

# District of Innovation

## Renewal 2022-2027

DEIC Public Hearing – November 8, 2021

Board of Trustee Approved – November 16, 2021

Implementation Date upon Expiration of Current Plan – March 28, 2022



# LACKLAND

Independent School District

## Lackland Independent School District Local Innovation Plan

### I. Introduction

The 84<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session passed House Bill 1842, allowing Texas public school districts to become Districts of Innovation and thus permitting exemption from specific provisions of the Texas Education Code. Lackland ISD seeks to renew its District of Innovation status to continue systemic improvement to better serve and accommodate military-connected stakeholders' diverse and unique needs, 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.

The Lackland ISD Board of Trustees appointed the Lackland District Education Improvement Council as the District Advisory Committee for developing a District of Innovation Plan. In March of 2017, the Lackland ISD Board of Trustees approved the District of Innovation Plan as presented by the District Education Improvement Committee. The Lackland ISD Local Innovation (5-year) Plan, approved in March 2017, expires in March of 2022. Therefore, the Lackland ISD DEIC pursued the plan's renewal beginning in September of 2021.

The DEIC, serving as the District Advisory Committee for developing a District of Innovation Plan, reviewed the current DOI Plan and voted unanimously to request the renewal of the current plan on September 27, 2021. For public comment, the draft plan renewal was posted on the Lackland ISD Website starting on September 30, 2021. The DEIC plans to hold a public meeting and vote on November 8, 2021, at 3:45 p.m. in the District's Cynthia Lyon Center. With final approval, we anticipate Board Action regarding plan renewal at the November 16, 2021, Board of Trustees meeting.

The local innovation plan may be terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees at any time in accordance with the law. Local policies adopted during the initial DOI application will remain in effect based on Board of Trustee approval. 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 regularly.

### II. Timeline

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Activity / Task</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
September	District Education Improvement Council develops a draft District of Innovation Plan for renewal.	September 27, 2021
	The DEIC posts the draft renewal plan online for 30 days	September 30, 2021 – October 30, 2021
November	The DEIC holds a public meeting to consider the plan.	November 8, 2021
	The Commissioner of Education is notified of the Board of Trustees intent to renew the District of Innovation Plan	November 9, 2021

	The District presents the proposed District Innovation Plan to the Board of Trustees for approval with a two-thirds majority vote.	*November 16, 2021
	The District sends the approved plan and completed Figure 19 to the Commissioner of Education with a March 28, 2022 renewal date.	*November 17, 2021

\*Anticipated

### III. District Innovation Planning Committee

- a. Dr. Burnie L. Roper, Superintendent
- b. JoAnne Moulder, Teacher
- c. Savina Martinez, Teacher
- d. Jennifer Thompson, Teacher
- e. Allison Martino, Teacher
- f. Amanda Rigby, Teacher
- g. Glen Sechler, Teacher
- h. Brian Hernandez, Teacher
- i. Vickie Johnson, Teacher
- j. Cathy Cotnam, Teacher
- k. Cris Street, Teacher
- l. Matthew Lapham, Parent
- m. Harrysca Martinez, Parent
- n. Rodney Ho, Parent
- o. Valerie Anderson, Parent
- p. Lauren Courchaine, Parent
- q. Terri Leija, Principal\*
- r. Hunter Shelby, Principal\*
- s. Alfred Concha, Operations\*
- t. Kyle Jones, Technology\*
- u. Dayna Guyton, Feder/Special Programs\*
- v. Cedric Menchion, CFO
- w. Tonya Hyde, Asst. Supt. For C & I \*

\*Membership added to the DEIC committee to develop the DOI Planning Committee

### 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.
- 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 21<sup>st</sup>-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**

### **Future Ready**

#### **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:

- System-wide practices to support social-emotional growth in military-connected students.

- i. Multi-tiered systems of support include access to relevant counseling services, including 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 the 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 21<sup>st</sup> – 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 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of August.
  - i. **Innovation Strategy**
    - 1. Flexible Calendar – Lackland ISD will begin instruction no earlier than the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 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. **§ 25.112 Class Size and Student-Teacher Ratios (EEB LEGAL) (TEC 25.111, 112, & 113)** – *25.111* requires each school district to employ the number of teachers necessary to maintain an average ratio of not less than one teacher for each group of 20 students. *25.112*- 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. *25.113* requires that a letter is sent home to each parent in the section that exceeds the 22:1 ratio, informing them the waiver has been submitted.

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.

ii. **Local Guidelines**

1. Lackland ISD will attempt to keep all K-4<sup>th</sup> core classrooms to a 22:1 ratio. However, in the event the class size / student to teacher ratios exceed 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-4<sup>th</sup> 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.
- c. **§ 21.102 (DCA LEGAL) Chapter 21 Employment Contracts** - Currently, experienced teachers and other certified personnel 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 and other certified personnel 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. Partial years would not count toward the full year requirement. This will allow the District more time to evaluate a staff member's effectiveness.
  - ii. **Local Guidelines**
    1. Campus Principals will inform the individual certified personnel 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.
- d. **§21.003 (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.
  4. Parents will receive notification of teacher credentials.
- e. **§ 21.003 Teacher Certification / Local Teaching Permit**- Currently, Districts must hire certified teachers and if a qualified certified teacher cannot be located, the District must submit a request to the Texas Education Agency or hire the teacher through a School District teaching permit.
- i. **Innovation Strategy**
    1. **Expanded CTE Offerings** – A non-certified 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 CTE teaching positions.
    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, demonstrated subject matter expertise, any combination of work experience, years of experience, qualifications, college degree, training and education or industry certification related to the subject matter he or she will be teaching, 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 required to go through the established hiring process and 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.
    8. Parents will receive notification of teacher credentials.

- f. **§ 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.

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% 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 demonstrate evidence of mastery such as a portfolio, assessment and/or other documentation deemed appropriate by the assigned committee and the assigned subject matter 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 that demonstrate evidence of mastery such as a portfolio, assessment and/or other documentation

deemed appropriate with input from the assigned committee. 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.

- g. **§ 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. Assistant Principals at each campus 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.