

EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

THE STATE OF TEXAS§

COUNTY OF HARDIN §

THIS EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT ("Contract") is made and entered into effective January 9, 2026 by and between the **Board of Trustees** (the "Board") of the **Lumberton Independent School District** (the "District") and **Dr. John Mathews** (the "Superintendent").

NOW THEREFORE, the Board and the Superintendent, for and in consideration of the terms hereinafter established and pursuant to the authority of Chapter 21 and Section 11.201(b) of the Texas Education Code, have agreed, and do hereby agree, as follows:

1. TERM

- 1.1 **Employment.** The Board, by and on behalf of the District, does hereby employ the Superintendent, and the Superintendent does hereby accept employment as Superintendent of Schools for the District for a term of three (3) years beginning on January 9, 2026, then ending on June 30, 2029. The District may, by action of the Board, and with the consent and approval of the Superintendent, extend the term of this Contract as permitted by state law.
- 1.2 **No Right of Tenure.** The Board has not adopted any policy, rule, regulation, law or practice providing for tenure. No right of tenure, contractual obligation, expectancy of continued employment, or claim of entitlement is created beyond the contract term.

2. EMPLOYMENT

- 2.1 **Duties.** The Superintendent shall faithfully perform the duties of the Superintendent of Schools for the District as prescribed in the job description and as may be lawfully assigned by the Board, and shall comply with all lawful Board directives, state and federal law, district policy, rules, and regulations as they exist or may hereafter be adopted or amended. The Superintendent shall perform the duties of the Superintendent of Schools for the District with reasonable care, skill and expertise and in a thorough, prompt, and efficient manner. The Superintendent agrees to devote his time, skill, labor and attention to performing his duties.
 - (a) Specifically, it shall be the duty of the Superintendent to recommend for employment all professional employees of the District subject to the Board's approval. It shall be the further duty of the Superintendent to employ all other personnel consistent with the Board's policies. It shall be the further duty of the Superintendent to direct, assign, reassign, and evaluate all of the employees of the District consistent with

Board policies and federal and state law. It shall be the further duty of the Superintendent to organize, reorganize, and arrange the staff of the District, and to develop and establish administrative regulations, rules, and procedures which the Superintendent deems necessary for the efficient and effective operation of the District consistent with the Board's lawful directives, the Board's policies, and state and federal law. It shall be the further duty of the Superintendent to accept all resignations of employees of the District consistent with the Board's policies, except the Superintendent's resignation, which must be accepted by the Board. The Board may assign additional duties to the Superintendent and change the Superintendent's responsibilities or work at any time during this Contract, but the duties shall be appropriate to and consistent with the professional role and responsibility of the Superintendent.

- (b) The Superintendent's duties include the submission of a preliminary list of goals for the District each year for the Board's consideration and adoption. The Superintendent and the Board shall then meet, and the Board shall approve or revise the list of goals. The Superintendent shall submit to the Board for its approval a plan to implement the goals. The Superintendent and the Board shall meet biannually to assess the goals and may adjust or revise the goals either by action of the Board or upon recommendation of the Superintendent and approval of the Board. The goals approved by the Board shall at all times be reduced to writing ("District Goals") and shall be among the criteria on which the Superintendent's performance is reviewed and evaluated. The District Goals approved by the Board shall be specific, definitive and measurable, to the extent feasible. The Board agrees to work with and support the Superintendent in achieving the District Goals.

- 2.2 **Professional Certification and Records.** This Agreement is conditioned on the Superintendent providing the necessary certification and experience records, medical records, oath of office, and other records required for the personnel files or payroll purposes. Failure to provide necessary certification shall render this Agreement void. The Superintendent agrees to maintain the required certification throughout the term of employment with the District. If the Superintendent's certification expires, is canceled, or is revoked, this Contract is void. Any material and intentional misrepresentation may be grounds for dismissal.
- 2.3 **Reassignment.** The Superintendent cannot be reassigned from the position of Superintendent to another position without the Superintendent's expressed written consent.
- 2.4 **Consultant Activities.** The Superintendent may serve as a consultant or undertake speaking engagements, writing, teaching or other professional duties and obligations outside the District (referred to collectively herein as "Consulting Services") that do not conflict or interfere with the Superintendent's professional responsibilities to the District. The Superintendent may accept a reimbursement of expenses for such Consulting Services at no expense to the District. Consulting Services provided by the Superintendent under the terms and conditions of this paragraph must be consistent with state and federal law.

2.5 **Board/Superintendent Relations.**

- 2.5.1 **Criticisms, Complaints and Suggestions.** The Board, individually and collectively, shall refer in a timely manner all substantive criticisms, complaints, and suggestions called to the Board's attention either: (a) to the Superintendent for study and/or appropriate action, and the Superintendent shall refer such matter(s) to the appropriate District employee or shall investigate such matter(s) and shall within a reasonable time inform the Board of the results of such efforts; or, (b) to the appropriate complaint resolution procedure as established by District Board policies.
- 2.5.2 **Board Meetings.** The Superintendent shall attend all meetings of the Board, both public and closed, with the exception of those closed meetings devoted to the consideration of any action or lack of action on the Superintendent's Contract, or the Superintendent's evaluation, or for purposes of resolving conflicts between individual Board members, or when the Board is acting in its capacity as a tribunal or for any other reason as agreed upon between the parties. In the event of illness or Board-approved absence, the Superintendent's designee shall attend such meetings. Further, the Superintendent shall provide recommendation(s) and/or information as to each of the items of business considered at each meeting as needed or requested by the Board.

2.6 **Representations.**

- (a) **Beginning of Contract.** The Superintendent represents that he has disclosed to the Board, in writing, any arrest, indictment, conviction, no contest or guilty plea, or other adjudication of the Superintendent. The Superintendent understands that a criminal history record acceptable to the Board, at its sole discretion, is a condition precedent to this contract.
- (b) **During Contract.** The Superintendent also agrees that, during the term of this Contract, the Superintendent will notify the Board, in writing, of any arrest, indictment, conviction, no contest or guilty plea, or other adjudication of the Superintendent for any felony, any offense involving moral turpitude, and any of the other offenses set forth in Board policy DH (Local). The Superintendent agrees to provide such notification in writing within seven (7) calendar days of the event.
- (c) **False Statements and Misrepresentations.** The Superintendent represents that any records or information provided in connection with his employment application are true and correct. Any material false statements, misrepresentations, omissions of requested information knowingly or consciously made, or fraud by the Superintendent in or concerning any required records or in the employment application may be grounds for termination or nonrenewal, as applicable.

3. COMPENSATION

- 3.1 **Salary.** The District shall provide the Superintendent with an annual salary in the sum of One Hundred Eighty-One Thousand Eight Hundred and 00/100 Dollars **(\$181,800.00)**. This annual salary rate shall be paid to the Superintendent in installments consistent with the Board's policies.
- 3.2 **Salary Adjustments.** At any time during the term of this Agreement, the Board may, in its discretion, review and adjust the salary of the Superintendent, but in no event shall the Superintendent be paid less than the salary set forth in Section 3.1 of this Agreement.
- 3.3 **Vacation and Accrued Leave.** The Superintendent may take, at the Superintendent's choice, with prior notice to the Board President, the same number of days of vacation authorized by policies adopted by the Board for administrators on twelve-month contracts, the days to be in a single period or at different times. The vacation days taken by the Superintendent will be taken at such time or times as will least interfere with the performance of the Superintendent's duties as set forth in this Contract. Accrued but unused vacation days shall accumulate and carry forward from year to year during the term of this Contract. At the sole option of the Superintendent, either at the end of each year of the term of this Contract, at retirement, or when the Contract is terminated, either voluntarily or involuntarily, the District shall pay in a lump sum to the Superintendent any accrued but unused vacation, state and/or local leave days at the Superintendent's daily rate of pay as of the payment date. The daily rate is calculated by dividing the salary under 3.1 by 226. The Superintendent shall observe the same legal holidays as provided by Board policies for administrative employees on twelve-month contracts. The Superintendent is hereby granted the same personal leave benefits as authorized by Board policies for administrative employees on twelve-month contracts.
- 3.4 **Expenses.** The District shall pay or reimburse the Superintendent for reasonable expenses directly incurred by the Superintendent in the continuing performance of the Superintendent's duties under this Agreement. The District agrees to pay the actual and incidental costs incurred by the Superintendent plus out of district expenses; such costs may include, but are not limited to, gasoline, hotels and accommodations, meals, rental car, airfare and other expenses incurred in the performance of the business of the District. The Superintendent shall comply with all procedures and documentation requirements in accordance with Board policies and as provided by state law.
- 3.5 **Communications.** The District shall provide the Superintendent with a personal computer for use both at work and his residence. Additionally, the Superintendent is authorized to use District equipment/facilities such as computer, telephone and facilities for a reasonable amount of personal use. The Superintendent understands that information stored in his cell phone or computer is subject to public disclosure if such information is related to the public business of the School District or to his duties as Superintendent. Notwithstanding the location of personal data on the cell phone or computer, the parties agree that any personal or private information of the Superintendent contained on the cell phone, computer or other devices containing such

data or information shall be deemed private and the Superintendent's sole property; provided it shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent to assert, and to bear any costs of asserting, privacy or other confidentiality privileges or rights as to any such data or information.

- 3.6 **Residency Requirement.** As a condition of this contract, the Superintendent shall establish and maintain permanent residence within the boundaries of the Lumberton Independent School District.

- 3.7 **Civic Activities.** The Board encourages the Superintendent to become a member of and participate in community and civic affairs, including the chamber of commerce, civic clubs, governmental committees, and educational organizations. The Board concludes that such participation will serve a legitimate purpose related to the educational mission of the District. The Superintendent may hold offices or accept responsibilities in these professional organizations, provided that such responsibilities do not interfere with the performance of his duties as Superintendent. Prior to engaging in these activities, the Superintendent will notify the Board in writing of the activity. The Board will notify the Superintendent if the activity presents a conflict or interferes with the performance of his duties as Superintendent. The District shall reimburse the Superintendent for the cost of membership in all local civic organizations in which the Superintendent participates and related travel outside of the District, subject to advance Board approval.

- 3.8 **Insurance.**

(a) **Health and Medical Insurance.** The District shall pay premiums for medical insurance coverage for the Superintendent pursuant to the group health care plan provided by the District. The Superintendent shall be responsible for the premiums and other payments associated with health and medical insurance for the Superintendent's dependents and/or spouse.

(b) **Disability Insurance.** For the duration of this Contract or any renewal or extension thereof or until age sixty-five, which ever first occurs, the District shall pay the premium for a long-term disability insurance policy for the Superintendent to compensate the Superintendent for an amount not to exceed 66.67% of the Superintendent's base salary, after a suitable qualifying period. It is expressly understood by the parties, in the event Superintendent qualifies under the criteria of the issuer to collect funds under the long-term disability policy, said amount collected under the long-term disability policy will serve as a credit towards the monthly salary due and owing by the District to the Superintendent, collectively not to exceed 100% of the Superintendent's base salary.

- 3.9 **Professional Growth.** The Superintendent shall devote the Superintendent's time, attention, and energy to the direction, administration, and supervision of the District. The Board, however, encourages the continued professional growth of the Superintendent through the Superintendent's active attendance at and participation in appropriate professional meetings at the local, regional, state and national levels. The Board shall encourage the use of data and information sources, and shall encourage the participation

of the Superintendent in pertinent education seminars and courses offered by public or private institutions or by educational associations, as well as the participation in informational meetings with those individuals whose particular skills, expertise, or backgrounds would serve to improve the capacity of the Superintendent to perform the Superintendent's professional responsibilities for the District. In its encouragement of the Superintendent to grow professionally, the Board shall permit a reasonable amount of release time for the Superintendent as the Superintendent and the Board deem appropriate, to attend such seminars, courses or meetings. The District shall pay the Superintendent's membership dues to the American Association of School Administrators and the Texas Association of School Administrators, as well as other memberships necessary to maintain and improve the Superintendent's professional skills. The District shall bear the reasonable cost and expense for registration, travel, meals, lodging, and other related expenses for such attendance and membership.

- 3.10 **Teacher Retirement System of Texas.** In addition to the Superintendent's stated annual salary, the District shall pay as a salary supplement, one-hundred percent (100%) of the Superintendent's portion of the monthly contribution to the Teachers Retirement System of Texas (TRS) required for the Superintendent beginning on January 9, 2026 and continuing for the term of this Contract. The additional salary supplement shall be paid to the Superintendent by regular payroll installments and shall be reported as creditable compensation by the District for purposes of TRS. The Superintendent acknowledges this payment is contingent upon and subject to applicable state law, TRS rules, and guidance in effect during the term of this Contract.

4. **REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE**

- 4.1 **Time and Basis of Evaluation.** The Board shall evaluate and assess in writing the performance of the Superintendent at least once each year during the term of this Contract.
- 4.2 **Evaluation Format and Procedure.** The evaluation format and procedure shall be in accordance with the Board's policies and state and federal law. In the event that the Board determines that the performance of the Superintendent is unsatisfactory in any respect, it shall describe in writing, in reasonable detail, specific instances of unsatisfactory performance. The evaluation shall include recommendations as to areas of improvement in all instances where the Board deems performance to be unsatisfactory. A copy of the written evaluation shall be delivered to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall have the right to make a written response to the evaluation within thirty (30) days of receipt of the written evaluation from the board. That response shall become a permanent attachment to the evaluation in the Superintendent's personnel file. Within sixty (60) days of the delivery of the written evaluation to the Superintendent, the Board shall meet with the Superintendent to discuss the evaluation. The Board shall devote a portion of, or all of, one executive session annually to a discussion of the working relationship between the Superintendent and the Board. In the event the Board deems that the evaluation instrument, format, and/or procedure is to be modified by the Board and such modifications would require new or different performance

expectations, the Superintendent shall be provided a reasonable period of time to demonstrate such expected performance before being evaluated.

- 4.3 **Confidentiality.** Unless the Superintendent expressly requests otherwise in writing, the evaluation of the Superintendent shall at all times be conducted in executive session and shall be considered confidential to the extent permitted by law. Nothing herein shall prohibit the Board or the Superintendent from sharing the content of the Superintendent's evaluation with their respective legal counsel. In addition, the Board shall treat the completed evaluation instrument as confidential to the extent required or permitted by law.

5. RENEWAL OF PERFORMANCE; SUSPENSION

- 5.1 **Renewal/Non-renewal.** Renewal or non-renewal shall be in accordance with Board policy and applicable law.
- 5.2 **Suspension.** In accordance with Texas Education Code Chapter 21, the Board may suspend the Superintendent without pay during the term of this Contract for good cause as determined by the Board.

6. TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

- 6.1 **Mutual Agreement.** This Agreement may be terminated by the mutual agreement of the Superintendent and the Board in writing, upon such terms and conditions as may be mutually agreed upon. After the Superintendent has returned the signed contract, the Superintendent will not be released from this Agreement without the written consent of the Board.
- 6.2 **Death/Retirement.** This Agreement shall be terminated upon the death of the Superintendent or upon the Superintendent's retirement under the Teacher Retirement System of Texas.
- 6.3 **Dismissal for Good Cause.** The Board may dismiss the Superintendent at any time for good cause. The term "good cause" is defined as the failure of the Superintendent to perform the duties in the scope of his employment that a person of ordinary prudence would have done under the same or similar circumstances, and includes, but is not necessarily limited to:
- (a) Failure to fulfill duties or responsibilities as set forth under the terms and conditions of this Contract;
 - (b) Incompetence or inefficiency in the performance of required or assigned duties as documented by evaluations, supplemental memoranda, or other written communication from the Board; provided, however, the terms and conditions of this paragraph shall not justify good cause unless the Board has provided the Superintendent a reasonable opportunity to remediate any incompetency or inefficiency;
 - (c) Insubordination or failure to comply with lawful written Board directives;

- (d) Failure to comply with the Board's policies or the District's administrative regulations;
- (e) Neglect of duties;
- (f) Drunkenness or excessive use of alcoholic beverages;
- (g) Illegal use of drugs, hallucinogens, or other substances regulated by the Texas Controlled Substances Act;
- (h) Conviction of a felony or crime involving moral turpitude;
- (i) Failure to meet the District's standards of professional conduct;
- (j) Failure to comply with reasonable District professional development requirements regarding advanced course work or professional development;
- (k) Disability, not otherwise protected by law, that impairs performance of the required duties of the Superintendent;
- (l) Immorality, which is conduct the Board determines is not in conformity with the accepted moral standards of the community encompassed by the District. Immorality is not confined to sexual matters, but includes conduct inconsistent with rectitude or indicative of corruption, indecency, or depravity;
- (m) Assault on an employee or student;
- (n) Knowingly falsifying records or documents related to the District's activities;
- (o) Conscious misrepresentation of facts to the Board or other District officials in the conduct of the District's business;
- (p) Failure to fulfill requirements for superintendent certification; or,
- (q) Any other reason constituting "good cause" under Texas law.

6.4 **Termination Procedure.** If the board terminates this Agreement for good cause, the Superintendent shall be afforded all the rights set forth in the Board's policies and state and federal law.

7. PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY

7.1 **Indemnification** The District shall indemnify, defend, and hold the Superintendent harmless regarding any claims, demands, duties, actions or other legal proceedings against the Superintendent, or damages incurred by the Superintendent, including court costs and attorney's fees, in his individual or official capacity for any act or failure to act involving the exercise of judgment and discretion within the normal course and scope of his duties as Superintendent of the District, to the extent and to the limits permitted by law. This paragraph does not apply if the Superintendent is found to have materially breached this Contract, to have acted with gross negligence or with intent to violate a person's clearly established legal rights, or to have engaged in official misconduct or criminal conduct, nor does it apply to criminal investigations or proceedings. The District may, at its discretion, fulfill its obligation under this paragraph by purchasing appropriate insurance coverage for the benefit of the Superintendent or by including the Superintendent as a covered party under any insurance contract providing errors and omissions insurance coverage purchased for the protection of the Board and the professional employees of the District. The Board may retain attorneys to represent the Superintendent in any proceeding for which he could seek indemnification under this paragraph, to the extent that damages are recoverable or a defense is provided, under any such contract of insurance. No individual member of the Board shall be personally

liable for indemnifying and defending the Superintendent under this paragraph. The District's obligation under this paragraph shall continue after the termination of this Contract for qualifying acts for failures to act occurring during the term of this Contract or any extension thereof.

- 7.2 **Adverse Proceedings.** The Board shall not be required to pay any costs of any legal proceedings in the event the Board and the Superintendent are adverse to each other in any such proceedings.
- 7.3 **Cooperation during the Contract Term.** The Superintendent shall fully cooperate with the District in the defense of any and all demands, claims, suits, actions and legal proceedings brought against the District during the term of this Contract.
- 7.4 **Cooperation after the Contract Term.** Following termination and/or expiration of the Contract, the Superintendent agrees to provide assistance to and cooperate with the District, its Board, Trustees, agents, and attorneys in response to, or in defense of, any demand, claim, complaint, suit, action or legal proceeding brought against the District, Board, its Trustees, or agents, arising from any acts or events alleged to have occurred during the term of Superintendent's employment with the District, at no additional expense to the District other than reimbursement to the Superintendent for his documented reasonable and necessary out-of-pocket expenses, plus reimbursement of any salary lost by Superintendent by virtue of his taking time off from his then current employment to assist the District at its request. If Superintendent is not employed at the time, the District shall compensate him at Superintendent's daily rate of pay, calculated by dividing his salary under the Contract by 226. Requests for assistance from Superintendent with respect to such matters shall be made through the Board of Trustees' President, any successor Superintendent, and/or legal counsel for the District, and the amount to be reimbursed to Superintendent shall be mutually agreed upon in advance.

8. MISCELLANEOUS

- 8.1 **Controlling Law.** This Contract shall be governed by the laws of the State of Texas.
- 8.2 **Amendment.** This Contract embodies the entire agreement between the parties and cannot be amended except by written agreement of the parties.
- 8.3 **Savings Clause.** In the event any one or more of the provisions contained in this Contract shall, for any reason, be held to be invalid, illegal, or unenforceable, such invalidity, illegality, or unenforceability shall not affect any other provision thereof, and this Contract shall be construed as if such invalid, illegal, or unenforceable provision had never been contained herein.
- 8.4 **Entire Agreement.** All existing agreements and contract, both verbal and written, between the Parties regarding the employment of the Superintendent are superseded by this Contract. This Contract and any addenda constitute the entire agreement between

the Parties. This Contract combines all prior agreements and resolutions concerning employment of the Superintendent into one document.

EXECUTED by action of the Board on this the 25th day of February, 2026.

LUMBERTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

By: Sharon Spears
Sharon Spears,
President Board of Trustees

By: Kenny Burkhalter
Kenny Burkhalter,
Secretary Board of Trustees



SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. John Mathews
Dr. John Mathews