



District of Innovation Lewisville ISD Local Innovation Plan

Introduction

Passed in 2015, House Bill 1842 created Districts of Innovation under Section 12A of the Texas Education Code (TEC). A district may apply for designation as a District of Innovation to be exempt from specific statutes of the TEC so long as the district's most recent performance rating is at least acceptable ("C"). Designation as a District of Innovation provides Lewisville ISD with more local control, customization, and flexibility.

On May 16, 2017, the Lewisville ISD Board of Trustees (Board) approved a Local Innovation Plan (Plan) that was created and voted favorably by a board-appointed District of Innovation Committee (Committee). No amendments or changes have been made to the Local Innovation Plan since its approval and it is set to expire on May 15, 2022. On September 13, 2021, the LISD Board of Trustees appointed a new District of Innovation Committee to revise and renew the existing plan. The committee consists of 34 parents, teachers, principals, district administrators, and community members, 14 of which previously served on the committee. Representation across the five high school feeder patterns has been ensured and membership priority was given to returning applicants for continuity purposes.

Terms

By law, designation as a District of Innovation may not exceed five years. The term of the Lewisville ISD Local Innovation Plan begins on May 02, 2022, and ends on May 01, 2027, unless amended or terminated earlier by the Board in accordance with the law or terminated by the Commissioner of Education. The plan may be amended, rescinded or renewed by recommendation of the Committee, a majority vote of the district-level committee established under TEC 11.251 (Committee) along with a two-thirds majority vote of the Board. An amendment to the Plan does not change/extend the date of the term of designation as an innovation district; exemptions that were already formally approved are not required to be reviewed. The District must notify the Texas Education Agency (TEA) within five business days of rescission of the plan and provide a date (not to be later than the start of the following school year) at which time it will be in compliance with all sections of the TEC. During renewal, all sections of the plan and exemptions shall be reviewed and the original statutory adoption process must be followed. The District shall notify the Commissioner of any actions taken to amend, rescind or renew the Plan along with the associated TEC exemptions and local approval dates.

The Committee will review the plan annually in the spring, unless the Board determines a review must be done prior to the annual review, to ensure that the recommendations are continuing to meet the needs of the District as intended and are aligned with Lewisville ISD (LISD) Strategic Design efforts. An annual report that includes data on the usage of each exemption will be provided to the Board based on the outcome of this review.

As part of the annual review process, the membership of the Committee will be renewed and/or modified by a majority vote of the Board. Outside of the annual review/renewal process, if a member of the Committee is unable to fulfill his/her duties, the Board may appoint a replacement by majority vote. The intent of the Board is to maintain a balanced representation on the Committee of parents/community members and staff.

Lewisville ISD's Local Innovation Plan is aligned with the beliefs, vision, mission, and goals of LISD as approved in the Strategic Design Plan. Additionally, the Plan is not intended to compromise District funding.

Core Beliefs

We believe:

1. Every student is uniquely capable and deserves to be challenged each day.
2. Uninhibited learning depends on a safe, nurturing, inclusive and flexible environment.
3. An educated citizenry is essential for equal opportunity and a prosperous society.
4. Meaningful and relevant work engages students in profound learning.
5. Critical thinking and problem-solving today are necessary for students to be equipped for future challenges.
6. Genuine transformation requires disruptive innovation.
7. Education is the shared responsibility of the community.

Vision

All of our students enjoying thriving, productive lives in a future *they* create.

Mission

Students, staff and community design and implement a learning organization that provides engaging, innovative experiences every day.

Goals

1. Provide all learners with safe, nurturing, inclusive and flexible learning environments.
2. Engage learners through the use of technological tools to access, create and share content as well as collaborate with other learners throughout the world.
3. Reframe state readiness standards in a way that leads to profound learning and has meaning and value for students.

4. Create flexible systems that result in a learning organization supported by innovative and engaged staff.
5. Continuously involve our diverse community, staff and students to use their strengths, resources and talents to provide engaging, innovative experiences for all learners.
6. Develop and implement meaningful, varied assessments that inform and inspire students and educators for continuous improvement and growth in a way that transforms learning and teaching.
7. Design an accountability system that transcends state/national mandates and reflects local values and expectations.

Innovations

It is determined that the following requirements of the Texas Education Code inhibit the pursuit of the goals of LISD in meeting the needs of students at this time.

Innovation Plan Exemption 1: Uniform Start Date for Academic Calendar

Texas Education Code [25.0811\(a\)](#) does not allow school districts to begin school before the fourth Monday of August. Exemption from Texas Education Code 25.0811(a) allows LISD to collaboratively design an academic calendar based on the needs of and input from the community. It provides the flexibility needed to maximize instructional time available before key exams and align more closely with dual credit courses.

Innovation Plan Exemption 2: Campus Behavior Coordinator

Texas Education Code Section [37.0012](#) constrains campus governance by requiring one person at each campus to be designated to serve as the campus behavior coordinator. LISD utilizes a collaborative approach to discipline to strengthen student learning and foster positive interactions. This collaborative approach includes the parent, student, school administrator and counselor. Exemption from Texas Education Code Section 37.0012 allows LISD campus principals to divide and/or delegate campus behavior coordinator duties to assistant principals as needed and appropriate. The Board will receive regular updates on campus behavioral issues.

Innovation Plan Exemption 3: Probationary Contracts for Experienced Teachers

Texas Education Code Section [21.102\(b\)](#) states that a probationary contract may not exceed one year for a person who has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment with the district. This period of time may not be sufficient to evaluate the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom since teacher contract timelines demand that employment decisions must be made prior to the availability of end-of-year classroom and student data. Exemption from Texas Education Code Section 21.102(b) allows LISD to offer an additional probationary contract, when needed, to teachers, counselors, librarians, or nurses that are new to LISD who have been employed in public education for at least five of the eight previous years to benefit the individual, schools, and students served. Offering an additional probationary contract will only be used when necessary to further support the impacted individual and campus.

Innovation Plan Exemption 4: Educator Certification for Teachers in State-Identified Shortage Areas in Non-Compliance Programs

Texas Education Codes [21.003](#) and [21.057](#) outlines state certification standards and notification standards for teachers. An exemption from these requirements allows LISD to issue a school district teaching permit to individuals who do not hold a teaching certificate or do not hold a certificate in the content area and/or grade in which they will be assigned, but whom the district deems best to teach in a state-identified shortage area. Shortage areas are defined annually by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and approved by the U.S. Department of Education. In the event LISD experiences a shortage area that is not on the state's shortage area list, the Superintendent and Chief Human Resource Officer will inform the Board. LISD will always strive to ensure only the highest quality educators are hired for the benefit of our students. Classroom teachers with current state credentials will remain the preference. However, on occasion when the district has positions that are difficult to fill, this exemption may be leveraged to meet the needs of a campus. Staff hired under a school district teaching permit will benefit from the same rights and responsibilities as certified teachers within the district. After the required posting period and candidate interviews, the principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what specific credentials (i.e. experiences and expertise) the prospective teacher possess that would qualify the individual to teach that subject(s). The Superintendent must approve the selection and report the action to the Board at the first board meeting following the assignment. Teachers hired under this exemption will be required to participate in the district's three-year tiered support system that is customized for DOI hires to ensure successful acclimation to their role in the district. Finally, this is a local certification only and does not transfer to another school district.

Amendment:

On July 25, 2023 the district-level committee established under the Texas Education Code (TEC), § 11.251 held a public meeting to consider the final version of the proposed plan (with amendment) and the plan was approved by a unanimous vote of the committee members. On August 7, 2023 the Board adopted the proposed local innovation plan (with amendment) by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the membership of the board.

Innovation Plan Exemption 5: Mandatory Disciplinary Alternative Education Program for E-Cigarettes

Under HB114 in the 88th Legislature, the Texas Education Code 37.006 was amended to specify the following: *a) Subject to the requirements of Section 37.009(a), a [A] student shall be removed from class and placed in a disciplinary alternative education program as provided by Section 37.008 if the student...C-2) possesses, uses, sells, gives, or delivers to another person an e-cigarette, as defined by Section 161.081, Health and Safety Code...*

This has the effect of requiring districts to place a student at DAEP for possessing or using any part of a vaping device, with or without the presence of any prohibited substances. Our DAEP campus already experiences periods throughout the school year where capacity is reached, and this change has the potential to add several hundred placements each school year based on district data. Additionally, the district believes that a less punitive consequence, paired with

a counseling intervention for a first offense will better support early intervention efforts, maintain academic consistency, and keep students engaged in school activities and experiences. For first offenses of e-cigarettes, including any parts and accessories as well as any nicotine cartridges, if the parent and student agree to participate in a district provided counseling program or other program approved by the district, the campus administration will assign in-school suspension or a comparable setting, not to exceed 5 days, instead of placement at DAEP as required by the Texas Education Code.

This exemption will only apply to e-cigarette offenses that did not involve THC or other controlled substances or illegal drugs. Those offenses will continue to be subject to mandatory DAEP or JJAEP as per the Texas Education Code and LISD Student Code of Conduct. Additionally, subsequent e-cigarette offenses in the same school year will not be subject to this exemption and will continue to be subject to mandatory DAEP or JJAEP as per the Texas Education Code and LISD Student Code of Conduct. Additionally, since the district's current counseling alternative is not available to students under grade 3, a counseling alternative will be developed on a case-by-case basis to support individual students in the lower grades if needed.

Summary

The District of Innovation Committee carefully weighed and considered the renewal of each of these exemptions and found each of these to offer the flexibility and local control we need to better serve our students, their families, and our communities. These exemptions are also common among surrounding school districts and can be found in their local innovation plans. The DOI Committee will meet annually to review these exemptions and explore ways that the district may continue to innovate in ways that meet the needs of our students and educators.

DOI Committee Members

Deborah Bailey – Principal
Jason Cooper – District Leadership
Kim Coppens – Teacher
Monya Crow – District Leadership
Beri Deister – Principal
Janice Eason – Teacher
Marianne Eckley – Teacher/ATPE Representative
Doug Emery – Teacher
Ginny Evans – Teacher/TSTA Representative
Timothy Fails – Teacher
Rachel Flanders – Principal
Kate Gesch – Board Appointed Community Member
Adam Gray – Principal
T-Ronn Hicks – Board Appointed Community Member
Demetrius Hicks – Teacher
Kristina Higgins – Board Appointed Community Member
Pam Johnson – Board Appointed Community Member
Erynn Keenen – Parent
Jules Kunsy – Parent
Cris Manning – Board Appointed Community Member
Lynette Narrell – Board Appointed Community Member
Andy Plunkett – District Leadership
Michelle Reed – Parent
Estella Rupard – District Leadership
Eyad Salloum – Community Member/Parent
Brandi Schwertner – Community Member/Parent
Shawn Sheehan – District Leadership
Heather Shorter – Principal
Will Skelton – Principal
Shelia Smith – District Leadership
Stephanie Smith – Parent
Vicky Ursi – Board Appointed Community Member
Gail Warner – Teacher/UEA Representative
Kim West – Parent

District of Innovation Renewal Process

