

Lackland

Independent School District



District of Innovation Plan
2017-2022

DRAFT



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Lackland Independent School District Local Innovation Plan

I. Introduction

The 84th Legislative Session passed House Bill 1842, allowing Texas public school districts to become Districts of Innovation and thus permitting exemption from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code. Lackland ISD seeks to become a District of Innovation, in an effort to transform systemic improvement to better serve and accommodate the diverse and unique needs of military-connected stakeholders, including students, staff, parents and community members. The distinction allows the District increased local control over District operations to improve the quality of services benefiting all stakeholders.

A petition to pursue the development of a local innovation plan was initiated by the District Education Improvement Council (DEIC) on February 6, 2017. On February 9, 2017, Dr. Roper held a district meeting to share information regarding the district of innovation process and the district's intention to seek permission from the Lackland ISD Board of Trustees to pursue designation as a district of innovation. The petition initiated by DEIC was presented to the Lackland ISD Board of Trustees with an 87.5% in-favor response on February 21, 2017. In turn, a resolution to initiate the process of Lackland ISD becoming a District of Innovation was adopted by the Board of Trustees on February 21, 2017.

On February 21, 2017, the Lackland ISD Board of Trustees appointed the District Education Improvement Council amended to include additional stakeholders to serve as the District Innovation Plan Committee. The team was assigned the role of developing a cohesive local innovative plan to improve the outcomes of all stakeholders. The District Innovation Plan Committee held a planning session on February 23, 2017, to discuss and develop the draft local innovation plan. The District Innovation Plan Committee considered multiple data points in an effort to construct a local innovation plan to bring about systemic change in Lackland ISD.

The Lackland ISD Local Innovation Plan is for five years from the date of Board of Trustee approval, beginning in the 2017-2018 school year and ending in the 2021-2022 school year. The local innovation plan may be terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees at any time in accordance with the law. With the exception of the laws applying to the school calendar, each law proposed for exemption shall continue to apply until local policies are adopted that implement the local innovation plan. The District Innovation Plan Committee will monitor the effectiveness of the local innovation plan and provide updates and/or necessary modifications to the Board of Trustees on a regular basis.



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II. Timeline

Timeline	Activity / Task	Due Date
February	District Education Improvement Committee discusses rules and process for becoming an Innovation District.	February 6, 2017
	District Education Improvement Committee members sign and indicate level of support towards submitting a petition to the Board of Trustees to pursue designation as a district of innovation.	February 6, 2017
	Board Meeting- Board votes to adopt Resolution to initiate consideration for being designated as an innovation district.	February 21, 2017
	Board Meeting – Board holds public hearing	February 21, 2017
	Board Meeting – Board votes to appoint the District Innovation Plan Committee, the current Lackland District Education Improvement Council, to develop a draft local innovation plan.	February 21, 2017
	Board Meeting – The Board delegates authority to the Superintendent to notify the Commissioner of Education of its intention to vote on adopting the final local innovation plan.	February 21, 2017
	The district innovation plan committee convenes a planning session to review data, determine focus areas, and develop a proposed local innovation plan.	February 23, 2017
	Post proposed district innovation plan on district website.	February 24, 2017
	District Innovation Plan Committee hosts public meeting to consider final version of the proposed Lackland ISD District Innovation Plan.	*March 27, 2017
	March	District presents the proposed District Innovation Plan to Board of Trustees for approval with a two-thirds majority vote.
	District sends approved plan and completed Figure 19 to the Commissioner of Education.	*March 28, 2017

*Anticipated



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III. District Innovation Planning Committee

- a. Dr. Burnie L. Roper, Superintendent
- b. Alfred Concha, Operations
- c. Theresa Heineman, Teacher
- d. Carol Cardenas, Teacher
- e. Jennifer Dominguez, Counselor
- f. Julie Mihalko, Teacher
- g. Victoria Payne, Teacher
- h. Russell Keller, Teacher
- i. Doug Poludniak, Teacher
- j. Pam Torre, Teacher
- k. Michelle Tarvin, Administrator
- l. Roxanne Hiers, Teacher
- m. Mrs. Bonnie Bush, Parent
- n. Mr. Eric Zwooll, Parent
- o. Mrs. Andrea Fisher, Parent
- p. Mrs. Debra Dockery, Business Representative
- q. Salma Boyd*, Teacher
- r. Melanie Patrick*, Parent
- s. James Staples*, Teacher

*Members added to the committee by the Lackland ISD Board of Trustees

IV. Comprehensive Educational Program

The Local Innovation Plan's comprehensive education program is guided by and aligned to Lackland ISD's vision, mission, beliefs, and strategic goals.

- a. **District Vision:** *The premier leader in educational excellence*
- b. **District Mission:** Providing world-class instructional programs that promote lifetime success for the military child.
- c. **District Beliefs:**
 - We believe students are our priority.
 - We believe all students should be treated with respect.
 - We believe in continual professional development for all staff.
 - We believe students, teachers, parents and staff must be partners in education.
 - We believe all children can learn and deserve a high-quality education.
 - We believe education is a responsibility and should be valued.



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- We believe education should promote cooperative, competitive, and creative learning.

d. **District Motto:** Inspired Teaching ~ Passionate Learning ~Lifetime Success

e. **Strategic Goals:**

- We will create a transparent environment in which the teacher is an active facilitator and the 21st-century framework is paramount.
- We will incorporate a variety of individual performance tasks in our assessments.
- We will measure accountability through continuous growth and mastery of goals for individual students and student groups.
- We will only foster a climate that adds value.
- We will provide a clear and attainable framework of learning that is engaging, flexible, and relevant that utilizes a full range of student capabilities.
- We will grow interconnected partnerships within the extended communities
- We will capitalize on the innate digital abilities of our students.

V. **Lackland ISD District of Innovation District-Wide Focus Areas**

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Inspired Teaching ~ Passionate Learning ~Lifetime Success

Lackland Independent School District aims to ensure a minimum of one year of academic progress in all core subject areas and full engagement in advanced, innovative, and Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) courses to include career and technical education to maximize opportunities for college and career choice. Military-connected students continue to face challenges related to course offerings and their ability to fully engage due to course timelines, social-emotional challenges related to transitions, and limited course availability related to district size. Our goal is to alleviate these obstacles through innovative approaches.

The District Innovation Plan Committee chose to focus our plan on innovative systemic changes that will yield results for all stakeholders: Students, staff, parents, and community members. District of Innovation focus areas include, but are not limited to:



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- System-wide practices to support social-emotional growth in military-connected students
 - i. Multi-tiered systems of support to include access to relevant counseling services to include school counselors, Military Family Life Counselors, Military Support Transition Consultants, and behavior consultants
 - ii. Increased opportunities to engage socially and professionally with community agencies
 - iii. Increased opportunities to grow through ongoing engagement in volunteer opportunities
- System- wide practices to support access to advanced and aligned curriculum for military-connected students
 - i. Data-driven decision-making procedures
 - ii. Differentiated Instruction
 - iii. High-yield instructional strategies
 - iv. Participation in assessment boot camps
 - v. Professional Learning Communities
 - vi. Vertically and horizontally aligned curriculum
- System- wide practices to support access to 21st – Century career offerings through participation in industry -applicable career and technology education.
 - i. Opportunities to receive course credit through participation in career based engagement
 - ii. Increased opportunities for industry-based certifications through career and technology education.

VI. Exemptions Requested in the Texas Education Code to Benefit Identified Focus Areas

- a. **§ 25.0811 (EB LEGAL) First Day of Instruction**- States that a school district may not begin student instruction before the 4th Monday of August.
 - i. **Innovation Strategy**
 - 1. **Flexible Calendar** – Lackland ISD will begin instruction no earlier than the 2nd Monday of August in an effort to create greater flexibility in the school calendar. Although military-related transitions are unpredictable, there is a pattern of transitions that occur in alignment with winter break. Due to this pattern of transitions, it has been our practice, based on community input, to



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complete first-semester course offerings prior to the beginning of winter break. This practice allows military-connected students a concurrent transition with their military member having completed course assignments for final grading. This practice also supports Lackland ISD's ability to reduce stressors related to grades and course completion, a strong contribution to positive social – emotional growth.

2. Balanced Semesters – In an effort to support student ability to complete course work prior to transitions that occur in conjunction with winter break, the fall semester has significantly fewer days than the spring semester. Flexible start dates allow the district to ensure that fall semester courses have the same opportunity to provide curricular depth and complexity as provided in the spring semester.
3. Participation in College Courses – By having flexibility in the start and end of the school year, students will be able to enroll in college courses that start in early June, thereby increasing college and career readiness. There is also a greater opportunity for students to take dual credit courses that match a college academic calendar.

ii. **Local Guidelines:**

1. The District Calendar Committee will receive staff and community input to build the school calendar.
2. The draft calendar will be posted for additional feedback.
3. The District Calendar Committee will consider feedback and recommend a school calendar for Board approval.
4. The recommended school calendar is subject to Board approval.

- b. **§ 25.082 (a) and § 25.081(e) Seven Hour School Day** – define a school day as “at least seven hours” and “420 minutes of instruction.”

i. **Innovation Strategy**

1. Lackland ISD believes that the professional learning of its teachers and staff is paramount to increasing student achievement and maintaining a positive climate for social development. An exemption from the 7 hour / 420-minute day statute would allow the addition of early release days in our district calendar to utilize for parent conferences, analyzing class data, completing report cards, staff participation in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), and final exams. This opportunity for more thorough processing



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will benefit students by increasing communication between teachers, parents, and students.

2. In order to maximize available funding under the Foundation School Program, the District will comply with 25.081 (a) – (d), requiring provision of at least 75,600 minutes of student instruction (including intermissions and recesses) each school year.

ii. Local Guidelines

1. Lackland ISD will use no more than six early release days and only for the purposes outlined above.
 2. Early release days will be determined during the development of the instructional calendar by the district calendar committee based on input from Campus Improvement Committees (CIC).
 3. Professional development days will be determined with the input of campus improvement committees based on accomplished needs assessments.
- c. **§ 25.112 Class Size (EEB LEGAL) (TEC 25.111, 112, & 113)** – Requires districts to maintain a class size of twenty– two students or less for kindergarten – fourth-grade classes. When any class exceeds this limit, the district must complete and file a waiver with the Texas Education Agency.

i. Innovation Strategy

1. Flexible Class Sizes – Student mobility presents a significant challenge to Lackland ISD’s ability to meet class size requirements. Waivers to required class size limitations are often submitted when highly-effective, experienced, and culturally adept teachers are not available for employment during irregular times of need.
2. Flexible Instructional Arrangements - To promote equitable opportunities for student growth, class ratios will be conducive to providing the instructional support that all learners require.

For example:

- a. Struggling learners may require smaller instructional ratios
- b. Academically advanced students may have appropriate and innovative learning opportunities which include collaborative and independent activities in ratios exceeding 22:1.



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ii. **Local Guidelines**

1. Lackland ISD will attempt to keep all K-4th core classrooms to a 22:1 ratio. However, in the event the class size exceeds this ratio, the following will occur:
 - a. The campus principal will notify the superintendent of the current ratios with a recommendation based on the best interest of the students.
 - b. The superintendent will notify the Board of current ratios.
 - c. Core classroom ratios should not exceed 24:1.
2. In the event a K-4th core classroom exceeds a 22:1 ratio, the campus will notify the parents of the students in the classroom and inform them of the situation.

- d. **§ 21.102 (DCA LEGAL) Teacher Employment Contracts**- Currently, experienced teachers new to the district have a probationary period that may not exceed one year if the person has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the previous eight years.

i. **Innovation Strategy**

1. **Probationary Contracts** – For experienced teachers new to Lackland ISD who have been employed in public education for at least five of the eight previous years, a probationary contract may be issued for up to two years from the date of hire. This will allow the district more time to evaluate a staff member's effectiveness.

ii. **Local Guidelines**

1. Campus principals will inform the individual teacher of performance standards that warrant improvement as determined by the evaluation tool and other performance-based documents.
2. During the first year of employment, campus principals will make a recommendation to the superintendent to non-renew, continue employment on a probationary contract for a second year, or offer a term contract.
3. The superintendent will determine if the decision is in the best interest of the district and make a recommendation to the Board.
4. The Board may terminate a probationary contract or extend the probationary contract to a second year and shall give notice to the employee no later than the tenth day before the last day of instruction required in the contract.



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- e. **§21.003, § 21.055, §21.044 (DK- Legal, DK-Local) Teacher Certification** – Currently, districts must submit requests to the TEA to hire a teacher who is teaching a subject outside of their certification area.

i. **Innovation Strategy**

1. **Flexible Scheduling and Additional Selections in Class Offerings** – Campus principals may submit to the superintendent a written request to allow a certified teacher to teach one subject outside of his/her certified field and/or grade level in which he/she is not certified. The superintendent will approve or deny requests, basing the decision on whether the certified teacher will be an asset for students. Upon tentative approval, the superintendent will report this action to the Board of Trustees for final approval.

ii. **Local Guidelines**

1. A request may be initiated by the teacher or campus principal to meet a temporary or innovative need.
2. The campus principal may submit a formal request to the superintendent allowing a certified teacher to teach one subject or grade level outside his or her area of certification. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document the credentials the certified teacher possesses which qualify the individual to teach the subject or grade level.
3. The superintendent approves or denies the request based on the best interest of students.

- f. **§ 21.055 Teacher Certification / Local Teaching Permit**- Currently, districts must submit requests to the TEA to hire a teacher who is teaching a subject outside of their certification area.

i. **Innovation Strategy**

1. **Expanded CTE Offerings** – An individual with experience in a CTE field could be eligible to teach vocational skills or courses through a local teaching permit. The principal will submit the request to the superintendent with the individual's credentials. The superintendent will approve or deny the request based on whether the individual will be an asset for students. The superintendent will report this action to the Board of Trustees. The employee will be hired on an at –will status.

ii. **Local Guidelines**

1. Local teaching permits will be issued for teaching positions only.



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2. Local teaching permits will only be issued for hard to fill positions.
 3. The district will establish local criteria such as, but not limited to, years of experience, qualifications, college degree, and industry certification to qualify for a local teaching permit.
 4. Campus principals will submit candidates to the superintendent with credentials. The superintendent will determine whether it is in the best interest of the students to locally certify the individual.
 5. Candidates will be thoroughly vetted to ensure they have not surrendered any teaching certificates in the past or been terminated from a teaching position for reasons unacceptable to the District. Candidates would receive pedagogy and classroom management training.
 6. Local teaching permits are only valid for one year but may be renewed annually based on district need.
 7. The superintendent will notify the Board prior to beginning employment.
- g. **§ 25.092 (FEC Local) Minimum Attendance for Class Credit or Final Grade** – requires the District to issue class credit or a final grade for a class based on “seat time” rather than based on content mastery. *The requested exemption from § 25.092 does not in any way impact or change existing compulsory attendance requirements or University Interscholastic League (UIL) rules. Moreover, opting out of § 25.092 in no way limits or modifies a teacher’s right to determine the finality of a grade in accordance with Texas Education Code § 28.0214, nor does it restrict or alter a teacher’s right to assign grades in accordance with TEC § 28.0216*
- i. **Innovation Strategy**
 1. **Flexible Learning Environments** - The district will design and implement more responsive learning environments, where blended and personalized learning opportunities are available. Blended learning occurs when instruction is delivered through a combination of time in class and time spent learning online.
 2. **Flexible Learning Opportunities** – The district will not penalize students who miss class due to legitimate school activities and/or family issues that may prevent students from meeting the 90% class attendance rule, as long as mastery of content can be documented. This will address the social and emotional issues that the District encounters due to military transitions and facilitate opportunities for students to engage with the community and social agencies.



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ii. Local Guidelines

1. The district will investigate the abundant opportunities for active learning outside the classroom in order to receive credit for content mastery, when not present for 90 percent of the days a class is offered. The Local Innovation Committee encourages the District to explore other avenues by which a student can achieve mastery, without being penalized academically. The exemption would allow the district to provide innovative options to promote student engagement in course material in flexible ways, ultimately allowing learning to happen anytime, anywhere, even apart from the traditional brick and mortar classroom.
 2. Enrolled Students: A campus committee comprised of teachers and staff with knowledge of the student will review the academic record of a student who has not met the 90% attendance statute. The student will submit a portfolio and/or assessment that corresponds with a rubric of skills for required mastery developed by the subject area teacher of record. The subject area teacher of record will determine the final course grade for the student with committee input as appropriate. Credit grades received in this manner are not subject to receive weighted grading.
 3. Transitioning Students: A campus committee comprised of teachers and staff with knowledge of the student will review the academic record of a student requesting to complete a course in a less than 90% attendance timeframe. The subject area teacher of record will establish course completion objectives in the form of a rubric. With the support of a committee, a timeline for course completion will be developed to include interim progress checks. The subject area teacher of record will determine the final course grade for the student with committee input as appropriate. Credit grades received in this manner are not subject to receive weighted grading.
- h. § 37.0012 (FO Legal and Local) Student Discipline Provisions – Senate Bill 107 requires the designation of a campus behavior coordinator on each campus. This designee is responsible for maintaining student discipline and the implementation of Chapter 37, Subchapter A.
- i. **Innovation Strategy**
 1. Administrator Responsibility – This exemption would allow Lackland ISD to abstain from the state requirement that each school have a designated campus behavior coordinator. The Senate Bill was put into place as a solution to a non-existent problem in



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Lackland ISD. Campus principals and assistant principals already serve in this capacity and a requirement to designate someone for this position is not necessary.

ii. **Local Guidelines**

1. The district will continue its current practice of parent notification to include prompt notification from teachers and staff. An administrator will provide appropriate follow up regarding all matters of discipline.

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