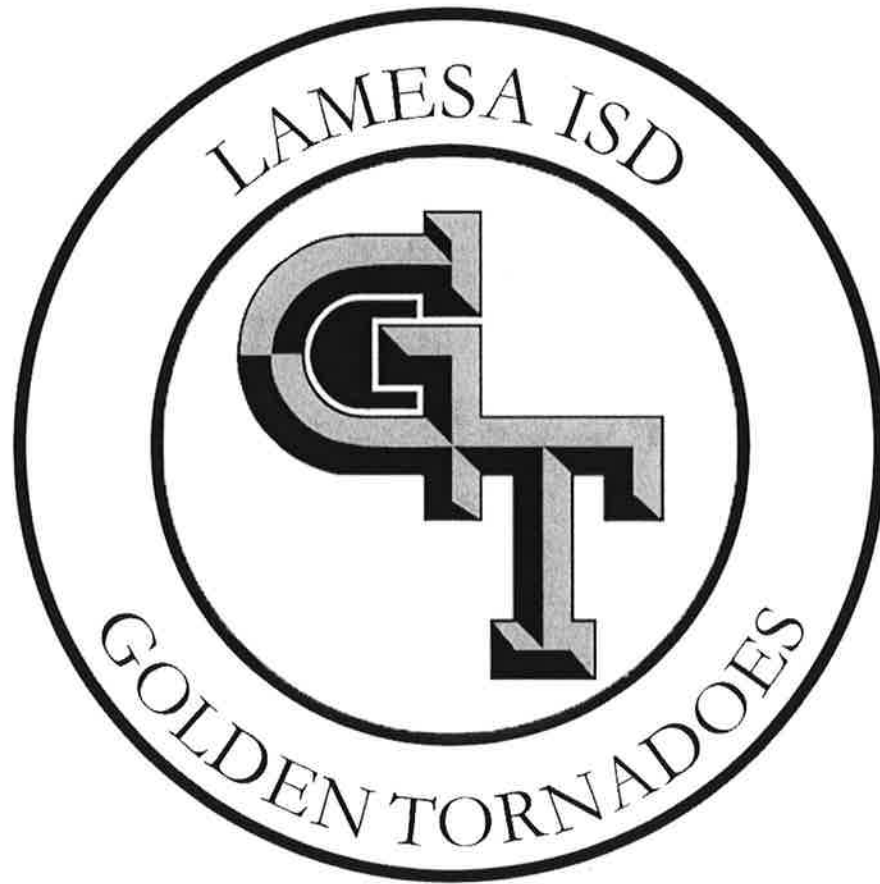


# Lamesa Independent School District



## **District of Innovation Plan**

### Overview

During the 84<sup>th</sup> Legislative session, HB 1842 was passed and became Texas Education Code Chapter 12A. This section of TEC allows districts to create a District Innovation plan and claim exemptions from sections of Texas Education Code that inhibit goals of the innovations while maintaining a comprehensive education program. To be eligible to identify as a District of Innovation, the district most recent performance rating is at least acceptable, and must follow the procedures set forth in TEC Chapter 12A.

Lamesa ISD is electing to exercise this opportunity to gain more local control in achieving specific district goals. The goals of Lamesa ISD's innovation plan align to the improvement in quality of education students receive and increasing course offerings to students (especially those classified as CTE and STEM). These goals are outlined below:

- 1) Attract, Develop and Retain High Quality Educators
- 2) Align academic calendar with needs of the district, students, community, and other cooperating partners
- 3) Expand and Improve CTE/STEM course offerings
- 4) Produce students who are Career and College Ready by increasing student success in coursework

### Term

Lamesa ISD's Innovation plan will begin on May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017 and be in effect until May 18, 2022. This plan is specific to the exemptions as outline, and all claimed exemptions are allowable as per TEC 12A.004. The district intends to follow TEC in all other areas. If at any point the district wishes to amend or rescind the plan, the Board of Trustees will appoint a new District Innovation committee and follow the processes outlined in TEC 12A.007. During the final six months of the plan, the district may elect to renew the plan as outlined in TEC 12A.007.

Under the Texas Education Code Chapter 12A: Districts of Innovation, Lamesa ISD has identified the following requirements imposed by the Texas Education Code that inhibit the goals and implementation of Lamesa ISD's Innovation Plan:

### **Uniform School Start Date**

#### ***Currently***

TEC Sec. 25.0811

**Goal:** Align academic calendar with needs of the district, students, community, and other cooperating partners

#### **Proposed**

Identifying the Fourth Monday in August as the earliest first day of instruction is often restrictive to creating an academic calendar that meets the needs of students, the community, and the district. By claiming an exemption from TEC §25.0811, Lamesa ISD shall, on an annual basis, determine the best start date for school based on input from stakeholders. This will provide more flexibility in creating an academic calendar that provides time for high quality, relevant professional development for faculty and staff, deployed at strategic times through the use of early dismissal days. In addition, flexibility in the start date will allow better collaboration between Lamesa ISD and other institutions involved in the education of the district's students (such as dual credit, CTE and articulated courses), promoting Career and College Readiness.

## **7 Hour School Day**

### ***Currently***

TEC Sec. 25.082(a)

**Goal:** Attract, Develop and Retain High Quality Educators

### **Proposed**

An exemption from TEC 25.082(a) will provide flexibility in creating an academic calendar and class schedule that will maintain a minimum of 75,600 minutes of instruction without the accountability of a 7-hour school day. This flexibility will allow the district and campuses more control in creating schedules that meet stakeholders needs. Additionally, the flexibility in scheduling will allow for more frequent early dismissal days for students in an effort to provide teachers meaningful and timely professional development and increased opportunities for collaborative planning time.

## **Limitations to School Day Interruptions**

### ***Currently***

TEC Sec. 25.083(b)

**Goal:** Produce students who are Career and College Ready by increasing student success in coursework

### ***Proposed***

An exemption from TEC 25.083(b) will allow greater flexibility in meeting the needs of individual students through targeted intervention programs. For students with major learning gaps that are classified far below grade level, Lamesa ISD will attempt to use regularly scheduled non-core course time to provide research based intervention strategies. These pull-out programs may at times require a student to miss more than ten percent of the regularly scheduled class. Exemptions from this will not require parent's written consent.

## **Teacher Certification**

### ***Currently***

TEC Sec. 21.003

**Goals:** Attract, Develop and Retain High Quality Educators, Expand and Improve CTE/STEM course offerings

### **Proposed**

Lamesa ISD is committed to placing the most qualified person into each available position. Exemption from TEC 21.003 will allow the district flexibility in hiring for specific instructional areas; specifically, Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) courses. The current certification requirements inhibit the district's ability to fill positions that are hard to hire and retain. This flexibility will allow Lamesa ISD to locally certify qualified professionals (those that have relevant experience, credentials and/or industry certification) to teach such courses, effectively increasing the applicant pool and allowing for more diversity in course offerings. This will also provide the district with an opportunity to partner with local and qualified community businesses and resources to offer a strategic CTE program that will enhance local work force development efforts as well as expand and improve these course offerings. Qualifications necessary for specific courses will be determined by the district.

Additionally, the superintendent has the authority to locally certify educators who hold valid certification or credentials outside of Texas to teach courses in their area of certification. Local certificates awarded in this manner will be limited to no more than three consecutive years to allow the educator appropriate time to complete the steps necessary to obtain a valid Texas Certification. The superintendent may also allow a certified teacher to teach one course in a field for which he/she is not fully certified in Texas according to SBEC guidelines.

Any employee hired under a local district teaching permit must comply with the same professional standards, ethics and requirements outlined in Lamesa ISD's School Board policy for personnel, and will be appraised using the same teacher appraisal system as outlined in district policies. A teacher certification waiver, state permit applications, or other paperwork will not be submitted to the Texas Education Agency for such hires.

## **Teacher and Principal Appraisal**

### ***Currently***

(TEC Sec. 21.352, 21.3541), (TEC 21.203, 21.352)

**Goal:** Attract, Develop and Retain High Quality Educators

### ***Proposed***

Exemptions from TEC 21.352, 21.3541, 21.203 & 21.352 will provide Lamesa ISD flexibility in teacher and principal appraisals. Lamesa ISD believes in the use of multiple measures to evaluate employees such as; observation and feedback cycle, goal setting, student achievement and growth measures related to learning objectives and other formative assessments. These exemptions will allow Lamesa ISD to locally develop teacher and principal evaluation systems that better support local needs, goals and initiatives.

## **Minimum Attendance for Class Credit**

### ***Currently***

(TEC 25.092)

**Goal:** Produce students who are Career and College ready and increase student success in CTE/STEM coursework

### **Proposed**

Denying credit for a course based on TEC 25.092 is arbitrary and implies that seat time is more important than content mastery. Lamesa ISD believes students should be in attendance at all times possible but understands that many students participate in multiple extra/co-curricular or academic activities, and/or have other extenuating circumstances. Denying credit to such students when they demonstrate content mastery through classroom activities, assessments, STAAR/EOC assessments, portfolios or other methods shouldn't necessarily be penalized. An exemption from TEC 25.092 will allow the district more flexibility in awarding credit to individuals on a case by case basis that meet these criteria, and allow for campuses to promote and encourage more students to participate in these activities. This will also allow the district to accommodate students with legitimate scheduling conflicts while reducing dropouts and increasing the number of qualifying graduates.

Exemption from TEC 25.092 will also allow Lamesa ISD to provide opportunities for students who are truly at risk (through the use of innovative methods, locations and times instruction may be delivered) opportunities to complete coursework. Lamesa ISD will continue to explore other means and innovations for concept mastery under this exemption.

Claiming exemption from TEC 25.092 does not impact or alter existing compulsory attendance requirements or University Interscholastic League (UIL) rules. Additionally, Exemption from TEC 25.092 does not in any way limit or modify the rights of a teacher to determine the finality of a grade in accordance with TEC 28.214, nor restrict or alter a teacher's right to assign grades as outlined by TEC 28.0216.



## **Class Size in Kindergarten through 4<sup>th</sup> Grade**

### ***Currently***

TEC 25.112, TEC 25.113

***Goal:*** To Recruit High Quality Teachers while maintaining local control and flexibility

### ***Proposed***

This exemption allows LISD the time to staff campuses with effective teachers by granting local control over class size ratios. Small class sizes enable effective teachers to provide more individualized attention to each student. Having the latitude and time to seek and hire teachers enables us to best serve students with an effective student-teacher ratio. Our vision is to have the timing and latitude to hire the “right teacher” for kids and not “any teacher” to fulfill a mandate. To best serve the needs of Lamesa ISD students and staff, the District will attempt to maintain the 22:1 ratio in all K-4<sup>th</sup> grade core classrooms. However, if the class size exceeds this ratio, the Superintendent will report the circumstance to the Board of Trustees.

In the event a K-4<sup>th</sup> grade core classroom reaches 25:1, the campus will contact the parents of the students in the classroom and inform them of the situation. The District will provide relief by placing an instructional aide in the classroom for the duration of time it remains at or above the 25:1 ratio.

While the District believes small class size plays a positive role in student learning, this must be balanced with the logistics and timing of adding staff. We do not believe there is a negative impact to student achievement when one or two additional students are added to a class. Most importantly, research demonstrates it is the teacher in the classroom, not absolute class size, which has the greatest impact on student learning.

A TEA waiver request will not be necessary when a K-4<sup>th</sup> grade classroom exceeds the 22:1 ratio.

## **Probationary Contracts**

*(DCA LEGAL) (Ed. Code Subchapter C Sec. 21.102)*

### **Currently:**

TEC 21.102

**Goal:** Attract, Develop and Retain High Quality Educators

### **Proposed**

This exemption from probationary contracts being limited to one year for a person who has been employed as a teacher or administrator in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment by the district will allow LISD extended time for the evaluation and training of new personnel. LISD is committed to effectively managing teacher contracts and this exemption will provide the district with the flexibility to keep all professional employees new to the district on probationary contracts for a maximum permissible period of three school years.

## **Student Discipline**

TEC 37.007 (c), 37.010(b)

**Goal:** Produce students who are Career and College Ready by increasing student success in coursework

### **Proposed:**

The Lamesa ISD DAEP has a strong and structured system of discipline. The Texas Education Code makes no allowance for students whose persistent misbehavior disrupts instruction and is detrimental to the educational environment to be expelled. An exemption from TEC §21.102 will allow the district to implement the following practices:

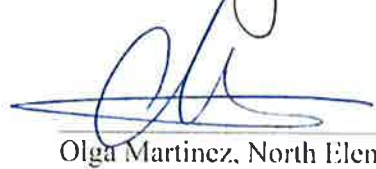
- a. A student placed in a DAEP who engages in documented serious misbehavior (as defined above) while on the DAEP campus despite documented behavioral interventions may be removed from class and expelled.
- b. A student placed in a DAEP who engages in documented persistent misbehavior while on the DAEP campus, despite documented behavioral interventions, may be removed from class and expelled.
- c. All students expelled from a DAEP campus will be given the option of attending Saturday school one day per week for the term of his/her expulsion in order to gain and/or maintain as many credits as possible during the period of expulsion.

Local Innovation Committee Members

  
Jim Knight, Superintendent

  
Shelley Mann, South Elem. Principal

  
Albert Acosta, Business Member

  
Olga Martinez, North Elem. Teacher

  
Angeley Shelley, Parent

  
Kortni Nowlin, District Testing Coordinator

  
Amy Bakdr, Lamesa HS Counselor

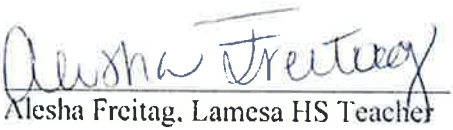
  
Chris Riggins, Lamesa HS Principal

  
DeAnn Drake, Assoc. Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction

  
Ky Riggins, Parent

  
Keith Emfinger, Technology Director

  
Steve Ruiz, Lamesa High School CTE Teacher

  
Alesha Freitag, Lamesa HS Teacher

  
Lyndi Sevedge, South Elem. Teacher

  
Brad Froman, Academy Principal

  
Nathan Tafuya, Exec. Director - Lamesa Economic Development

  
Chad Haskins, Assoc. Dir. of C&I and IT

  
Christine Teaff, Lamesa MS Teacher