LAKE TRAVIS ISD

PLAN OF INNOVATION

May 20, 2026 - May 20, 2030



ONE COMMUNITY. | ONE PURPOSE. | ALL HEART.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a District of Innovation?

The District of Innovation concept was passed by the 84th Legislative Session in House Bill 1842 and has been codified in the Texas Education Code Chapter 12a. A District of Innovation designation gives traditional school districts most of the flexibility currently available to Texas' open-enrollment charter schools. It gives a district more local control and increases a district's ability to decide what best suits the district's needs. Under HB 1842, districts may identify certain requirements imposed by the Texas Education Code "that inhibit the goals of the plan and from which the district should exempt on adoption of the plan."

What are the benefits to Lake Travis ISD becoming a District of Innovation?

A District of Innovation will have the flexibility to implement practices similar to charter schools and exercise local control over certain decisions about education and governance that are more appropriate for the individual needs of the District. A District of Innovation is given empowerment to innovate and think differently based on the unique needs of the school, students, and staff. Becoming a District of Innovation allows a district to customize appropriate plans district-wide, a grade level, or a single campus.

What are the proposed areas of innovation for Lake Travis ISD?

Class size in grades K-4
First day of instruction
Grievance Timeline, Processes, and Procedures
Instructional Plans and Syllabi
Parent Conferences
Probationary Teacher Contracts
School Day Interruptions - Announcements
School Day Interruptions - Tutoring/Test Prep Time
Staff Development
Teacher Appraisal System
Teacher Certifications
Teacher Mentor Program
Teacher Workdays:Minimum Service Required

What areas is Lake Travis ISD prohibited from seeking exemption?

A District of Innovation cannot seek exemption from state or federal requirements applicable to an open enrollment charter school; state requirements for curriculum or graduation; and academic and financial accountability. Additionally, a District of Innovation cannot be exempt from statutes, including but not limited to, election of board of trustees; powers and duties of school boards, superintendents, and principals; criminal history record checks and educator misconduct reporting; bilingual education; special education; prekindergarten; academic accountability including student assessment; open meetings, open records; financial accountability and related reporting; nepotism; and transportation.

Has the District done this before?

Yes. The Lake Travis ISD Board of Trustees approved its first District of Innovation Plan in December 2016. The initial plan expired in 2021, and the current renewal is effective from May 19, 2021 through May 19, 2026. A district may renew a District of Innovation Plan by following the process outlined in 19 Texas Administrative Code §102.1307 for adoption.

What is the process for developing and approving LTISD's Innovation Plan?

On November 19, 2025, the Lake Travis ISD Board of Trustees passed a resolution to initiate the process to renew the District's designation as a District of Innovation. The Board designated the Advisory Committee for Education (ACE) as the District Advisory Committee to explore and develop the renewal of the local innovation plan.

The Innovation Plan Committee was composed of key district stakeholders, including senior leadership, administration, staff, parents, board members, and community members. The committee met in January and March to draft, review, and prepare the proposed renewal of the Innovation Plan.

The proposed renewal of the Innovation Plan was posted on the District of Innovation webpage for at least 30 days. The District of Innovation Committee, which included members of the District's Advisory Committee for Education (ACE) established pursuant to Texas Education Code §11.251, held a public meeting on March 10, 2026 to consider and vote on the final version of the proposed renewal plan. The plan renewal was approved by a majority of the committee.

On April 15, 2026, the Board of Trustees voted on and adopted the final renewal plan. With approval by two-thirds of the Board, the District continued its designation as a District of Innovation under Chapter 12A of the Texas Education Code and began operating in accordance with the renewed plan.

How long is the District of Innovation Plan effective?

The renewed plan will be in effect for another term of five years.

Timeline of Events

Action	Responsibility	Date
Consideration of a renewal of designation by adoption of a resolution	Board	11/19/2025
Appoint a committee to develop a local innovation plan	Board	11/19/2025
Innovation Plan Committee meeting	ACE Committee	10/21/2025
Innovation Plan Committee meeting	ACE Committee	1/20/2026
DOI public meeting to consider final version of the proposed plan; DOI committee to vote on final plan	ACE Committee	3/10/2026
Post proposed local innovation plan on website	District	3/11/26-4/13/26
First reading for local innovation plan	Board	3/25/26
Board to vote on approval of final plan	Board	4/15/26
Notification to TEA Commissioner of approval of plan	District	4/16/26
DOI public meeting to review amendment of the plan renewal; DOI committee to vote on amended plan	ACE Committee	5/12/26
Board to vote on approval of amended plan	Board	5/20/26
Notification to TEA Commissioner of approval of amended plan	District	5/26/26

Innovation Plan Committee

Name	Position
Christin Badillo	Parent*
Victor Trasoff-Jilg	Parent*
Safina Mahmood	Parent*
Mark Barrera	Parent*
Alysson Cozart	Parent*
Prasanth Sekar	Parent*
Patrick Conolly	Parent*
Michelle Amerson	Parent*
Andrea Daugherty	Parent*
Samantha Pryor-Miller	Parent*
Kara Bell	Parent*
Erin Root	Parent*
Maria Duhovich	Parent*
Ivy Tully	Student - LTHS*
Pedro Alvarez	Student - LTHS*
Vaishnavi Senthil	Student - LTHS*
Desiree Rogacki	Community Member*
John Severance	Community Member*
Cally Conklin	Community Nonprofit*
Melissa Calderon Rivas	Teacher - LTE*
Souvany Jennings	Teacher - LWE*
Laura Annabelli	Teacher - SHE*
Bonnie Mottola	Teacher - WCHE*
Amy Wallander	Teacher - RHE*

Kim Waugh	Teacher - LTHS*
Samantha Lopez	Teacher - 18+ Program*
Brittany Baptista	Teacher - LTHS*
Dr. Curtis Null	Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Bethany Medford	Assistant Superintendent of School Leadership
Tasha Barker	Assistant Superintendent of Organizational Services
Susan Fambrough	Assistant Superintendent of Human Resource Services
Pam Sanchez	Assistant Superintendent of Business Services
Chad Crowson	General Counsel
Chris Woehl	Executive Director of Technology & Information Services
Dr. Lyndsea Benton	Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Marco Alvarado	Executive Director of Communications/Community Relations
Jennifer Freeman	Executive Director of Special Services
Lianka Soliz	Senior Director of FANS & Transportation
Roy Hudson	Senior Director of Maintenance & Safety
Shannon Gill	Director of Fine Arts
Kathy Burbank	Director of Accountability & Assessment
Jennifer Garrigan	Director of Counseling and Health Services
Hank Carter	Director of Athletics
Paula Miller	Director of Transportation
Brad Goerke	Director of Finance - Comptroller
Claire Kinnersley	Director of Corporate Relations/LTEF
Cristy Soares	Director of Purchasing
Robert Winovitch	Director for Facilities and Construction Services
Brad Merritt	Director of Security/Chief of Police
Betsy Russell	Director of Quality Assurance
Suzi Menfi	Director of Community Programs

James Bush	Principal - LTHS
Rebecca Hudson	Principal - LTMS
Laura Keogh	Principal - HBMS
Melanie Beninga	Principal - BCMS*
Amanda Prehn	Principal - LTE
Matthew Nelson	Principal - LWE
Kim Kellner	Principal - BCE
Karen Reich	Principal - LPE
Angela Page	Principal - RHE
Keegan Luedecke	Principal - SHE
Amy Russ	Principal - WCHE
Phil Davis	Board Member Ex-Officio
Kris Woodcock	Board Member Ex-Officio

*Denotes individuals who serve on the District's Advisory Committee on Education (ACE).

Innovation Plan

As a District of Innovation, Lake Travis ISD seeks to maximize local control over educational and governance decisions for students and staff. To carry forward that mission, LTISD seeks exemption from the following provisions of the Texas Education Code. The District intends to continue to follow the Texas Education Code in all other areas. If amendments to this plan are considered at some point in the future, the District will reconvene the innovation plan committee to initiate the appropriate process, as outlined in Chapter 12a of the Texas Education Code.

CLASS SIZE IN GRADES K-4

(Texas Education Code §§ 25.112, 25.113) (BF LEGAL, EEB LEGAL)

Manner in which the statute inhibits the plan

The Texas Education Code currently requires the District to maintain a class size of 22 students or less in each kindergarten through fourth grade class. When a class exceeds this limit, the district must complete a waiver with the Texas Education Agency (TEA). These waivers are rarely rejected by TEA, making the process of applying for a waiver no more than an administrative step of putting TEA on notice. Along with the waiver, the District is required to notify parents of the waiver or exception to the class size limit. Many times soon after the waiver is submitted, students move out of the district and the class returns to a size at or below 22 students, thus negating the need for the waiver or notification to parents.

Category of innovation

Campus governance

Innovation strategies

The average class size in kindergarten through fourth grade in LTISD is 19.33. However, numerous circumstances each year necessitate applying for class-size waivers. While LTISD certainly believes that small class size plays a positive role in the classroom, research does not support a negative effect when only one or two more students are added. Class size must be balanced with the logistics of funding, availability of resources and space, parental requests or desires, and adding staff. LTISD's purpose is not to disregard the intent of class size ratios, but rather to allow the District more flexibility and control in determining appropriate class sizes based on the unique facts and circumstances.

1. LTISD will establish local ratios for all Kinder through 5th grade classes and will attempt to keep all classes sufficiently staffed, but will allow local consideration in placing students.
2. A TEA waiver will no longer be filed when a K-4 classroom exceeds the 22:1 ratio.
3. The board of trustees will be notified of all class sizes that exceed the locally established ratios.

FIRST DAY OF INSTRUCTION

(Texas Education Code § 25.0811) (EB LEGAL, EB LOCAL)

Manner in which the statute inhibits 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 eventually was eliminated, 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's, board of trustees', and community members' needs and desires. It also inhibits the District from creating a calendar that better balances the instructional semesters.

Category of innovation

Modifications to the school year

Innovation strategies

1. To allow for a calendar that fits the local needs of our community, the District will determine on an annual basis the local starting date for the first semester of each school year.
2. Students will begin no earlier than the second Monday in August of any given year.

These strategies provide the District the benefits of additional time for staff to plan and students to learn; additional time for staff to prepare for summer school; equitable allocation of the days in the two semesters; additional professional learning community time for staff; flexibility to end the school year earlier, which in turn, allows staff and students starting college the ability to access the first summer semester of college courses.

GRIEVANCE TIMELINE, PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

(Texas Education Code TEC §26A.002)

Manner in which the statute inhibits the plan

The statute requires that, for a hearing not conducted before the board of trustees of the school district, the district must hold a hearing no later than the tenth (10th) day after the date the grievance or appeal is filed and issue a written decision no later than the twentieth (20th) day after the hearing, including any relief or redress to be provided. These requirements, calculated in calendar days rather than business days, limit the District's ability to administer a thorough, orderly, and equitable grievance process.

The use of calendar-day deadlines imposes operational constraints during periods when district offices are closed or operating with limited staffing, including holidays and scheduled breaks such as Thanksgiving, Winter Break, and Spring Break. During these periods, the statutory timelines may significantly compress the time available for investigation, coordination of witnesses, review of documentation, consultation with legal counsel, and preparation of a written decision. As a result, the statute inhibits the District's ability to ensure procedural consistency, due process, and thoughtful resolution of grievances while balancing staffing availability and operational realities. The rigid timelines restrict local discretion to manage grievance procedures in a manner that prioritizes fairness, accuracy, and effective use of district resources.

Category of innovation

Local Governance, Administrative Processes, and Operational Flexibility.

Innovation strategies

The exemption permits the District to establish locally determined grievance timelines, processes, and procedures that support timely, thorough, and equitable resolution of concerns while accounting for operational realities, staffing availability, and scheduled district closures. The innovation supports efficient administrative operations, procedural fairness, and effective use of district resources while maintaining appropriate due process protections.

Pursuant to this plan, the District will implement locally developed grievance timelines, processes, and procedures that provide flexibility to account for district calendars, office closures, and staffing availability while ensuring timely and equitable resolution of grievances. The District may calculate grievance timelines using business days rather than calendar days, as appropriate, to allow sufficient time for investigation, documentation review, witness coordination, and preparation of written decisions. This flexibility supports procedural consistency, due process, and thoughtful decision-making while enabling the District to manage grievance proceedings efficiently and in alignment with operational realities.

INSTRUCTIONAL PLANS AND SYLLABI

(Texas Education Code § 26.0062)

Manner in which the statute inhibits the plan

Texas Education Code §26.0062 requires the board of trustees of a school district to adopt a policy mandating that an instructional plan or course syllabus for each class offered by the District be made available on the District's internet website at the beginning of each semester. The statute further requires each teacher to provide, prior to the beginning of each semester, a copy of the instructional plan or course syllabus for each class taught to both district administration and the parent of each student enrolled in the class, and to furnish additional copies upon parental request.

These statutory requirements restrict the District's ability to implement flexible instructional planning and delivery models that adapt throughout the semester in response to student needs, curriculum pacing, formative assessment data, and instructional refinement. The prescriptive timing and distribution mandates limit teacher professional discretion and impose administrative obligations that reduce instructional planning flexibility and constrain the District's capacity to implement innovative instructional approaches, interdisciplinary coursework, and responsive lesson design.

Additionally, the requirement to publish instructional plans or course syllabi for each class by a fixed statutory deadline creates operational challenges during the initial stages of each semester, affecting both district-level and campus-level readiness. The requirement that teachers distribute instructional plans or course syllabi to parents prior to the start of the semester further concentrates administrative responsibilities on instructional staff during periods already characterized by significant competing duties following summer or winter breaks. Collectively, these requirements inhibit the District's ability to fully implement a locally developed instructional framework that emphasizes adaptability, continuous improvement, efficient use of resources, and meaningful parent communication.

Category of innovation

Other innovations prescribed by the Board of Trustees

Innovation strategies

Pursuant to this plan, exemption from the requirements of Texas Education Code §26.0062 will permit the District to implement flexible and responsive instructional planning practices that allow instructional plans and course content to evolve throughout the semester based on student needs, curriculum pacing, and formative assessment data. The exemption enables the District to utilize alternative methods of providing instructional information to parents, including curriculum guides, unit-level overviews, and other locally developed communication tools, rather than adhering to prescriptive timelines and distribution mandates. This flexibility reduces administrative duplication, supports innovative and interdisciplinary instructional models, allows educators to prioritize instructional readiness and student support at the beginning of each semester, and facilitates more effective use of instructional and administrative resources while continuing to ensure transparency and parent access to instructional information upon request.

Pursuant to this plan, exemption from the statutory requirements of Texas Education Code §26.0062 allows Lake Travis Independent School District to implement instructional planning and communication practices that are responsive to instructional needs and operational realities. The District will continue to maintain Parent Content Guides on the District website for core academic courses, which provide parents with curriculum transparency and course-level instructional information.

For non-core courses, instructional plans or course syllabi will be made available upon parental request. This approach preserves meaningful parent access to instructional information while affording educators additional flexibility to refine instructional plans during the early weeks of the semester based on student needs, curriculum pacing, and formative assessment data. The exemption enables the District to reduce unnecessary administrative duplication, support instructional quality, and allocate educator time more effectively, while continuing to uphold transparency and parent engagement.

PARENT CONFERENCES

(Texas Education Code § 28.022(a)(1))

Manner in which the statute inhibits the plan

Texas Education Code §28.022(a) requires a school district's board of trustees to adopt a policy providing for a minimum of two in-person parent-teacher conferences during each school year. This statutory requirement limits the District's ability to implement alternative communication models and flexible conference structures that may better align with modern family schedules, educator workloads, and evolving instructional practices. The in-person mandate restricts the District's discretion to utilize virtual, hybrid, or non-traditional conferencing formats as substitutes for in-person conferences and reduces flexibility in calendar planning and staff scheduling. As a result, the statute inhibits the District's ability to fully implement a locally designed plan that emphasizes innovative, efficient, and flexible family engagement practices while maintaining meaningful parent-teacher communication.

Category of innovation

Other innovations prescribed by the Board of Trustees

Innovation strategies

Prior to the 2025 Legislative Session, state law required the board of trustees of each school district to adopt a policy providing for a parent-teacher conference. Lake Travis Independent School District affirms its commitment to meaningful parent engagement and shall continue to provide at least one opportunity for a parent-teacher conference during each school year, as scheduled on the applicable campus calendar.

Pursuant to this plan, exemption from the statutory parent-teacher conference requirement affords the District discretion to determine the number, timing, and format of parent-teacher conferences in a manner consistent with local needs and priorities. Each campus shall continue to permit parents to request and participate in conferences with teachers, counselors, campus administrators, and other appropriate staff members as necessary to address matters related to a student's educational program.

The exemption enables the District to allocate instructional time and educator work hours more efficiently, reduce prescriptive scheduling mandates, and implement locally developed family engagement practices while maintaining open access to school personnel. Determinations regarding parent-teacher conferences shall be made by the Board of Trustees, the Superintendent, and/or campus principals, in collaboration with parents, and in accordance with District policy and campus procedures. Parent conferences shall remain available upon request throughout the school year.

PROBATIONARY TEACHER CONTRACTS

(Texas Education Code 21.102(b)) (DCA LEGAL)

Manner in which the statute inhibits the plan

The Texas Education Code requires that teachers newly-hired by the District who have five years of experience in public education in Texas within the last eight years can only be placed on a one-year probationary contract, and after the first year, must be placed on a term contract. In contrast, newly-hired teachers without the 5 of 8 years of experience can be hired by the District on a one-year probationary contract for a total of three years. This law limits the District's ability to sufficiently assess and determine whether a newly-hired teacher is a good fit for the District. The one-year probationary period is insufficient to evaluate the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom because the teacher contract renewal timelines demand that employment decisions be made before the end of the school year.

Category of innovation

Other innovations prescribed by the Board of Trustees

Innovation strategies

To create equity in new hires, to give LTISD the opportunity to serve students better, to allow administrators time to evaluate performance, and to provide opportunities for improvement, growth and professional development, the District will issue all new teachers hired in Lake Travis ISD a one-year probationary contract for a total of three years.

SCHOOL DAY INTERRUPTIONS - ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Texas Education Code § 25.083(a)) (EC LEGAL, EC LOCAL)

Manner in which the statute inhibits the plan

The Texas Education Code limits announcements, other than emergency announcements, made by a campus administrator over the public address system to only once during the school day. Many legitimate reasons other than emergencies can arise throughout a school day which necessitate the use of the public address system in order to inform or notify students and/or staff of information in an efficient and effective manner. This law limits campus administration's ability to use the PA system when determined appropriate or necessary.

Category of innovation

Campus governance

Innovation strategies

LTISD will eliminate the restriction and allow campus administrators to exercise their professional judgment in the use of public address systems in order to notify or inform students and/or staff of relevant school-related information at any time deemed necessary and appropriate.

SCHOOL DAY INTERRUPTIONS - TUTORING/TEST PREP TIME

(Texas Education Code § 25.083(b)) (EC LEGAL, EC LOCAL)

Manner in which the statute inhibits the plan

The Texas Education Code limits the ability to remove a student from a regularly scheduled class for remedial tutoring or test preparation if, as a result of the removal, the student would miss more than 10 percent of the school days on which the class is offered, unless a parent otherwise provides written consent. While the District recognizes the importance of keeping students in regularly-scheduled classes, this restriction imposes limitations on otherwise critical support and teaching necessary for students who may be struggling or in need of more individualized support and assistance.

Category of innovation

Campus governance and instructional methods

Innovation strategies

LTISD will allow for a waiver of the ten percent cap when a student's RTI/MTSS committee, 504 committee, ARD committee, language proficiency assessment committee (LPAC), Student Success Initiative (SSI)/grade placement committee, or attendance committee determines such intervention outside of the regular classroom is necessary and appropriate. Parents must receive notification of the type of support or intervention the student will be receiving.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

(Texas Education Code §21.451)

Manner in which the statute inhibits the plan

Texas Education Code §21.451 prescribes mandatory annual staff development and training requirements applicable to all educators. These statutory requirements limit the District's discretion to design and implement locally developed professional learning models that align with district priorities, campus needs, educator roles, and instructional improvement goals. The prescriptive nature of the statute constrains the District's ability to differentiate professional development by position, experience level, or instructional assignment and reduces flexibility in determining the content, delivery methods, timing, and sequencing of professional learning activities.

As a result, the statute inhibits the District's ability to implement a comprehensive, outcomes-driven staff development framework that emphasizes targeted training, job-embedded learning, instructional coaching, and continuous improvement while allowing for efficient use of instructional time and district resources.

Category of innovation

Other innovations prescribed by the Board of Trustees

Innovation strategies

Pursuant to this plan, exemption from the requirements of Texas Education Code §21.451 permits the District to implement a differentiated, outcomes-based professional learning framework. The District will provide ongoing professional learning opportunities through regularly scheduled sessions; however, the frequency and duration of certain training requirements may be adjusted based on an employee's years of service, role, and demonstrated mastery of required content as evidenced through pre-assessments or other locally developed measures.

This flexibility allows the District to reduce redundant training for experienced educators, prioritize targeted support for staff based on identified needs, and allocate professional learning time more effectively. The exemption supports instructional quality by enabling job-embedded learning, coaching, and continuous improvement models while allowing the District to use staff development time and resources efficiently and responsively, consistent with local priorities and educator effectiveness.

TEACHER APPRAISAL SYSTEM

(Texas Education Code § 21.352(c)) (DNA LEGAL, DNA LOCAL, DNA REGULATION)

Manner in which the statute inhibits the plan

The state currently requires use of a teacher appraisal system called the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS). LTISD is currently using T-TESS as its teacher appraisal system. While this system is designed to meet the needs of the entire state, LTISD seeks to customize certain aspects of the system to better meet the needs of its teachers and campus administrators.

Category of innovation

Accountability and assessment measures that exceed the state and federal law

Innovation strategies

The District seeks to allow teachers who have demonstrated high-quality performance the opportunity to be exempt from a full appraisal under certain circumstances that are locally established. A non-probationary teacher may be exempt if he/she meets the local criteria. These innovation strategies offer local benefits including increased opportunities for more unannounced walk-throughs, which are more reflective of what is happening in a teacher's classroom than a scheduled observation. This flexibility will increase an administrator's ability to focus on struggling or new teachers, and will continue to allow administrators to have meaningful professional interactions with all campus staff.

TEACHER CERTIFICATION

(Texas Education Code §§ 21.003(a), 21.0031; 21.053) (DK LEGAL, DK LOCAL, DK EXHIBIT, DBA LEGAL, DBA LOCAL, DF LEGAL)

Manner in which the statute inhibits the plan

The Texas Education Code requires a public school employee to have the appropriate certification for his or her current assignment unless the appropriate permit has been issued. The credentials appropriate to each assignment are set forth in the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) rules at 19 Administrative Code Chapter 231. In the event an appropriately certified teacher cannot be found, the District must request an emergency certification from TEA and SBEC. These rules are burdensome and do not take into account the unique needs and circumstances of the district. Certain subject areas, in particular, are often very difficult to find properly-certified teachers.

Category of innovation

Other innovations prescribed by the Board of Trustees

Innovation strategies

In order to best serve LTISD students, certain decisions on certification will be handled locally. Campus administrators will have the ability to consider out-of-state or out-of-country educator certifications and professional qualifications or credentials of candidates, as well as to review the strengths and qualifications of campus staff to make local recommendations for teaching outside of certain certification areas in hard to fill positions, as allowed by locally established policy. The Superintendent or designee will approve all local certifications and will report to the board of trustees.

TEACHER MENTOR PROGRAM

(Texas Education Code §21.458) (DEAA LEGAL)

Manner in which the statute inhibits the plan

The Texas Education Code, in conjunction with rules found in the Texas Administrative Code, implement a significant number of requirements related to the qualifications to serve as a teacher mentor, how long a mentor must be assigned, mentor training requirements, how many mentor sessions are required, etc. These are state-wide requirements without any consideration of local needs or the specific needs of a mentor program at LTISD and may limit the number of teachers who can serve or who are willing to serve in a mentor role.

Category of innovation

Other innovations prescribed by the Board of Trustees

Innovation strategies

The development of a robust mentoring program is an identified need; however, LTISD will create a locally-designed mentor program that more appropriately meets the needs and interests of its administrators and teachers. Over the course of the 2021-2022 school year, district administrators will work with campus administrators and teaching staff to develop requirements and processes for a mentor program with the goal of implementing a new program in the 2022-2023 school year. For the 2021-2022 school year, current mentoring practices will remain in place.

TEACHER WORKDAYS: MINIMUM SERVICE REQUIRED

(Texas Education Code §21.401(b))

Manner in which the statute inhibits the plan

Texas Education Code §21.401(b) requires that employment contracts for educators be for a minimum of 10 months and provide for a minimum of 187 days of service. The statute inhibits full flexibility in calendar design and staffing models by establishing a fixed minimum threshold for educator service days that must be met regardless of local operational preferences or alternative instructional structures.

Category of innovation

Other innovations prescribed by the Board of Trustees

Innovation strategies

The District will continue to provide ten-month employment contracts to educators; however, pursuant to this plan, the District will be exempt from the statutory requirement of 187 days of service. This exemption provides the District with flexibility to reduce educator contract service days from 187 to no fewer than 185 days, without any reduction in educator salaries. The ability to maintain the current salary schedule while reducing required service days enhances the District's competitiveness in educator recruitment and retention.

The exemption further allows the District to establish educator work schedules and instructional calendars that align with local instructional priorities, operational needs, and fiscal considerations, while supporting improved work-life balance and workplace satisfaction for educators. For purposes of this amendment, all other staff groups shall have their required workdays reduced by the same number of days to ensure consistency and equity across employee groups.

Each year during the term of the plan, the District will evaluate educator contract days as part of the annual calendar development process and will make a good-faith effort to maintain a reduced number of contract days when economically and functionally feasible, while continuing to meet all instructional time, student attendance, and operational requirements.