

LOHN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

District of Innovation Plan

By way of invoking H.B. 1842 (84th Session of the Texas Legislature), Lohn ISD has developed a locally adopted Innovation Plan utilizing the flexibility granted under Chapter 12 of the Texas Education Code (TEC). The purpose of this locally adopted Innovation Plan is to exempt and/or achieve flexibility for the district from sections of the TEC that inhibit the district's goals and objectives.

Lohn ISD's Innovation Plan will officially become effective pending the completion of all required steps outlined in TEC Chapter 12A Districts of Innovation. The date an official vote in favor of adoption by the Lohn ISD's Board of Trustees will serve as the plan's commencement date. The term for Lohn's Innovation Plan will be five years from the school board's vote to adopt the plan.*

* Sec. 12A.007. AMENDMENT, RESCISSION, OR RENEWAL OF LOCAL INNOVATION PLAN. A local innovation plan may be amended, rescinded, or renewed if the action is approved by a vote of the district-level committee established under Section 11.251, or a comparable committee if the district is exempt from that section, and the board of trustees in the same manner as required for initial adoption of a local innovation plan under Section 12A.005.

Motto

Teaching Every Child, Every Day

Mission

The mission of Lohn School is to provide each student with a diverse education in a safe, supportive environment that promotes self-discipline, motivation, and excellence in learning. The Lohn School staff joins the parents and community to assist the students in developing skills to become independent and self-sufficient adults who will succeed and contribute responsibly in a global community.

Goals & Objectives

The following six goals have been established in order to fulfill the district's potential to accomplish the designated Mission:

- **Goal 1:** All students will be given the opportunity to enhance their learning potential and improve test scores.
- **Goal 2:** Recruit and/or retain quality personnel that mirror the values of the Lohn community and the ISD Mission.
- **Goal 3:** Parents/Guardians will be afforded the opportunity to be full partners in the education of their children and increase their involvement in their student's academic growth, attendance, and conduct.
- **Goal 4:** Increase student enrollment and attendance.
- **Goal 5:** Technology will be upgraded and integrated into classrooms and lessons.
- **Goal 6:** Increase the safety and security of our students and staff.

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Timeline of Events

Event/Activity	Organization/Group	Date Conducted
District of Innovation Discussion	Board of Trustees	3/8/2017
District of Innovation Committee Established	District of Innovation Committee	4/19/2017
Committee Meeting	District of Innovation Committee	5/6/2017
Committee Meeting	District of Innovation Committee	5/26/2017
District of Innovation Board Resolution	Board of Trustees	5/10/2017
District of Innovation Public Hearing	School Community	
Plan posted to district website	District of Innovation Committee	5/31/2017
School Board vote to adopt plan	Board of Trustees	
District Innovation Plan filed with Commissioner of Education	District of Innovation Committee	

District of Innovation Committee

District/School Community Position	Name	Signature
Superintendent	Leon Freeman	
Principal	Steven Coston	
Technology Director	Virginia Moore	
Teacher	Kellie Greer	
Teacher	Tammy Shapland-Perkins	
Teacher	Linda Fore	
Teacher	Jim Altieri	
Teacher	Austin Simpson	
Teacher	Melody Hashberger	
Teacher	Rebekah Chew	
Community Member	James Marshall	

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1. Attendance (TEC 25.092)

Summary of TEC:

Currently, 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 time the class is offered.

Innovation/Rationale:

Local data from previous years has shown a direct correlation between a student's attendance and his/her academic success-including STAAR results. The Lohn ISD reserves the right to require a minimum of 95% attendance to earn credit. Those students who have less than 95% attendance will be required to attend additional instructional opportunities to complete their academic requirements.

2. Probationary Contracts (21.002, 21.102)

Summary of TEC:

Under current law, probationary periods for newly hired teachers who have been in public education for at least five of the previous eight years cannot exceed one year.

Innovation/Rationale:

This one year period is insufficient in some cases to fully determine the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom. Flexibility from TEC 21.002 will permit the District the option to issue a probationary contract for a period of up to three years for experienced teachers, counselors, nurses, and certified librarians newly hired in Lohn ISD. This will allow for better evaluation and teacher effectiveness through yearly appraisal.

3. Return to Probationary Contract (TEC 21.106)

Summary of TEC:

Under current education code, a district may in lieu of discharging/or not renewing a teacher employed under continuing or term contract with "written consent of the teacher" may return said teacher to a probationary contract. Teachers returned to probationary contract status must serve a new probationary contract period as provided by TEC 21.102.

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Innovation/Rationale:

The Lohn ISD board of trustees reserves the right to return a continuing or term contract teacher back to a probationary contract without the written consent of said teacher. This is a method that might be used to grant a reprieve to a teacher who would otherwise face discharge or non-renewal. This action may only be initiated by recommendation of the superintendent to the board of trustees, who must approve the recommendation by majority vote in a duly-posted meeting.

4. Teacher Certification (TEC 21.003) (TEC 21.005)

Summary of TEC

Currently school district teachers are only authorized to teach courses in their certified teaching areas. Exceptions to this are contingent upon TEA approving a request for probationary certification.

Innovation/Rationale

As a small, rural district, Lohn ISD teachers are often required to teach multiple grade levels and/or different subject areas. Lohn ISD reserves the right to locally approve teachers to teach core subjects outside of their current certified area for a period of one school year with superintendent approval. This arrangement may be extended as approved by the board of trustees. Courses considered as electives may be approved at the discretion of the superintendent and board of trustees.

5. Teacher and Principal Evaluation (TEC 21.203, 21.352, 21.354)

Summary of TEC

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, the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS). Lohn ISD policy requires teachers on term or probationary contracts to be formally evaluated annually. Principals are evaluated annually on T-PESS.

Innovation/Rationale:

A committee of administrators and teachers will develop a teacher evaluation system that may include any combination of PDAS, T-TESS, T-PESS, and any other best practices to develop local evaluation tools that fit the needs and goals of Lohn ISD.

A. Lohn ISD will create and use a locally-developed teacher appraisal tool.

B. Lohn ISD will create and use a locally-developed principal evaluation tool.

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C. These evaluation tools will be developed with input from administration and teachers. It will use staff input, PDAS, T-TESS, T-PESS, and any other relevant best practice.

D. Lohn ISD's teachers and principals will be formally evaluated annually.

E. The teacher appraisal tool will include an annual summative conference to discuss the year and to set personal goals and provide focus for a professional improvement plan for the coming year. These locally-developed plans should reflect the strengths, areas of concern, and goals for Lohn ISD personnel.

6. Removal by a Teacher (TEC 37.002)

Summary of TEC

A teacher may remove from class a student who has been documented by the teacher to repeatedly interfere with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in class. Furthermore, a student whose behavior is unruly, disruptive, or abusive may be referred to the campus behavior coordinator and/or principal. The principal may place the student into another appropriate classroom, into in-school suspension, or into a disciplinary alternative education program.

Innovation/Rationale

In addition to TEC 37.002 current format, Lohn ISD reserves the right to revoke the transfer status of students whose behavior is cause for removal by a teacher from the classroom or a student whose on-campus behavior repeatedly violates the Lohn ISD student code of conduct.

Lohn ISD reserves the right to revoke the transfer status of students who fall below Lohn ISD attendance standards.

This flexibility will allow Lohn ISD to grant inter-district transfer students who may not currently meet Lohn ISD requirements an opportunity to re-establish their discipline and attendance records.

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7. School Start/End Date (TEC 25.0811) (TEC 25.0812)

Summary of TEC:

Currently TEC 25.0811 allows school districts to begin instructional days for students on the fourth Monday in August. In addition, TEC 25.0812 mandates schools to schedule the last day of school no earlier than May 15th.

Innovation/Rationale:

Lohn ISD reserves the right to initiate instructional days prior to the fourth Monday of August and end school prior to the 15th of May. This flexibility is an effort to maximize instructional time before state assessment exams and allow greater flexibility in creating the district calendar.