



## Lamar CISD

**Meeting Date:** November 15, 2022

**Meeting Type:** Regular

**Item Category:** Future Action Item

**Primary Contact:** Dr. Roosevelt Nivens

**Presenter(s)/Add'l Contact(s):** Dr. Terri Mossige

**Item Name:** Discussion of Board approving the committee (DSIC) to develop a District of Innovation Plan

### Item Summary:

House Bill 1842, passed in 2015 in the 84th Session of the Texas Legislature, in part amended Chapter 12A of the Texas Education Code (TEC) to create Districts of Innovation. The designation allows school districts to be exempt from certain sections of the TEC, providing more flexibility and control in locally meeting the needs of students and the communities served.

A district-level committee (DSIC) has signed a petition to initiate consideration of designation as a district of innovation as provided by TEC 12A.001(c)(2). Consequently, a public hearing will be scheduled before the regularly scheduled board meeting on December 13, 2022, to consider whether the district should develop a local innovation plan for designation of the district as a district of innovation. At the conclusion of this hearing the administration will be requesting the board to consider approval of the committee (DSIC) to develop a local innovation plan in accordance with TEC Section 12A.003.

After the board approves the committee (DSIC) to develop the plan, the committee will work to finalize the plan and post it for 30 days. Next, the administration will request approval of the plan at the regularly scheduled board meeting on January 17, 2023.

**Recommendation:** Administration recommends that the Board consider approving the committee to develop a District of Innovation Plan

**Policy Reference:** TEC 12A.002(b)(2); TEC 12A.003

**Leadership Definition Alignment:** Plan for Success

**Strategic Plan Alignment:** Focus on Talent

**Currently Budgeted?**  Yes  No  No Budgetary Impact

**Completion or Implementation Timeline:** Plan will remain in effect for up to 5 years.



# 11.B Discussion of Appointing District Committee to Develop Plan for District of Innovation Plan

November 15, 2022

# Discussion of Appointing District Committee to Develop Plan for District of Innovation Plan

The District of Innovation concept, passed during the 84th Legislative Session in House Bill 1842, gives traditional independent school districts most of the flexibilities available to Texas' open enrollment charter schools. The flexibility derives from the district's ability to exempt itself from state mandates that may limit its ability to implement innovative ideas. The potential benefits of becoming a District of Innovation include:

- Increased local control to decide which flexibilities best suit local needs
- Freedom in customizing an innovation plan
- Autonomy in that the innovation plan does not require state approval

# Discussion of Appointing District Committee to Develop Plan for District of Innovation Plan

Board approves the district committee (DSIC) to write a plan that:

- Provides for a comprehensive educational program for the district, which program may include:
  - (A) innovative curriculum, instructional methods, and provisions regarding community participation, campus governance, and parental involvement;
  - (B) modifications to the school day or year;
  - (C) provisions regarding the district budget and sustainable program funding;
  - (D) accountability and assessment measures that exceed the requirements of state and federal law; and
  - (E) any other innovations prescribed by the board of trustees; and
- Identifies requirements imposed by this code that inhibit the goals of the plan and from which the district should be exempted on adoption of the plan.

# Discussion of Appointing District Committee to Develop Plan for District of Innovation Plan

- A majority of the district-level committee (DSIC) has signed a petition to initiate consideration of designation as a district of innovation as provided by TEC 12A.001(c)(2).
- A public hearing will be scheduled before the regularly scheduled board meeting on December 13, 2022, to consider whether the district should develop a local innovation plan for designation of the district as a district of innovation.
- At the conclusion of this hearing the administration will be requesting the board to consider approval of the committee to develop a local innovation plan in accordance with TEC Section 12A.003.

# Discussion of Appointing District Committee to Develop Plan for District of Innovation Plan

- After the board approves the committee (DSIC) to develop the plan, the committee will work to finalize the plan and post it for 30 days.
- The administration will request approval of the plan at the regularly scheduled board meeting on January 17, 2023.



# Discussion of Appointing District Committee to Develop Plan for District of Innovation Plan

<b>Innovation #1: First Day of Instruction</b>	
Current State Requirement:	A district cannot begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.
<b>Texas Education Code</b>	<b>§25.0811</b>
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflicts with current need to provide strategic breaks for staff and students throughout the year.</li> <li>• A challenge to balance the days in each semester, particularly at the secondary level when participating in a one-semester course.</li> <li>• 45-day penalty free period for contract release</li> <li>• Limited calendar options</li> </ul>

# Discussion of Appointing District Committee to Develop Plan for District of Innovation Plan

## Innovation #2: Teacher Certification for hard to fill positions

Current State Requirement	All teachers must hold an appropriate certificate or permit issued by the state. In the absence of the certification, districts can request emergency certification from the State Board of Educator Certification (SBE). When a teacher does not have certification, the district must provide written notification to parents within 30 days.
Texas Education Code:	<b>§21.003, §21.0031, §21.051, §21.053, § 21.057</b>
Challenge(s)	Traditional certification requirements for hard to fill positions are not aligned with the realities of the current educational environments. There is a need to hire industry experts to teach many of the "hard to fill" course offerings like <b>career and technology</b> and <b>world languages such as French, ASL, and Chinese.</b> Without a traditionally certified teacher, there could be limited availability of these courses.



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## Innovation #3: Staff Workdays

Current State Requirement

Requires a contract between a school district and an educator to be for a minimum of 10 months service with a minimum of 187 days.

**Texas Education Code**

**§21.401**

Challenge(s)

With the change in requirements for student instruction time, the calendar for educators became difficult.

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<b>Innovation #4: Ninety Percent Rule</b>	
Current State Requirement	<p>A student in any grade level from kindergarten through grade 12 may not be given credit or a final grade for a class unless the student is in attendance for at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered.</p> <p>Note: This innovation would not apply to standard credit bearing courses offered in the traditional classroom setting, but would be appropriate to apply to nonstandard, non-traditional courses offered outside of the campus classroom, such as an off-site internship or a dual credit course taken on a college campus.</p>
<b>Texas Education Code:</b>	<b>§25.092</b>
Challenge(s)	<p>Current reality reflects that some students are unable to attend class in the traditional brick and mortar building for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to, illness, family concerns, disabilities, efforts to pursue an accelerated programming such as the LCISD Senior Rescue Program (1621).</p>

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## Innovation #5: Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator

Current State Requirement	A person at each campus be designated to serve as the campus behavior coordinator. The person designated may be the principal of the campus or any other campus administrator selected by the principal.
<b>Texas Education Code:</b>	<b>§37.0012</b>
Challenge(s)	By placing this duty on one administrator creates great inefficiencies and limits the effectiveness of Lamar CISD administrators. The assistant principals build relationships with the students and families assigned to them and are best equipped to handle discipline concerns and the management of behavior issues and consequences.

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<b>Innovation #6: Limitations on Student Suspensions</b>	
Current State Requirement	Students below grade three may not be placed in out-of-school suspension unless the student engages in behaviors that include weapons, violent offenses or being under the influence.
<b>Texas Education Code:</b>	<b>§37.005</b>
Challenge(s)	There are times when students engage in behaviors that do not necessarily fit into the categories of weapons, violent offenses or being under the influence, but warrant removal from the instructional setting. An example might include students who engage in “persistent misbehaviors” that are deemed to be harmful to the student, other students, and staff. Currently students in these situations sometimes fail to understand the seriousness of their behaviors due to administrative limitations in responding to their behaviors.

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<b>Innovation #7: Required Professional Development</b>	
Current State Requirement	Staff development provided by a school district to an educator other than a principal must be conducted in accordance with standards developed by the district and designed to improve education in the district.
<b>Texas Education Code</b>	<b>§21.451</b>
Challenges	Lamar CISD faculty are well trained in required staff development. Annual mandated trainings serve only to add redundancy to back to schoolwork that can be better utilized in preparing for the students to return.