

LaPoynor ISD

District of Innovation Plan

Introduction

House Bill 1842, passed in the 84th Texas Legislative Session, provides an opportunity for Texas public school districts to modify state requirements at the local level to better meet the needs of their unique student populations, in order to prepare them for success and lifelong learning. As a District of Innovation, LaPoynor ISD wishes to implement an Innovation Plan with increased flexibility and freedom necessary to personalize learning experiences. As a District of Innovation, LaPoynor ISD intends to use this opportunity to develop a plan that focuses on the District's vision, "Igniting Potential, Motivated to Succeed", and utilize the opportunity to enact maximum local control and design local policies as needed to best meet the needs of our students, employees, and community.

Term

LaPoynor ISD's Innovation Plan will begin with the 2017-2018 school year and conclude at the end of the 2021-2022 school year, unless the plan is terminated or amended by the LaPoynor ISD Board in accordance with HB1842. To ensure success of LaPoynor ISD students, the committee is committed to constantly monitoring and making necessary amendments to be presented to the Board of Trustees for approval.

District Innovation Team

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|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. James Young | Superintendent |
| 2. Garland Willis | Secondary School Principal |
| 3. Marsha Mills | Elementary School Principal |
| 4. Crystal Woodard | Secondary School Assistant Principal |
| 5. Sandra Burch | District Curriculum Director |
| 6. Melissa Sheffield | District Counselor |
| 7. Dedra Moltz | High School Teacher |
| 8. Patty Bristow | Middle School Teacher |
| 9. Ashleigh Arnold | Elementary School Teacher |
| 10. Fred Hambrick | Parent |
| 11. Jimmy Gracey | Parent |
| 12. Sherry Crawford | Parent |
| 13. Willie Mitchell | Parent |

Innovations

1. Teacher Certification

(TEC 21.003) (DK LEGAL) (DK EXHIBIT)

Currently

A person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern or 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.

Proposed Plan

- In order to best serve LaPoynor ISD students, decisions on certification will be handled locally.
- The current state teacher certification requirements inhibit the District's ability to hire teachers to teach hard-to-fill, high demand dual credit, and career and technical/STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics) courses. In order to enable more students to obtain the educational benefit of such course offerings, the District seeks to establish its own local qualification requirements and its own requirements for training of professionals and experts to teach such courses in lieu of the requirements set forth in law.
- This exemption directly supports the move from “highly qualified” requirements in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). By obtaining exemption from existing teacher certification requirements, the District will have the flexibility to hire community college instructors, university professors, or internal applicants seeking assignments outside of their traditional certification area.
- In addition, this exemption will afford the District the flexibility to hire professionals in certain trades or vocations to teach the crafts of those trades or vocations (such as welding, fine arts, health sciences, law, etc.) if certified teachers are not available to teach those courses.
- The superintendent will submit this action to the Board of Trustees for Board approval prior to the individual beginning any employment. Local teaching certificates will be for one year. Teachers employed by local certification will only be offered a probationary contract.

2. Teacher & Principal Evaluations

(TEC 21.203) (TEC 21.352)(TEC 21.3541) (DNA LEGAL) (DNA LOCAL) (DNB LEGAL) (DNB LOCAL)

Currently

The state of Texas has used the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) teacher appraisal system since 1997. The state issued a new teacher appraisal system in 2016-2017, that will be called the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS). Districts currently have the authority to only formally appraise teachers once every five school years. LaPoynor ISD teachers are formally evaluated annually.

Proposed Plan

- LaPoynor ISD will utilize a locally developed teacher and principal evaluation tool.
- A committee of administrators and teachers would have the option to develop a teacher evaluation system that would be a combination of PDAS, T-TESS, and other best practices to develop a local instrument and/or process that fits the needs and goals of LaPoynor ISD.
- This instrument will be developed with input from central administration, campus administration, and teachers. It will use staff input, PDAS, T-TESS, T-PESS, and any other relevant best practice.
- All teachers will be formally evaluated at a minimum of once every other year. Administrators will have the authority to place a teacher on an annual appraisal schedule if the teacher is performing below expectations.
- All teachers will have an annual summative conference to discuss the year and to set classroom goals and a staff development plan.
- All new teachers to the district will be formally evaluated during their first year of employment.
- Principals will continue to be evaluated annually on a locally developed plan.
- These locally developed plans should reflect the strengths, areas of concern, and goals for LaPoynor ISD.

3. School Calendar

(TEC 25.0811) (TEC 25.0812) (EB LEGAL)

Currently

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

Proposed Plan

- Students will begin no earlier than the 2nd Monday of August.
- Teachers will begin no earlier than the 1st Monday of August.
- Will allow for the elimination of imbalanced grading periods and semester schedules.
- Will allow for a calendar that fits the needs of our local community, staff, and students.

4. Minimum Minutes of Instruction

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

Currently

Both Texas Education Codes 25.081 and 25.082 address the length of the instructional day by limiting it to “420 minutes of instruction” or “seven hours each day including intermissions and recesses”, totaling 75,600 minutes for the year.

Proposed Plan

- The opportunity to exempt from the 420 minute school day requirement will provide the district the opportunity to provide each campus the flexibility of creating a daily schedule that will better serve the students and teachers on each campus.
- This flexibility will give local control to the district in meeting the yearly requirement of 75,600 minutes in relation to the district calendar for each specific school year.
- This exemption will provide greater flexibility than the current 6 day waiver maximum that relates to the length of the school day.
- The opportunity to be exempt from the 7 hour day requirement will allow the district to create more flexibility within the daily schedule for students and staff. This flexibility will be used to create a unique bell schedule instead of the static schedule required of schools by this mandate.

5. Teacher Contract Days

(TEC 21.401) (DCB LEGAL) (DCB LOCAL)

Currently

Current education law located in Chapter 21 defines a teacher contract as a ten month contract equivalent to 187 days.

Proposed Plan

- This proposal recognizes the fact that the teachers of the LaPoynor Independent School District are both dedicated and committed to meeting the obligations of not only their profession but also to their students.
- This proposal reduces teacher contract days from 187 to 182 with no effect on teacher salaries. This somewhat makes an attempt to align the teacher days to the 75,600 minutes required of students.
- This proposal will increase the daily rate the district pays teachers.
- This proposal should enhance teacher recruitment, therefore putting the district on a more level playing field with larger districts.
- This proposal will hopefully improve teacher morale.
- This proposal will provide teachers more opportunities during the summer months to seek out beneficial staff development that relates to their field.

6. Campus Behavior Coordinator

(TEC 37.0012) (FO LEGAL) (FO LOCAL)

Currently

Manner in which statute inhibits goals of the plan TEC§37.0012 requires that a person be designated to serve as the campus behavior coordinator (CBC) who is primarily responsible for maintaining student discipline and implementation of Chapter 37 and allows duties imposed on a campus principal or other campus administrator to be performed by the campus behavior coordinator.

Proposed Plan

- This requirement inhibits social and emotional learning because it restricts the District's ability to promote a more collaborative discipline program that provides social and

emotional supports to students. It takes the control of the discipline plan out of the principal's control and does not take into consideration situations where discipline is handled by other professionals.

- The District will focus on establishing classroom protocols and utilizing school culture to foster the development of individual responsibility, positive behavioral interventions and supports while encouraging the social and emotional development of each student and his/her responsibility toward the community.
- LaPoynor ISD will restore control and management of maintaining student discipline to the oversight of the campus principal.
- The specific duties of the Campus Behavior Coordinator will be given to the campus principal who may divide and/or delegate duties to other professionals as needed. Examples: parent notification of disciplinary action, notice of law enforcement action, restraint reports, corporal punishment, video recordings, etc.

Strategic Planning / Innovation Process Timeline

August 24, 2016	District meeting & introduction of District of Innovation
September 18, 2016	Superintendent & Administrators Meeting
October 28, 2016	Superintendent & Administrators Meeting
December 3, 2016	Superintendent & Administrators Meeting
February 5, 2017	Superintendent & Administrators Meeting
February 2, 2017	District and Campus Site based Meetings
February 13, 2017	What We Value Survey released
February 16, 2017	Board Resolution & Committee Created
March 1, 2017	Design Committee meeting
March 8, 2017	District and Campus Site based Meetings
March 23, 2017	Public Hearing on District of Innovation
March 30, 2017	Committee meets to approve Final Proposed Innovation Plan
March 31, 2017	Final Proposed Innovation Plan posted on website
May 18, 2017	School Board approval of District of Innovation Plan