



LWISD will engage, challenge, and empower every student every day.

District of Innovation Plan





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Lake Worth ISD Vision

LWISD - a learning community that fosters thinkers, contributors, competitors, and leaders.

Core Beliefs

Lake Worth Independent School District Believes...

- every student has worth, is capable of learning and can achieve high standards.
- education and communication are the shared responsibility of the student, school, home and community.
- in inspiring each other and holding one another accountable in a safe, supportive and collaborative environment.
- all members of the school community are lifelong learners.
- in the power of effective instruction, using sound research, data, and fidelity of practice.

District Goals

1. LWISD works collaboratively with students, families and community to increase engagement and communication
2. LWISD Provides a rigorous education to ensure student success and student readiness for career, college and/or military.
3. LWISD provides research-based professional development focused on academic growth and student achievement.
4. LWISD provides a servant-minded leadership model by recruiting and retaining diverse, high quality administrators, teachers, and staff.



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Lake Worth ISD Proposed District of Innovation Plan

HB 1842 was passed during the 84th Legislative Session permitting Texas public school districts to become Districts of Innovation, thus allowing such districts to obtain exemption from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code. This distinction allows the District increased local control over various areas in order to gain student success. HB 1842 was codified in Texas Education Code Section 12A.001 et seq.

During the summer of 2016, LWISD adopted the following district goal: Lake Worth Independent School District, partnering with the community, will prepare every student for college and/or career.

In order for LWISD to reach this goal, LWISD exercises innovations in the following areas under Texas Education Code Section 12A.001 et seq.

Area 1: School Start Date/Last Day of School

Current Legislation:

(EB Legal) (EB Local) (TEC 25.0811) (TEC 25.0812)

Texas Education Code Section 25.0811 states that a school district may not begin instruction prior to the fourth Monday in August. Texas Education Code Section 25.0812 states that a school district may not schedule the last day of school prior to May 15.

Plan:

Flexibility in start and end dates warrants such dates to be determined locally, thus allowing the development of a calendar that is conducive to increased college and career readiness, balanced instructional time, increased instruction and remediation time, and focused calendar determinations based upon the needs of LWISD students, resulting in increased student attendance and improved assessment scores.

- LWISD will determine on an annual basis when to start school each year. The student start date will not precede the second Monday in August in any given year.
- Students will have additional instructional days prior to the state assessment.
- Students attending college/trade school will be able to take summer courses at area entities.
- Remediation for 5th and 8th STAAR and EOCs will include additional time.
- The number of days in semester one and semester two will be closer in number.



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Area 2: Teacher Certification:

Current Legislation:

(DK Legal) (DK Exhibit) (DBA Legal) (DBA Local) (TEC 21.002) (TEC 21.003) (TEC 21.044)

TEC §21.003(a) states that a person employed by a school district must hold an appropriate certificate or permit issued by the appropriate state agency. TEC 21.044(d) states that to obtain a certificate to teach a STEM course, a person must pass the certification test administered by the recognized business/industry group that created the STEM curriculum, hold an associate's degree from an accredited higher education institution, and have three years' work experience in an occupation corresponding to the STEM course. TEC §21.057 requires districts to provide written notice to parents when an inappropriately certified teacher is assigned to the same classroom for more than 30 consecutive instructional days during the same school year.

Plan:

Lake Worth ISD is committed to hiring certified professionals and will seek highly effective, certified educators for all teaching positions. However, when it is not possible for LWISD to hire certified teachers, Lake Worth ISD will have flexibility to hire external/internal candidates that do not have traditional state certifications, but who are knowledgeable in the area and fully equipped to effectively perform the duties of the position based on local qualification requirements without requesting a permit or waiver from TEA. Decisions on necessary certification will be handled locally. Such local control of certification requirements and the ability to use local teaching permits/certifications will establish local qualification requirements and training requirements in order for these professionals to teach such courses in lieu of the requirements set forth in law, thus allowing the district to enrich applicant pools in essential teaching positions when certified candidates are not available to teach those courses. This exemption directly supports the placement of quality instructors in every classroom as required in the "Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)".

A written request for local teaching certification can be made to the Superintendent or designee. The request must outline the reason for the request and document the credentials the teacher possesses that would qualify him/her to teach the subject or area.

A request can be submitted to the Superintendent or designee by the principal for the following areas:

- For grades K-12, a campus principal may submit a request for a teacher to teach one course outside of his/her certification area.
- A request for an individual who holds a four-year degree to teach in a bilingual, CTE/STEM, LOTE, and/or hard-to-fill vacancy if he/she is willing to pursue a certification and/or is eligible to take the bilingual exam, and/or is enrolled or will become enrolled within 4 weeks in an appropriate Alternative Certification program. (The bilingual stipend will not be available until certification is completed.)



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- A request for an individual who is a professional in a field that is similar to the position.
- The Superintendent or designee will report this action to the Board of Trustees prior to the individual beginning any employment unless the Board of Trustees has given the Superintendent hiring authority. The Board Agenda, Board Meeting Minutes, and related reports will suffice as parental notification.
- Local teaching certificates will expire at the end of each school year and may be renewed at the Superintendent's discretion. An employee working under a local teaching certificate will not receive a Chapter 21 contract but will be employed on an at-will basis.
- Teacher certification paperwork i.e. certification waiver, state permit or other paperwork will not be submitted to the Texas Education Agency.
- Parental notification of "inappropriately certified or uncertified teachers" under Sec. 21.057 would no longer be completed for students of teachers who are locally certified.

Area 3: Class Size Waivers:

Current Legislation:

(EEB LEGAL) (Ed. Code 25.111) (Ed. Code 25.112) (Ed. Code 25.113)

K-4 classrooms currently must meet a student to teacher ratio of 22 to 1 according to state law. If a class exceeds this 22:1 ratio, then the district must complete a waiver with the Texas Education Agency. Waivers are always approved. In addition, a letter must be sent home to each parent in the section that exceeds the 22:1 ratio, informing them that the waiver has been submitted.

Plan:

LWISD believes that class size plays a positive role in instruction but also acknowledges that other factors influence the learning environment such as the relationship between the teacher and student as well as the provision of a consistent learning environment that reduces disruption.

LWISD will maintain reasonable class sizes in grades K-4 and PK. With continued growth over the next several years, it is possible that class sizes may by necessity be slightly larger. District resources can be used more wisely by not having to continuously notify TEA each time a class exceeds 22:1. LWISD will make every effort to begin each school year with the 22:1 ratio except for unique and extenuating circumstances.

- LWISD will make every effort to keep the class-size ratio at 22:1.
- In the event that class size rises above the required ratios, a waiver will not be submitted to the Texas Education Agency.
- In the event that a class exceeds 22:1, the Board will be notified.
- In the event that a class exceeds 23:1, the parents of the campus will be notified.



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- In the event that K-2 class size exceeds 23:1, and 3rd and 4th grade class size exceeds 24:1, it will be reviewed to determine appropriate outcomes and the school board will be notified by the superintendent or the superintendent's designee.
- A teacher will be hired at any point during the school year if the principal, superintendent, and school board deem it in the best interest of students.

Area 4: Instructional Minutes:

Current Legislation:

(TEC 25.081) (TEC 25.082) (EB LEGAL)

HB 2610, passed by the 84th Texas Legislature eliminated the required 180 days of instruction. The Texas Education Code defines a day of instruction as "420 minutes" of instruction. Schools are allowed to reduce the number of minutes (25.081(b) in certain circumstances with Board approval. If the board does not approve, then the District may add minutes to normal school hours as necessary in the event of school closures due to disaster, flood, extreme weather conditions, fuel curtailment or another calamity.

Plan:

LWISD will make every effort to maintain the total of 75,600 minutes of instruction each year, but desires flexibility without being confined to either 420 minutes each day or seven hours of instruction every day. LWISD believes that we must grow our teachers in order to increase the learning of our students, and time is a critical element in doing such. Flexibility in the use of minutes as well as the length of the school day is crucial in order to support teacher learning and growth through professional development, data analysis, and increased collaboration. In addition, parent-teacher conferences, inclement weather days, etc. may impact cumulative instructional minutes during the school year.

A component in the annual school district calendar development process by the DEIC will include analysis of the needs of both students and employees to determine if flexibility should be included in the calendar. Modification to the length of specific dates will only be recommended when there is a clear purpose for doing so.



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Area 5: Probationary Contracts:

Current Legislation:

(TEC 21.102) (DCA LEGAL)

DCA (LEGAL) states that a person who is new to a district shall be employed under a probationary contract. This contract may be renewed two times for a total of three years except for one who has been employed in public education for the preceding five out of eight years. For those teachers, the probationary period is only one year. This time period may not be sufficient to evaluate the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom, especially since teacher contract timelines demand that employment decisions must be made prior to receipt of state assessment results.

Plan:

An experienced teacher, counselor, nurse, or other professional employee who holds a certification under TEC Chapter 21, who has been employed in public education for at least five out of the eight previous years, a probationary contract may be issued for up to two additional years, for a total of three years.

Area 6: Group Health Benefits for School Employees:

Amended into the plan March 2021

Current Legislation:

(TEC 22.004)

This code states that a school district may not make group health coverage available to its employees pursuant to TEC §22.004(b) after the date a district implements the program of coverages provided under Chapter 1579 of the Texas Insurance Code. The current process allows no flexibility in the design of group health insurance benefits to fit the needs of all district employees. This provision also prohibits the district from procuring group health insurance benefits that may provide better coverages for its employees at a lower cost. This provision does not give the district the flexibility needed to acquire benefits packages that would potentially be more attractive to prospective employees.

Plan:

LWISD would like flexibility in the design of group health insurance benefits to fit the needs of all district employees, the option of procuring group health insurance benefits that may provide better coverages for its employees at a lower cost, and the flexibility needed to acquire benefits packages that would potentially be more attractive to prospective employees.



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Area 7: Transfer Students:

Current Legislation:

(TEC 25.036) (FDA LOCAL, FDA LEGAL)

(TEC 25.036) states that any child, other than a high school graduate, who is younger than 21 years of age and eligible for enrollment on September 1 of any school year may transfer annually from the child's school district of residence to another district in this state if both the receiving district and the applicant parent or guardian or person having lawful control of the child jointly approve and timely agree in writing to the transfer. This is interpreted to be for a period of one year.

(FDA LOCAL) states that a nonresident student wishing to transfer into the District shall file an application for transfer each school year with the Superintendent or designee. Unless otherwise provided by this policy, transfers shall be granted for as long as a student is enrolled at the same campus; a student who moves from elementary to middle school or middle to high school shall file an application for transfer with the Superintendent or designee.

Plan:

The district will reserve the right to revoke the transfer of a student at any time during the year based on behavior, excessive tardies, late pick-up, attendance, or not remaining in good academic standing. Revocation of transfers for the above reasons is final and may not be appealed.

Area 8: Mentors:

Current Legislation:

(TEC 21.458)

A mentor must have at least three complete years of teaching experience with a superior record of assisting students, as a whole, in achieving improvement in student performance. This limits the amount of teachers who are able to serve as mentors within LWISD.

Plan

LWISD will make every attempt to ensure that mentors assigned to the necessary teachers have the required three completed years of teaching experience. In the event that an exception is needed, LWISD reserves the right to choose the best teacher possible to serve as a mentor, despite the completed years of teaching experience.



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Area 9: Student Health Advisory Council (SHAC):

Current Legislation:

(TEC 28.004)

The TEC passed during the 87th legislative session, implements strict meeting requirements for a local school health advisory council (SHAC), requires the Board to adopt a resolution convening SHAC to make recommendations regarding human sexuality curriculum, requires SHAC to hold two public meetings on the human sexuality curriculum materials, and requires the Board to take action on the SHAC recommendations.

Plan

LWISD is seeking an exemption from the SHAC meeting requirements under the law. Exemption from the SHAC meeting requirements under the law will allow for greater flexibility in regard to scheduling meetings and will allow for the meetings to run more efficiently.

Area 10: Out of School Suspensions:

Current Legislation:

(TEC 37.005)

A student who is enrolled in a grade level below grade three may not be placed in out-of-school suspension unless while on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off of school property, the student engages in:

- conduct that contains the elements of an offense related to weapons under Section 46.02 (Unlawful Carrying Weapons) or 46.05 (Prohibited Weapons), Penal Code;
- conduct that contains the elements of a violent offense under Section 22.01 (Assault), 22.011 (Sexual Assault), 22.02 (Aggravated Assault), or 22.021 (Aggravated Sexual Assault), Penal Code; or
- selling, giving, or delivering to another person or possessing, using, or being under the influence of any amount of:
 - marijuana or a controlled substance, as defined by Chapter 481 (Texas Controlled Substances Act), Health and Safety Code, or by 21 U.S.C. Section 801 et seq.;
 - a dangerous drug, as defined by Chapter 483 (Dangerous Drugs), Health and Safety Code; or
 - an alcoholic beverage, as defined by Section 1.04 (Definitions), Alcoholic Beverage Code.

Plan

LWISD values a safe environment for all students. The statute that limits out-of-school suspensions to only students in third grade or above places unnecessary burden on the school and further limits techniques available for maintaining classrooms where quality learning can take place. Out of school suspensions for students in grades PK – 2nd will not be used commonly, but as necessary to maintain



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order in the classroom and encourage parental engagement in the growth of the students.

Term of Plan:

The term of the Plan is for five years, beginning at the start of the 2017-18 school year and concluding at the end of the 2021-22 school year, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The DEIC will continually monitor the effectiveness of the Plan and recommend to the Board any suggested modifications to the Plan.

Term of Plan (renewal):

The term of the Plan is for five years, beginning on June 1, 2022 and concluding on May 31, 2027, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The DEIC will continually monitor the effectiveness of the Plan and recommend to the Board any suggested modifications to the Plan.

District of Innovation Renewal Timeline	
December 6, 2021	LWISD DEIC meets to review the current District of Innovation plan.
January 10, 2022	LWISD DEIC meets to finalize the proposed renewal of the District of Innovation plan.
January 12, 2022	LWISD Board of Trustees notifies the commission of the board’s intention to vote on and adopt the renewed District of Innovation plan.
January 12, 2022	The final proposed version of the District of Innovation plan is available on the district’s website.
February 15, 2022	LWISD DEIC holds a public hearing & approves the District of Innovation plan.
February 28, 2022	LWISD Board of Trustees adopts the proposed local District of Innovation plan.
March 2, 2022	LWISD notifies the commissioner of approval of the District of Innovation plan.
March 2, 2022	LWISD provides a copy of the current local District of Innovation plan to the Texas Education Agency.
March 4, 2022	The final version of the District of Innovation plan is available on the district’s website.

Amendment Timeline	
District-Wide Educational Improvement Committee Approval Date	March 22, 2022
Board of Trustees Adoption Date	March 28, 2022



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District-Wide Educational Improvement Committee		
Name	Role	Location
Taylor Abbott	Teacher	Effie Morris Early Learning Academy
Condi Graham	Teacher	Marine Creek Leadership Academy
Aurelia Arita	EL Coordinator	Central Office
Jennifer Stokes	Teacher	Effie Morris Early Learning Academy
Ashley Smith	Teacher	Miller Language Academy
Asha Chatlani	Teacher	Marine Creek Leadership Academy
Mindy Massey	Teacher	Howry STEAM Academy
Kim Clark	Teacher	Collins Middle School
Sharon Trask	Director of Special Services	Central Office
Martha Jimenez	Professional Staff	Collins Middle School
Victor Valadez	Teacher	Lake Worth High School
Steve Flores	Parent	Parent
Amanda Burcie	Parent	Parent
Chris Beaty	Business Representative	Business Representative
Rob Hubbard	Business Representative	Business Representative
Dana Beauleau	Community Member	Community Member
Caren Beauchamp	Community Member	Community Member
Dr. Eric Tingle	Assistant Superintendent	Central Office
Ad-hoc Committee Members		
Tosh McGaughy	Director of Curriculum and Instruction	Central Office
Jennifer Edenfield	Director of Advanced Academics/CCMR	Central Office
Kelly Giddens	Principal	Marine Creek Leadership Academy
Jose Lara	Principal	Miller Language Academy
Dr. Rose Mary Neshyba	Superintendent of Schools	Central Office

DISTRICT OF INNOVATION AMMENDMENTS		
Section	DEIC Approval Date:	BOT Approval Date:
Area 2: Teacher Certification	Approval 8/12/22	Approval 8/15/22