

Lampasas

Independent School District



District of Innovation Plan

December 2021 – December 2026

Lampasas ISD

District of Innovation Plan

Introduction

HB 1842 was passed during the 84th Texas Legislative Session in Spring 2015, and provides Texas public school districts the opportunity to be designated as Districts of Innovation. To access these flexibilities, a school district must adopt an innovation plan, as set forth in the Texas Education Code Chapter 12A.

Districts of Innovation may be exempted from a number of state statutes and will have:

- Greater local control as the decision makers over the educational and instructional model for students;
- Increased freedom and flexibility, with accountability, relative to state mandates that govern educational programming; and
- Empowerment to innovate and think differently.

Districts are not exempt from statutes including curriculum and graduation requirements, and academic and financial accountability.

LISD Historical Timeline

On November 7, 2016, the Lampasas Independent School District's Board of Trustees passed a Resolution to Initiate the Process of Designation as a District of Innovation in order to support innovation and local initiatives to improve student learning.

On November 7, 2016 the Lampasas ISD Board of Trustees held a public hearing on whether the District should pursue the designation as a District of Innovation. The Board of Trustees appointed the District of Innovation Committee to discuss and draft a Local Innovation Plan. This committee represented various stakeholders across the district, including teachers, parents, campus administration, district administration, and Board of Trustees. The committee met on November 8th and 10th to discuss and develop the plan. A follow up meeting to finalize the plan was held on November 17, 2016. The plan was posted on the district website November 22, 2016.

A review of the plan was conducted by the District Site-Base Decision Making Committee on December 1, 2016.

The school board approved the plan on January 9, 2017.

Term of Renewal

The District of Innovation Plan will become effective after school board approval and will remain in effect for five years, through December 2026, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. Any

amendment to the Innovation Plan must follow the same process as the plan development. The District of Innovation Committee would consider any proposed amendment/s. Any amendment/s would require majority approval of the District of Innovation Committee, a majority approval of the District Site-Based Committee, and posting on the district website for 30 days. A 2/3 vote by the Board of Trustees would be required for final approval of any amendment/s.

Lampasas I.S.D. Renewal Timeline

Timeline	Activity/Task
October 12, 2021	<i>Meeting of DOI Committee to discuss District of Innovation Plan</i>
October 26, 2021	<i>District Site-Based Committee Meeting (TEC 11.251)</i>
November 1, 2021	<i>Notification sent to TEA of proposed renewal plan.</i>
November 1, 2021	<i>Post DOI Plan on Lampasas ISD website for 30 days</i>
December 6, 2021	<i>Recommend Final Plan to Board of Trustees for Approval</i>

District of Innovation Renewal Committee

Member Name	District/Community Role
Dana Holcomb	<i>Assistant Superintendent</i>
Julie Salvato	<i>Career & Technical Education (CTE) Director</i>
Heather Naragon	<i>Teacher, Hanna Springs Elementary</i>
Shane Jones	<i>LISD CFO</i>
Wes Graham	<i>Principal, Lampasas Middle School</i>
Carl Gehring	<i>Teacher, Lampasas High School</i>
Whitney Walker	<i>LISD HR Director</i>
Sherrie Berry	<i>Kline Whitis Instructional Specialist</i>
Leanne Bobo	<i>Principal, Kline Whitis Elementary</i>
Joey McQueen	<i>Principal, Lampasas High School</i>
Kyle Black	<i>Teacher, Taylor Creek Elementary</i>
Jessica Hedges	<i>Teacher, Lampasas Middle School</i>
Maurine Patterson	<i>LISD Parent</i>
David Millican	<i>LISD School Board Member</i>

Proposed Exemptions

The following are the provisions of the Texas Education code that inhibit the goals of the district and from which the district seeks to exempt itself through adoption of the District of Innovation Plan.

SCHOOL START DATE

(EB LEGAL) (Texas Education Code 25.0811)

Current Law

Uniform School Calendar (TEC 25.0811) (EB LEGAL) Texas Education Code Section 25.0811 states that a school district may not begin instruction before the fourth Monday in August.

Proposed

This flexibility of a start date allows the district to determine locally, on an annual basis, what best meets the needs of the students and local community. This flexibility of the start date also offers the following opportunities:

- a) This will allow the first and second semesters to be somewhat equal in the number of days of instruction.
- b) Students participating in Dual Enrollment opportunities will work with balanced semesters, which align with our local colleges.
- c) An early start date permits students an additional week of instruction prior to state assessments in December.
- d) Students will be afforded opportunities to enroll in summer college sessions with finalized official transcripts and staff will be able to attend summer school classes as well.
- e) This would allow an option to start school with a shorter week, easing the transition for students entering kindergarten, middle school, and high school.

LISD Local Guidelines

The district will determine, on an annual basis, when each school year will begin.

LOCAL ROLE IN TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION

(DNA LEGAL) (Texas Education Code 21.351, 21.352, 21.353, 21.354, 21.3541)

Current Law

The state of Texas has used the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS) and Texas Principal Evaluation System (T-PESS) since 2016 -2017.

Proposed

A committee of administrators and teachers would have the option to develop a local teacher and principal evaluation system that could be a combination of T-TESS, T-PESS, and other best practices.

Local Guidelines

The state teacher appraisal system called the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS) and the Texas Principal Evaluation and Support System (T-PESS) have been utilized by the district since 2016 -2017. While the district intends to continue to use T-TESS and T-PESS, the district would like the option to exercise local control of decisions regarding teacher and other administrative appraisals.

TEACHER CERTIFICATION

(DK LEGAL, LOCAL; DBA LOCAL)(Texas Education Code 21.003)

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. Additionally, Districts must submit requests to the TEA to hire a teacher who is teaching a subject outside of their certification area.

Innovation Benefits/Strategy

Lampasas ISD will continue to seek traditionally certified candidates for all teaching positions. However, the district's exemption from TEC 21.003 would allow the district to consider part-time professionals to teach courses, allow industry expert professionals to transition into the teaching profession in Career and Technology, assist in staffing high need STEM and dual credit course offerings, and allow the District to identify and staff hard-to-fill teaching positions. Out-of-

state certified teachers could be considered for positions upon a local review of experience, education and credentials. Often there are experienced certified teachers in our district that could teach a course outside of their certification area due to their education, background and/or experience. Local decisions outside of state certification requirements would allow innovation and flexibility in scheduling to meet student needs.

Campus Principals shall submit to the Superintendent a written request to allow a certified teacher to teach a subject outside of his/her field and/or grade level; or a non-certified individual with experience in a dual credit field, career and technical education (CTE) field, or science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) field, or a hard-to-fill area to teach in a field in which they have experience.

Local Guidelines

- a) Local teaching permits will only be issued for hard to fill positions. The District will develop minimum required qualifications for persons hired for such positions.
- b) The campus principal shall submit to the superintendent a formal request to allow a certified teacher to teach a subject and/or grade level out of their field. The principal must specify the reason for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses qualifying this individual to teach the subject.
- c) The Principal shall submit a formal request to the Superintendent for local certification of a non-certified candidate. The Principal must specify the reason for the request and document what credentials the individual possesses qualifying the candidate to teach the subject.
- d) The superintendent will approve or deny requests for local certification.
- e) Local teaching permits are only valid for one year but may be renewed annually based on District need.

INTER-DISTRICT TRANSFERS

(FDA LOCAL) (Texas Education Code 25.036)

Current Law

Currently, under Texas Education Code 25.036, a district may choose to accept, as transfers, students who are not entitled to enroll in the district, but TEC 25.036, has been interpreted to require a transfer to be for a period of one school year.

Proposed

Lampasas ISD maintains a transfer policy under FDA (Local) requiring nonresident students wishing to transfer to file a transfer application each school year. In approving transfer requests, the availability of space and instructional staff, availability of programs and services, the student's disciplinary history records, work habits, and attendance records are also evaluated. Transfer students are expected to follow the attendance requirements, rules, and regulations of the district. TEC 25.036 has been interpreted to establish the acceptance of a transfer as a one-year commitment by the district. The district is seeking to eliminate the provision of a one-year commitment in accepting transfer applicants. On rare occasions, student behavior warrants suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion. In addition, student attendance may fall below the TEA truancy standard. In these rare cases, Lampasas ISD seeks exemption from the one year transfer commitment.

Local Guidelines

Nonresident students who have been accepted as inter-district transfer students may have such transfer status revoked by the Superintendent at any time during the year if the student is assigned discipline consequences of suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion. In addition, students not meeting the State's 90% attendance standard may also be subject to immediate revocation of the transfer status.

UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS: REFUSAL OF ENTRY, EJECTION, IDENTIFICATION

(GKA LOCAL) Texas Education Code 37.105)

Current Law

In 2017, the Texas Legislature changed the law on how school administrators can eject unruly guests from school events. This applies to parents and community members, not students. Under the law, the guest must be given a warning before he or she is ejected. Upon ejection, the guest must also be given notice of how he can appeal the ejection.

Proposed

Designated LISD staff members would have the authority to remove parents or visitors whose behavior is deemed inappropriate without warning or written notice.

Local Guidelines

In accordance with the District's innovation plan, a District official shall have authority to refuse entry or eject a person from property under the District's control without a warning or written notice. A person appealing under the District's grievance process shall be permitted to address the Board in person within 90 calendar days of filing the initial complaint, unless the complaint is resolved before the Board considers it.