

# LONGVIEW ISD

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## DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLAN 2024- 2029





# LONGVIEW INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

## 2024 - 2029 LOCAL INNOVATION PLAN

### BACKGROUND

District of Innovation was created by the 84th Legislature through Texas Education Code (TEC) Chapter 12A. The purpose of TEC Chapter 12A is to allow traditional independent school districts the opportunity to obtain exemptions from certain provisions of the TEC. Designation as a District of Innovation allows a school district to increase local control and to support innovation as a means to improve educational outcomes for the benefit of all district stakeholders.

### BENEFITS OF THE EXEMPTION

Exemptions from statutory provisions of the Texas Education Code will enable the district to continue innovation through flexibility and local control in the way the Longview Independent School District (LISD) provides governance through the development of the district's annual budget and board policy. The plan detailed below is the work of the committee charged with researching, developing and drafting the LISD's renewal plan.

In accordance with state law, Longview ISD has the opportunity to renew its Local Innovation Plan. Longview ISD seeks to renew its local innovation plan to enhance and accelerate its implementation and vision to provide all students regardless of race, ethnicity or socio-economic status multiple pathways of educational opportunities that will lead to student success in college, the workforce or military service.

### TERM OF PLAN

The Local Innovation Plan's term is five years, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board in accordance with statute. The initial Local Innovation Plan started at the beginning of the 2019-20 school year and ends at the end of the 2023-24 school year. Following approval by the Board of Trustees, the Local Innovation Plan renewal will extend the term until the end of the 2028 – 29 school year.

### RENEWAL TIMELINE

DATE	REQUIRED ACTIONS – TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY
December 12, 2023; January 3, 2024	<b>Innovation Plan Renewal Development &amp; Approval</b> The Longview Independent School District (Longview ISD) Innovation Committee will develop the Local Innovation renewal plan.
January 8, 2024	<b>Board of Trustees Overview</b> The Longview ISD Board of Trustees (BOT) will receive an overview of TEC Chapter 12A District of Innovation renewal provisions.
January 9 - February 9, 2024	<b>Proposed District Innovation Plan Posted</b> Final Draft Local Innovation Plan posted for 30 days for community Feedback.

February 12, 2024	<b>Board of Trustees Approval</b> BOT considers adoption of proposed Local Innovation Plan by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the membership of the Board held in a public meeting.
February 20, 2024	<b>Commissioner Notification of Approval</b> Superintendent notifies the commissioner of approval of the plan along with a list of approved TEC exemptions.
February 20, 2024	<b>Local Innovation Plan Posting</b> The Longview ISD Superintendent of Schools or designee shall ensure that a copy of the local innovation plan is posted on the district's website for the term of the designation as a District of Innovation.
February 20, 2024	<b>Texas Education Agency Submission</b> The Longview ISD Superintendent of Schools or designee will provide a copy of the link to the local innovation plan to the Texas Education Agency for posting on the agency website.

### **LONGVIEW ISD INNOVATION PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The committee responsible for the review, feedback, and approval of the renewal plan are members of the Local Innovation Plan Committee. This committee included stakeholders from the district and community. The renewal of the 2024-2029 Local Innovation Plan was reviewed at the December 12, 2023 and January 3, 2024 meetings in which present committee members provided specific feedback on the components of the plan.

### **COMMITTEE FACILITATOR: Shalona McCray, Chief Human Resources Officer**

<b>Horace Williams</b> Deputy Superintendent	<b>Scott Fisher</b> Director of Safety and Magnet Grant
<b>Kimberly Law</b> Teacher, Foster Middle School	<b>John York</b> Teacher Incentive Allotment Lead/HR Officer
<b>Kimberly Pierson</b> Teacher, Foster Middle School	<b>Lori Aguilar</b> Coordinator of School Success
<b>Rochelle Ceballos</b> Teacher, Longview Early Graduation	<b>LaDarion Brown</b> Longview Police Department, Community Member
<b>Jennifer Conde</b> Teacher, Longview High School	<b>LaShundra Rodgers</b> Talent Acquisition Coordinator
<b>Dr. Craig Coleman</b> Chief Innovation Officer	<b>Dr. Jacqueline Burnett</b> Director, East Texas Montessori Prep Academy
<b>Dr. Brian Ziemer</b> CEO, East Texas Advanced Academies (ETAA)	<b>Ryan Carroll</b> Principal, Forest Park Middle School

## **LONGVIEW ISD VISION**

Our vision is to provide all students regardless of race, ethnicity or socio-economic status multiple pathways of educational opportunities that will lead to student success in college, the workforce or military service.

## **LONGVIEW ISD MISSION**

Believing in excellence for all, the Longview Independent School District will guarantee the highest level of academic achievement and character development of each learner by providing challenging curriculum and exemplary instruction within a safe environment.

## **STATEMENT OF BELIEFS**

### **We believe that...**

1. Every individual has intrinsic worth and is able to contribute to society.
2. Every student has a right to a high-quality, equitable education.
3. Every individual has the ability to learn and an innate desire to succeed.
4. A safe, healthy, and orderly environment is critical for learning.
5. A community holding high academic expectations will reap educational, economic, cultural, and societal benefits.
6. High morals, strong character, and personal integrity are essential for the betterment of society.
7. Honoring diversity and building on individual strengths contribute to growth.
8. School-Community partnerships are vital for success.
9. Change is essential for continuous improvement.
10. Every learner must be prepared to compete globally.
11. Education immeasurably enriches quality of life.
12. Learning is a life-long quest.

## **BOARD GOALS CONNECTED TO DOI:**

- Goal 1: Improve Recruitment and Retention of Quality
- Goal 2: Improve Communication and Delivery of Information to Parents and General Public
- Goal 3: All Schools Will Meet State Accountability Standards and Perform at or above State Level in Math, Reading/Writing, and Science.
- Goal 4: Implement the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP), Middle Years Programme (MYP), Diploma Programme (DP), and/or Career-related Programme with fidelity.
- Goal 5: LISD will provide a safe, disciplined, and healthy environment on all campuses and facilities to promote and support student learning.

## First Day of Instruction {TEC §25.0811}

### Current Statute and Rationale:

The Texas Education Code states that a school district may not begin instruction before the 4th Monday in August. Removing the state-required uniform school start date would allow the district the flexibility to start instruction as a shortened school week, easing the transition for students. This will also allow for flexible professional development scheduling for district staff.

### Proposed Exemption:

This flexibility of a start date allows the district to determine locally, on an annual basis, what best meets the needs of the students, parents, and our local community. This empowers the district to increase college and career readiness and balance the amount of instructional time per semester. By having the flexibility in beginning instruction before the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of August, students will be able to enroll in college courses that start in early June.

## Teacher Contracts {TEC §21.102}

### Current Statute and Rationale:

**Chapter 21 Contracts-** The Texas Education Code states an applicant cannot be hired to teach a subject without appropriate certification, causing vacancies or deficiencies. Currently, it is a practice at Longview ISD to issue a Chapter 21 contract for the remainder of the school year to certified teachers hired after the first day of instruction, binding the LISD to potentially ineffective instruction for students.

**Probationary Contracts-** Current guidelines regarding probationary periods cannot exceed one year for newly hired teachers who have been in public education for at least five years of the previous eight years. Meaning, the probationary contract may not be renewed, but must be transitioned to term or the teacher's contract non-renewed. This limited period is insufficient in some cases to fully determine the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom.

### Proposed Exemption:

**Chapter 21 Contracts-** To not put the district in a binding contract with an ineffective teacher, Longview ISD's Human Resources Department will submit a form for approval to fill a teaching position to the Superintendent or designee without issuing a Chapter 21 Contract:

- For a noncertified applicant to teach
- For a teacher hired after the first day of instruction (late hire)

The written request will outline the reason for the request and it will document the credentials the recommended teacher possesses which qualify them to teach the subject. In addition, the form must be submitted to the Superintendent or designee for approval before employing the applicant.

**Probationary Contracts-** Relief from Texas Education Code 21.102 will permit the LISD the option to issue a probationary contract for a period of up to two years for experienced teachers, counselors or nurses newly hired in Longview ISD, which will allow the district to better evaluate a teacher's effectiveness. Also, this would decrease our turnover rate and increase the number of experienced teachers. Extension of the probationary contract may prevent the district from having to terminate experienced teachers who may need another year to adjust to the district's programs and initiatives. These recommendations will require prior approval from the Superintendent or designee.

## Teacher Certification {TEC §21.003}

### **Current Statute and Rationale:**

In the event a district cannot locate a certified teacher for a position or a teacher is teaching a subject outside of their certification, the district must submit a request to the Texas Education Agency to hire without certification, with the requirement to obtain certification in a specified time. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) then approves or denies this request.

The current certification requirements inhibit the LISD's ability to hire professionals with industry experience to teach Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, & Mathematics (STEAM) courses. To provide more students with an opportunity to take these courses and obtain professional certifications, the district seeks to establish its own local qualification requirements for such individuals in lieu of the requirements outlined in law.

Additionally, teacher certification requirements could potentially hinder the district's ability to hire teachers to teach in high-demand areas, hard-to-fill courses, certified teachers to teach courses outside of their certification area, or to hire an uncertified person, when that person is the best individual for the job.

### **Proposed Exemption:**

Longview ISD will maintain its current expectations for employee certification and will make every attempt to hire individuals with appropriate certifications for the position before examining the employment of non-certified personnel. However, when that is not reasonably possible, LISD will have the flexibility to hire individuals who are knowledgeable in the subject area and equipped to effectively perform the duties of the position in question, as permitted by law. Longview ISD seeks the ability to locally certify teachers in areas of high demand in order to better meet the educational needs of our students.

This exemption will allow the district to hire an individual with professional or vocational experience who does not possess a traditional teaching certificate but is highly credentialed as evidenced by a license, degree or experience. This process will allow more flexibility in our rapidly evolving hiring landscape, and will strategically enable LISD to staff campuses in areas where teacher shortages are prevalent due to applicants with certification/credentialing issues. In addition, this flexibility will allow LISD to provide more options for our students in class offerings in areas such as gaming, fine arts, and CTE pathways leading to industry recognized certifications and give us the ability to rely less on substitute teachers in high-need assignments where there is a scarcity of traditionally credentialed teacher applicants.

Employees hired under this exemption will be supported and mentored toward their attainment of credentials required for a state teacher certification. Candidates, along with their credentials, will be submitted to the Superintendent or designee for approval, and parent notification will not be required for these employees. Special Education and Bilingual/ESL teachers must continue to be certified and are not included in this exemption.

## PreK- Fourth grade Class Size {TEC §25.112, §25.113}

### **Current Statute and Rationale:**

Prekindergarten – Fourth grade classes are to be kept at a 22-student-to-1-teacher ratio according to state law. When a class exceeds this limit, the district must complete a waiver with the Texas Education Agency. The district notifies the Board and completes the TEA waiver process for an exemption. Once notification of TEA's waiver approval is received, the district is required to notify parents of the approved class size exception.

By the time the board approved the exception waiver request and the waiver was submitted, it was not needed. Being exempt from the 22 to 1 ratio statutory requirement will allow students to remain with the teacher and classmates with whom they began the school year, which will foster continuity, stability, and support increased student achievement.

Class sizes frequently fluctuate during the school year and this process often accounts for limited times a class exceeds 22 students. Not taken into consideration is the academic and social impact on students who are transferred to new classrooms or schools during these times. This reporting proves to represent an unnecessary step for the education of our students.

### **Proposed Exemption:**

While we certainly believe that small class size plays a positive role in the classroom, we do not believe it has a negative effect when you only add one or two more students. Many times, it is not the number of students, but the makeup and chemistry of the classroom that influence the learning environment.

LISD seeks to locally monitor and maintain appropriate class sizes without the necessity of waivers. This exemption allows the district to utilize a more flexible class size approach based on student needs and time of year, in the event a Prekindergarten – Fourth-grade core classroom reaches 24:1. Additional instructional aides or teacher allocations for Prekindergarten - Fourth grade will be considered once a grade level reaches a student to teacher ratio of 24:1.

This exemption would allow minimal disruption to the learning environment and provide relief from the reporting currently required by state law. Additionally, district Bilingual students will not have to be separated from siblings to balance Bilingual education classes.

## Teacher Planning and Preparation {TEC §21.404}

### **Current Statute and Rationale:**

The Texas Education Code states that teachers are entitled to at least 450 minutes within each two week period for preparation for teaching, conferencing with parents, and evaluating student work.

### **Proposed Exemption:**

The district is seeking flexibility in the scheduling of teacher planning and preparation. The district does not seek to reduce the total planning and preparation time for teachers, but rather seeks the flexibility to schedule planning and training when it is best needed. As the district continues to roll out new curriculum, academic programs, the ability to have sustained periods of shared planning time is crucial for fidelity of implementation. This exception allows the district and campuses to allow for that time.

## Discipline; Law and Order {TEC §37.006}

### Current Statute and Rationale:

Vaping and DAEP Statutory Requirement: mandates that a student who possesses or gives/sells another student an e-cigarette or marijuana must be sent to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP).

This new code provides no flexibility in dealing with students who violate this rule. This zero-tolerance policy requires removal based on a first offense and does not allow for any discretion based on the nature of the offense. The district believes this will unnecessarily remove students from the classroom, adversely impact student proficiency, and reverse the progress being made on behavior and discipline in our schools.

### Proposed Exemption:

The district is seeking exemption for mandatory DAEP placement for vaping related offenses. LISD seeks to put decisions back in the hands of educators and local district leadership. Student learning and progress is disrupted when students are removed from their home campus. The district will ensure that vaping and other similar offenses will be dealt with appropriately through the District-wide, Board-approved Student Code of Conduct, local interventions, or counseling.

## Admission, Transfer, and Attendance {TEC §25.0915}

### Current Statute and Rationale:

Longview ISD will allow each Charter Partner and District Administration to determine the appropriate official attendance time/period for their campus. The Charter Partner and District Administration will review attendance data and make an attendance time/period recommendation for each campus. LISD will utilize Texas Education Agency Student Attendance Accounting Handbook Section 3.6.2.2 along with 19 TAC 129.21(h) (3) and 19 TAC 129.21 (h). For student attendance funding eligibility, the district will utilize Texas Education Agency Student Attendance Accounting Handbook Section 3.2.2 referred to as the "two-through-four-hour rule."

Many times the students are listed as absent due to their missing the LISD designated attendance period. The absences accumulate and may place the student in jeopardy of failing and/or truancy. In order to meet the local needs of LISD at-risk students, the district will develop guidelines for the minimum number of minutes a student must be in attendance during the day to be counted present. The official Average Daily Attendance (ADA) time/period will be determined collaboratively by each Charter Partner and District Administration. The attendance exemption will provide one Truancy Prevention Measures to assist the district's students.

Some factors that could at-risk students are often in school, but may be late and tardy to class. Several factors may account for their tardiness to school, which include but are not limited to:

- Assisting their younger siblings to get ready for school.
- Walking their siblings to their school and then walking to their campus.
- Limited options for private transportation to school if they missed the school bus.
- Homeless or living in different locations during the week.

### Proposed Exemption:

LISD is asking to be exempt from documenting attendance across the District only at 10:00 a.m., and instead allow each Charter Partner and District Administration to determine the appropriate attendance time/period. Without this exemption, a student who arrived for class at 10:45 a.m. and completes the rest of the school day would be counted absent. With this proposed exemption, the student would be credited for attending school that day provided they were in attendance for at least 4 hours.