



Lufkin ISD District of Innovation Plan



Introduction

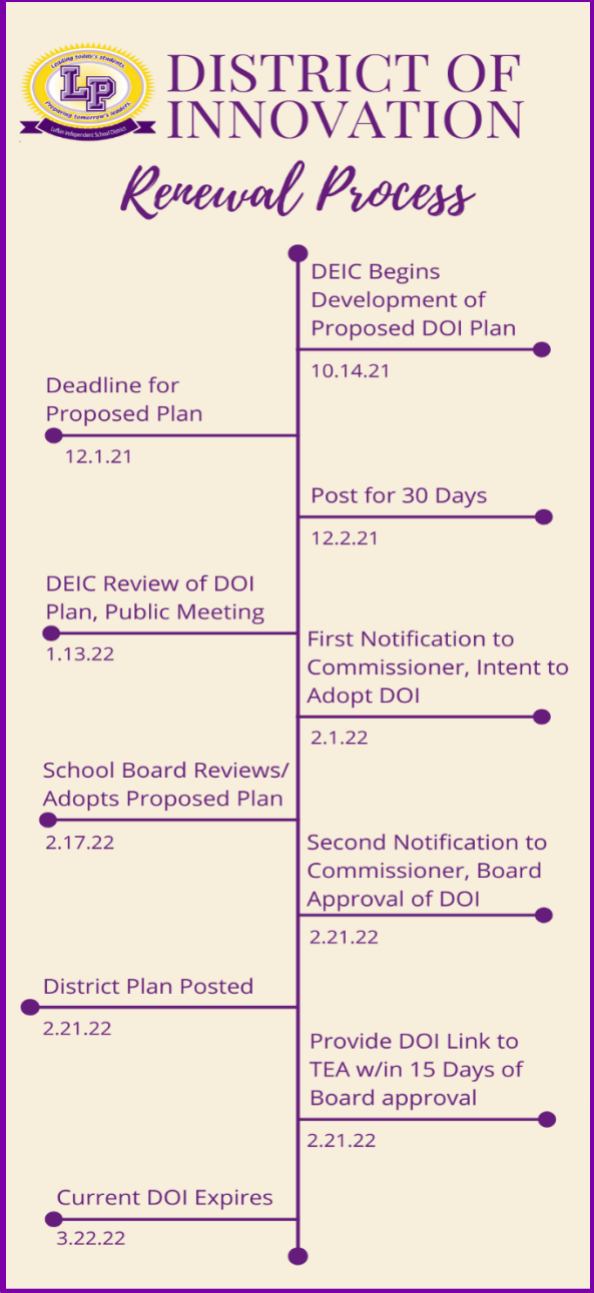
HB 1842 was passed during the 84th Texas Legislative Session in spring 2015. This bill provides Texas public school districts the opportunity to be designated as Districts of Innovation. To access these flexibilities a school district must adopt a District of Innovation Plan. Districts of Innovation provides opportunities for:

- Greater local control;
- Increased flexibility governing education programming; and
- Empowerment to innovate and think differently.

Districts are not exempt from statutes related to curriculum, graduation requirements, nor academic and financial accountability.

Term

The term of the Plan is for five years, beginning March 23, 2022 and ending at March 22, 2027 school year, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The Committee will continually monitor the effectiveness of the Plan and recommend to the Board any suggested modifications to the Plan.



In order to best serve our students and align our learning to the Lufkin ISD board goals, we have developed a five-year District of Innovation Plan to provide opportunities that allow the Lufkin ISD Board of Trustees the ability to use their best judgement to make decisions regarding the students of Lufkin ISD. Lufkin ISD is a community with diverse students and unique challenges. Giving the board local control of these decisions will provide lasting effects on our students, parents and community

Lufkin ISD District Educational Improvement Committee

Calendar

First Day of Instruction

Exemption from: TEC §25.0811

Manner in which law inhibits district goals:

TEC §25.0811 states that a school district may not begin student instruction before the 4th Monday of August. The current process allows no flexibility in the design of annual calendars to fit the needs of the community, students or the wishes of the local Board of Trustees who represent community interests in this matter.

Proposal: Relief from this statute will enable district flexibility in the design of annual calendars to fit the needs of the school district and community. The flexibility to begin instruction earlier in August will enable the district to develop a calendar that best meets the needs of the students in Lufkin ISD. An earlier start date allows a better balance between semesters, more instructional days prior to mandatory testing, and a school end date prior to June. By ending earlier, Lufkin ISD can support students who need remediation, as well as students who are entering college or trade school. An earlier school start date allows these students to register for summer classes and attend new student orientation meetings without missing instructional time. This proposal will enable the district to align the school calendar with the county Early College High School and the local college and university.

Certification

Teacher Certification Mandates

Exemption from: (TEC §21.003)

Manner in which law inhibits district goals:

TEC §21.003 states that a person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern, teacher trainee, librarian, educational aide, administrator, educational diagnostician, or school counselor by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued as provided by Subchapter B. The teacher certification requirements enacted in this statute inhibit the District's ability to hire highly-skilled individuals to teach dual credit and career and technical education courses, as well as courses taught in languages other than English. The availability of teachers who are certified to teach these courses is limited, which causes the district to limit course offerings in these areas.

Proposal: Lufkin ISD will maintain its current expectations for employee certification and will make every attempt to hire individuals with appropriate certifications for the position in question. However, when that is not reasonably possible, the district will have the flexibility to hire individuals who are knowledgeable in the area and equipped to effectively perform the duties of the position in question. This exemption will afford the district the flexibility to hire professionals in certain trades and vocations to teach the crafts of those trades and vocations as well as applicants fluent in other languages to teach specialized classes. These areas would include, but are not limited to CTE, languages other than English, dual credit and bilingual courses. In order to enable more students to obtain the educational benefit of specialized class offerings, the district seeks to establish its own local qualification requirements for such courses in lieu of the requirements set forth in statute. This exemption permits these professionals to meet the state requirements and permits the district to obtain the same weighted funding as would be available should the professional hold a traditional teaching certification for the course.

This exemption does not apply to special education and bilingual/ESL teachers. These teachers must continue to be SBEC certified.

Probationary Contracts

Probationary Contracts for Teachers

Exemption from: (TEC §21.102)

Manner in which law inhibits district goals:

TEC §21.102 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.

Proposal: Relief from Texas Education Code 21.102 will permit Lufkin ISD the option to issue a probationary contract for a period of up to two years for experienced, teachers, counselors, or nurses newly hired in Lufkin ISD. This exemption will allow more time for the district to fairly and thoroughly assess an employee's performance.

Exemptions from Future TEC Mandates

To best serve our local Lufkin ISD community, staff, and students, Lufkin ISD includes this provision in our District Innovation Plan for the district to maintain control over any future or eligible Texas Education Code mandates. Amendments may be adopted by a majority vote of the DEIC at a public meeting and a 2/3 majority vote by the Lufkin ISD board of Trustees.

DEIC Members

District Educational Improvement Committee
Superintendent, Lynn Torres
2021-2022

Primary / Elementary Campuses

Anderson	Sheila Whitaker	2021-2024
Brandon	Phyllis Belcher	2021-2024
Brookhollow	Amanda Venegas	2021-2024
Burley	Angela Pool	2021-2024
Coston	Brenda Ehrlich	2021-2024
Dunbar	Angela Duncan	2021-2024
Garrett	April Lawson	2019-2022
Hackney	Misty Deggs	2021-2024
Herty	Kirby Bryce	2021-2024
Kurth	Amber Ford	2021-2024
Slack	Megan Morgan	2021-2024
Trout	Susan Sowards	2021-2024

Secondary Campuses

ACE	Brad Dubois	2019-2022
LHS	Travis Garcia	2021-2024
LHS	Elizabeth Perkins	2021-2024
LHS	Johnnie Shepherd	2021-2024
LHS	Cadey Widacki	2021-2024
LMS	Angela Bennett	2021-2024
LMS	Rebecca Flowers	2021-2024
LMS	Patrick Yarbrough	2021-2024

Campus-Based Professional Employees

Brookhollow	Tarsha Henderson	2019-2022
Burley	Caroline Leslie	2019-2022
Dunbar	Dorinda Wade	2019-2022
LMS	Jessica Shepherd	2019-2022
LHS	Erin Currie	2019-2022
Slack	Malissa Collins	2021-2024
Trout	Angela Dean	2021-2024

District-Level Professional Non-Teaching

DEC	Natalie Allen	2019-2022
DEC	Melanie Garrett	2021-2024
DEC	Betsy Mijares	2021-2024
DEC	Donna James	
Technology	Misty Spencer	

Community Nancy Hicks

Parent Leslie March

Business Todd Kassaw

District Kurt Stephens, Sheila Adams, Cindy Tierney