approaches to learning, including engaging students with parents and other adults in the community; and
- **Personalization**—schools deliberately personalize the relationships among students, teachers, parents, and administrators by faculty members gathering as a group for dialogue and by other arrangements that facilitate communication among the members of the school community.

BENEFITS FOR SCHOOLS

Overall: Professional Development, Renewal, and Preservation

Specific:

- **Capacity building** related to the school's vision, core values, and renewal;
- **Facilitated sharing of strategies and ideas** being used among members of the League for:
 - **Integrating democracy in the curriculum**
 - **Integrating democratic practices in schools**
 - **Engaging the school faculty as a group for dialogue**
 - **Facilitating communication among the members of the school community**
 - **Engaging, building, and/or strengthening engagement between community members and professional school employees, and external support agencies;**
- **Professional development** provided for teachers and administrators to expand knowledge and strengthen connections between classroom practice and the **Agenda for Education in a Democracy**;
- **Research/Inquiry** is conducted and shared on successful practices;
- **Leadership development** that expands knowledge and skills for effective leadership that is consistent with the **Agenda for Education in a Democracy**;
- **Collaboration and supportive relationships** in problem solving, professional development activities, research, conference presentations, and grant getting to support initiatives;
- **Materials and expert help** are provided to assist members of the school community with the work, as well as facilitation of mutual assistance among members of the League;
- **Local support** is strengthened through communication and collaboration;
- **Site visitations and networking** with the national networks that are associated with the Institute for Educational Inquiry;
- **Forum for support and sustainability** is provided; and
- **Recognition** nationally.

CONTACT:

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