



## **District of Innovation Plan**

**District of Innovation Overview:**

The District of Innovation concept, passed by the 84th Legislative Session in House Bill 1842, gives traditional independent school districts most of the flexibilities available to Texas' open enrollment charter schools.

**Potential benefits of becoming a District of Innovation include:**

**Local control:** Districts decide which flexibilities best suit their local needs.

**Customization:** Districts can create an innovation plan for a level of school (e.g., only high schools), grade level, or a single campus.

**Autonomy:** Districts must submit a district of innovation plan to the commissioner of education, but approval is not required.

**Flexibility:** Districts will have the flexibility to implement practices similar to charter schools, including exemptions from mandates such as:

- School start date
- 90% attendance rule
- Class-size ratios
- Site-based decision-making processes
- Certain student discipline provisions
- Use of planning and preparation periods
- Teacher appraisal requirements

The Lockhart Independent School District believes that this level of local control would add flexibility and empower our district to think and act in innovative ways to meet our district goals, which are listed below.

1. Create a collaborative culture of contagious ambition.
2. Expect all staff to embrace growth opportunities.
3. Empower students to seize opportunities to achieve at high levels.

**District of Innovation Timeline:**

January 9, 2017

Board Workshop

- District of Innovation Board presentation
  - Exploration of LISD becoming a District of Innovation

January 17, 2017

District Advisory Committee (DAC)

- Exploration of LISD becoming a District of Innovation

January 23, 2017

Board Meeting

- Board of Trustees approves Resolution to hold a public hearing to discuss the possibility of becoming a District of Innovation pursuant to HB 1842 [TEC § 12A.001(c)(1)]
- Public Hearing to consider whether the District should develop a local innovation plan for designation of the District as a District of Innovation [TEC §§ 12A.002(b)(2), 12A.003]
- Board approval to pursue the designation of District of Innovation, and Board appoints Innovation Plan Committee [TEC §§ 12A.002(b)(2)]

February 1, 2017

First District of Innovation (DOI) Committee Meeting

February 8, 2017

Second DOI Committee Meeting

February 13, 2017

Third DOI Committee Meeting

February 21, 2017

DAC/DOI Committee Meeting

- Presentation of LISD *District of Innovation DRAFT Plan*

February 27, 2017

Board Meeting-First reading of DRAFT District of Innovation Plan and discussion of impacted Board Policies

February 28, 2017

LISD District of Innovation Plan posted to District website [TEC § 12A.005(a)(1)]; notice to Commissioner of intention to vote on local innovation plan in April sent [TEC § 12A.005(a)(2)]

March 27, 2017

Board Meeting-Review board policies that would be impacted by DOI plan

## Lockhart ISD District of Innovation Plan

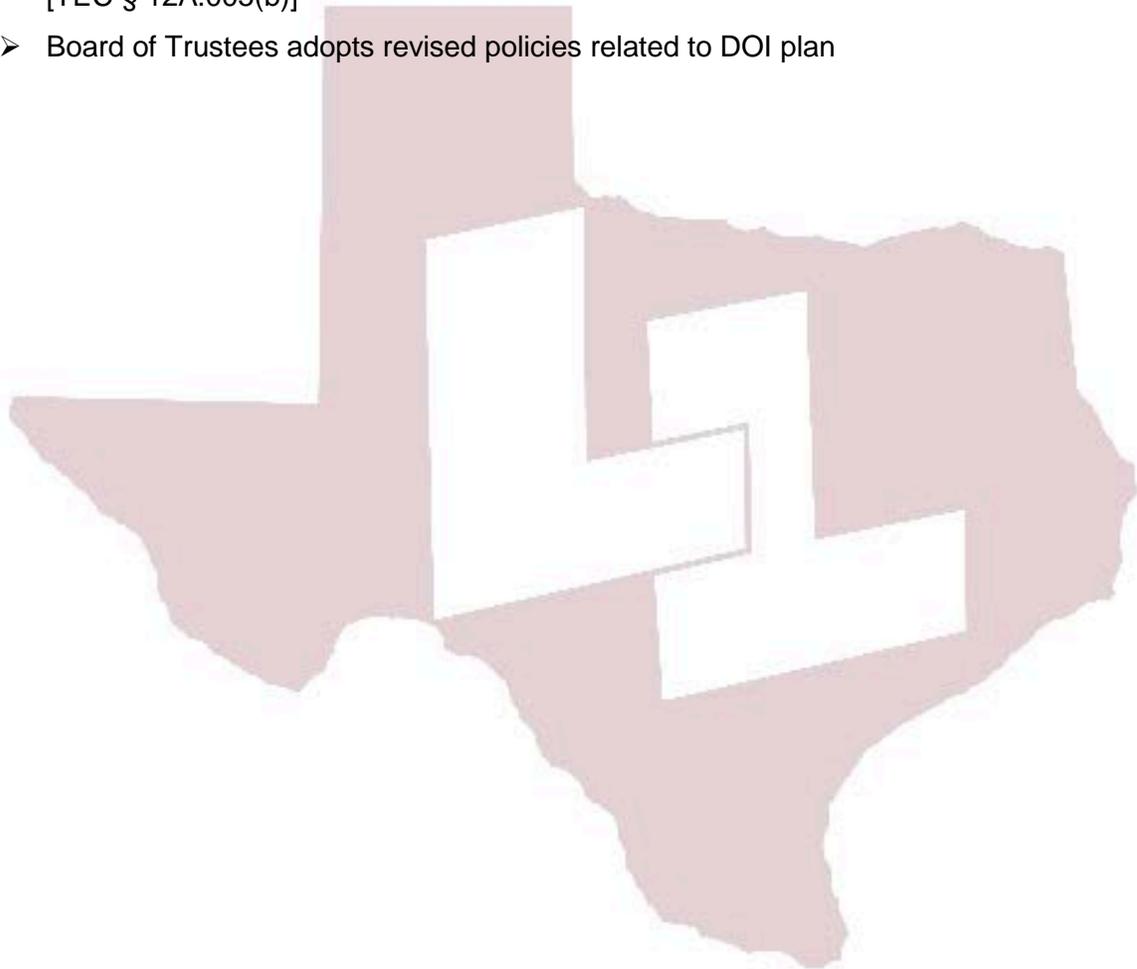
April 10, 2017

DAC/DOI Meeting 6:00-6:30pm

- DAC hosts a public meeting to consider the final version of the proposed DOI Plan for LISD [TEC § 12A.005(a)(3)]
- DAC approves DOI plan by majority vote [TEC § 12A.005(a)(3)]

Board Meeting

- Board of Trustees approves DOI plan by a 2/3 majority of membership of the Board [TEC § 12A.005(b)]
- Board of Trustees adopts revised policies related to DOI plan



## RESOLUTION TO ADOPT A DISTRICT OF INNOVATION

WHEREAS, the Lockhart ISD Board of Trustees is committed to creating a collaborative culture of contagious ambition, expecting all staff to embrace growth opportunities, and empowering students to seize opportunities to achieve at high levels; and,

WHEREAS, the Lockhart ISD Board of Trustees believes that it can be a better decision-making body for students when it has the freedom to exercise local control over the decision-making process; and,

WHEREAS Education Code 12A.001 provides that a district is eligible for designation as a district of innovation if the district's most recent performance rating under Section 39.054 reflects at least acceptable performance, and that consideration of designation as a district of innovation may be initiated by a resolution adopted by the board of trustees of the district; and

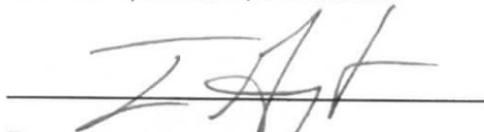
WHEREAS the Lockhart Independent School District's most recent performance rating under Education Code 39.054 reflects at least acceptable performance.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of Lockhart Independent School District by adoption of this resolution initiates the process under Education Code Chapter 12A to become a district of innovation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that after this resolution is signed by the Board, a public hearing shall be held to consider whether the District should develop a local innovation plan for the designation of the District as a district of innovation and that after the public hearing the Board of Trustees of Lockhart Independent School District shall appoint a committee to develop a local innovation plan or decline to pursue designation as a district of innovation.

Adopted this 23rd day of January, 2017, by the Board of Trustees.

  
Brenda Spillmann, President

  
Tom Guyton, Secretary

Lockhart ISD District of Innovation Plan

Committee Member Name	Campus	Position / Role
Monica Parks	LISD	Executive Director of Student Programs
Adam Galvan	LISD	Executive Director of Instructional Tech
Sheila Henderson	LISD	Executive Director of Athletics and UIL
Faith Pope	LISD	Director of Elementary C&I
Glenn Shanks	BBE	Principal
Lori Davis	LJHS	Principal
Deana Juarez	LHS	Principal
Luciano Castro	LHS (MLCC)	Associate Principal
Kelly Molitor	LHS (MLCC)	Counselor
Keitha Hernandez	LJHS	Instructional Coach
Jennifer Robuck	LHS (MLCC)	Teacher
Megan Jones	PCE	Teacher
Sarah Venglar	BBE	Teacher
Amanda Soliz	NAV	Teacher
Hilda Cudzilo	ABS	Teacher
Krystin Feole	CF	Teacher
Melissa Zoulek	LJHS	Teacher
Melissa Hardaway	LHS	Teacher
Meghan Bailey	NAV	Teacher
Tanner King	ABS	Teacher
Patricia Page	PRIDE	Teacher
Jennifer Lickert	PCE	Teacher
Julie Juarez	Carver	Teacher
Lisa Guyton	Community	Community Member
Bobby Herzog	Community	Community Member
Alfredo Munoz	Community	Community Member
Sam Lockhart	Community	Community Member
Andy St. Ledger	Community	Community Member
Jo Beth Stephenson	Community	Community Member
Waldo Villarreal	Community	Community Member

**District of Innovation Plan:**

Connection to District Goals:

Goal 1: Create a collaborative culture of contagious ambition.

Goal 2: Expect all staff to embrace growth opportunities.

Goal 3: Empower students to seize opportunities to achieve at high levels.

The Lockhart Independent School District recognizes that we are a district experiencing rapid student growth. We also recognize that the methods which previously met student needs may no longer support all students achieving at their highest levels. Changes in student demographics and shifting pedagogical frameworks that best support future-ready students require a paradigm shift for all school districts across Texas and across our country. As an organization, we must all confront areas in which we can grow so that we may better serve our students. As an organization, we must also model collaboration with our school community and demonstrate actions for what it means to be ambitious. The district of innovation designation serves as a rallying call for our community that clearly and proudly demonstrates our belief that our community can be a better decision-making body for students when it has the freedom to exercise local control over the decision-making process and policies that govern us.

We must be able to maximize our responsiveness to our community's vision for the future. As we begin turning our community's goals for their children into reality, we must be positioned to minimize the barriers that could otherwise preclude us from doing our best work on their behalf. Our work will require LISD to evolve, to think differently about critical systemic components such as how we are organized, how we evaluate our staff, how we spend our time with students and staff, how we recruit and retain top talent, and how we grow continually as a learning organization. To think differently, we must respond differently. Leveraging the freedom and flexibility afforded as a District of Innovation will assure we are empowered to do so.

## **Exemptions**

Teacher and Principal Evaluations

**Exemption from:** TEC §§ 21.352, 21.354, 21.3541

**Related Board Policies:** DNA (Legal), DNA (Local), DNB (Legal), DNB (Local)

**Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan:** LISD believes that all staff members can and must continually improve in their role of supporting student achievement. In fact, LISD goal #2 states that we expect all staff members to embrace growth opportunities. Teachers and principals should be evaluated fairly and assessed on the entire scope of their job functions. While student learning is the ultimate measure of teacher and principal effectiveness, multiple metrics should be utilized. We believe that our current state-required evaluation tool, T-TESS, places too heavy an emphasis on STAAR scores. We are equally concerned that our current systems will require the district to give additional assessments in subject areas that do not have a STAAR test simply for the sake of testing to use on a teacher's evaluation. Further, evaluations should target progress made on reaching local goals and aspirations identified by individual faculty.

**Local Guidelines and Innovation Strategies:** LISD intends to use the T-TESS and T-P ESS for the 2017-2018 school year, removing the portion of the evaluation related to only using STAAR scores and/or STAAR growth to rate the teacher's role in student achievement. In subsequent school years a new appraisal systems may be developed by a committee consisting of but not limited to teachers and administrators.

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School Calendar

**Exemption from:** TEC § TEC 25.0811

**Related Board Policies:** EB (Legal), EB (Local)

**Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan:** The Texas Education Code requires that students may not begin school before the fourth Monday of August. For many years this was the rule; however, districts had the option of applying for a waiver to begin school earlier.

The waiver process was eliminated several years ago, mandating that all schools begin school no earlier than the fourth Monday of August, with no exceptions. This requirement inhibits the District's flexibility to develop a calendar that best meets students', staff, and community needs. Research has found that a catalyst to accelerating student learning and improving teacher practice is allowing for structured time for educators to prepare, lesson plan, and receive professional development. Other benefits of this flexibility include having balanced semesters that allow for finals prior to the Christmas break and for the completion of the K-12 school year that allows high school students the ability to attend summer college courses.

**Local Guidelines and Innovation Strategies:** The school calendar will be designed so that the semesters are balanced, with the first semester ending at Christmas break. The school calendar will allow for timely and meaningful staff development. Before the school year begins, teachers will have ample professional development and teacher preparation and planning time. The calendar will provide for designated time after the first quarter for professional development and possible flex time to make up for professional development attended during the summer months and/or Saturday professional development.

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Teacher Certification

**Exemption from:** TEC §§ 21.003, 21.053, 21.057

**Related Board Policies:** DBA (Legal), DK (Legal), DK (Local), DK (Exhibit)

**Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan:** Current statute requires that all teachers be fully certified by the Texas Education Agency (TEA)/State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC), regardless of previous work experience and/or demonstrated knowledge and skills in their area of specialty. Although it is possible to seek an emergency certificate, certification is dependent upon TEA approving the request. This process is burdensome and does not take into account the unique financial and/or instructional needs of the district.

TEC 21.053 requires a teacher to present his or her certificate to the District before their employment contract will be binding, and prohibits the District from paying an educator for teaching if the educator does not hold a valid certificate at the time.

TEC 21.057 requires that the District provide written notice to parents if an inappropriately certified or uncertified teacher is assigned to a classroom for more than 20 consecutive instructional days.

LISD needs the ability to make a local decision regarding who is best-suited to teach our children. While the District will maintain its current expectations for employee certification and make attempts to hire individuals with appropriate certification for the position in question, when that is not reasonably possible, the District will have the flexibility to hire individuals who are knowledgeable in the area and equipped to effectively perform the duties of the position in question. LISD needs flexibility in order to hire for "hard to fill" positions at all levels, Pre-K-12. LISD aspires to continue growing programs offering students career and technology industry certifications. In order to position our students for the most opportunities, at times, it may be appropriate to be flexible with teaching candidates who possess the knowledge and skills that would benefit the students of LISD, but who do not possess a Texas teaching certification.

***Local Guidelines and Innovation Strategies:*** LISD is seeking flexibility with certification requirements for all courses excluding core courses, i.e.: Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. To bolster classroom management skills of non-SBEC certified teachers, LISD shall implement a mentorship and intensive training program for all new hires lacking SBEC certification that must be no less than one year in length. New hires must have proper industry certification or comparable industry experience. Administration/hiring panels may determine what level of education, certification, or industry experience must be present.

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***Exemption from:*** Lockhart ISD seeks exemption from all permissible provisions of the TEC as allowed by HB 1842, 84th Session of the Texas Legislature, excluding TEC 25.112 and TEC 25.113, regarding maximum class size.

***Related Board Policies:*** All LISD Legal and Local Board Policies, excluding those policies which specifically address the provision of the Texas Education Code for which a District of Innovation Plan may not provide for an exemption under § 12A.004(a).

***Manner in which statutes inhibit the goals of the plan:*** It is in the best interest of Lockhart

ISD to maximize our adaptability in meeting the needs of our ever-changing demographics. In order to adapt in a timely manner, we also need the flexibility to minimize barriers that preclude us from the necessary adaptations. The provisions of the Texas Education Code which the Texas Legislature considered and did not limit for exemption all place additional burdens on LISD and prevent quick adaption by the District to implement the District's goals.

Requesting full local control by relieving the District from the encumbrances of all permissible statutes places the responsibility for improvements into the hands and minds of our local educators and community members. Indeed, these stakeholders have the most to gain from our improvement efforts as they pinpoint and strategically act upon the immediate needs of our students each and every year. LISD will phase in implementation of the Local Innovation Plan, beginning with exemption from TEC §§ 21.352, 21.354, 21.3541, 25.0811, 21.053, 21.057, and 21.003, as discussed above.

***Local Guidelines and Innovation Strategies:*** LISD will phase in implementation of the Local Innovation Plan, beginning with specific exemptions addressed in this plan above, i.e., TEC §§ 21.352 (local role regarding appraisals), 21.3541 (appraisal and professional development system for principals), 25.0811 (first day of instruction), and 21.003 (certification).

LISD will implement an enhanced local policy development process that is rigorous, transparent, and inclusive of stakeholder input when seeking any further exemptions and changes to the District of Innovation Plan. The process for approving future changes to the District of Innovation Plan shall include a committee made up of teachers, district staff, and community members. Any new changes would be presented by this committee, to the District Advisory Committee and then to the Board of Trustees. Future policy changes that require an exemption from a provision in the Texas Education Code must be approved by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the membership of the Board of Trustees.

Once District of Innovation status is achieved, LISD will voluntarily continue to comply with all current provisions of the Texas Education Code and related regulations, as well as all current District legal and local policies that are not specifically addressed in this plan. Unless and until the LISD Board of Trustees takes action to enact a particular exemption from the Texas Education Code and related regulations, there will be no change in the District's compliance with state laws and local policies. If and when, during implementation of this Local Innovation

## Lockhart ISD District of Innovation Plan

Plan, the Board of Trustees takes action to activate an exemption under HB 1842, the fact that LISD is enacting an exemption as a District of Innovation will be clearly noted in the legal and local policies affected. A list or index of exemptions enacted as a District of Innovation will be kept in Policy AF (LOCAL) – INNOVATION DISTRICTS.

