

**Point Isabel Independent School District
Local Innovation Plan – Project S.A.I.L.: *a team solution***



Local Innovation Committee Members	
Name	Position
Dr. Lisa Garcia	Superintendent of Schools
Cecilia Castillo	Board of Trustee
Jimmy Vela	Board of Trustee
Henry LeVrier	Deputy Superintendent for Business and Operations
Ana Holland	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
Calvin Byrd	Local Business Owner
Roxanne Harris	Community Member
Abbie Mahan	Parent
Andy Platner	Local Business Owner
Dymphna Canales	Technology Director
Christie Esparza	Garriga Elementary Principal
Sonia Harry	Garriga Elementary Dean of Instruction
Deborah Bickerton	Garriga Elementary Teacher
Maribel Valdez	Derry Elementary Principal
Noemi Guzman	Derry Elementary Dean of Instruction
Ana Greenwood	Derry Bilingual Elementary Teacher
Nancy Gonzalez	Port Isabel Junior High School Principal
Joey Rivera	Port Isabel Junior High School Dean of Instruction
Anne Francis	Port Isabel Junior High School Teacher
Dr. William Roach	Port Isabel High School Principal
Debra Wilson	Port Isabel High School Dean of Instruction
Wen Moore	Port Isabel High School Teacher
Blake Ramsey	Port Isabel High School Teacher
Efren Rodriguez	AP/Pre AP Port Isabel High School Teacher



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I. INTRODUCTION

House Bill 1842, passed during the 84th Texas Legislative Session provides public school districts the opportunity to seek designation as a District of Innovation to obtain exemption from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code. February 16, 2016, the Point Isabel Independent School District’s Board of Trustees (Board) passed a Resolution to initiate the process of designation as a District of Innovation to increase local control over District operations to further support innovation and local initiatives to improve educational outcomes. On February 23, 2016 the Board held a public hearing passing a resolution to consider developing a Local Innovation Plan.

On March 7, 2016, a District of Innovation Committee (Committee) comprised of District stakeholders, including educators, administrators, parents and community members formed to develop the Local Innovation Plan (Plan). Opportunities to review and revise the plan occurred during Committee meetings held March 23 and April 13, 2016. The Committee obtained input from various stakeholders by posting the information on the District website, social media sites, email correspondence to staff members and campus presentations. An email address created for submission of questions or requests for additional information led to the development of a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document. The FAQ is updated regularly and accessible on the district website. Based on direction provide by the Board and input from various District stakeholders, the Committee proposes the following plan for designation as a District of Innovation.

II. TERM

The term of the Plan is for five years, beginning with the 2016-2017 school year and culminating at the end of the 2021-2022 school year, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The Committee will continually monitor the effectiveness of the Plan and recommend to the Board any suggested modifications to the Plan.

III. TIMELINE

Activity	Start Date
Board of Trustees passes resolution	February 16, 2016
Board of Trustees holds public hearing to consider developing a plan for innovation	February 23, 2016
Committee forms to work on plan for innovation	March 7, 2016
Committee meeting to review draft plan	March 23, 2016
Draft versions of the plan are shared with Board, DEIC, SBDM and placed on the website for feedback	March 28, 2016
Committee meeting to finalize plan	April 13, 2016
Final version of the plan is posted on District website	April 15, 2016
Board notifies Commissioner of intent to approve plan	May 9, 2016
Board of Trustees votes to adopt final plan	May 17, 2016

IV. A COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The Plan’s comprehensive educational program is guided by and aligned with the Board’s Goals, Mission and Project S.A.I.L. (Student Achievement via Individualized Learning) blended learning business plan.

A. Mission

Point Isabel Independent School District in partnership with parents and the community, prepares skilled life-long learners to responsibly contribute to our global society.

B. 2016-2017 Board Goals

A qualified staff will be held accountable to implement a rigorous curriculum in a disciplined, safe learning environment committed to a higher standard of conduct, integrating interactive instructional technology to transform the educational experience of all students to be college or career ready.

Evolving systems will be in place to empower and hold students accountable for continuous annual progress towards their personalized learning path.

Point Isabel ISD will promote fiscal and fiduciary responsibility through comprehensive reviews to include human talent, facilities, technology, safety and security of all buildings, and allow for reallocation of funds to support and enhance the District of Innovation.

Point Isabel ISD will build and expand a network of strong, positive relationships and partnerships with our communities, businesses, parents and staff to enhance the opportunities available to our students.

C. Project S.A.I.L. (Blended Learning Business Plan) Priorities

Port Isabel High School (PIHS) believes providing a full flexible high school schedule, coupled with personalized learning experiences based on relevant content, will better prepare high school students for careers or higher education pathways.

Port Isabel Junior High School (PIJH), Garriga Elementary and Derry Elementary believe that by transforming learning environments and teaching styles to blended learning models of instruction more students will reach their maximum potential.

D. Blended Learning Business Plan

The Board recognizes that the current “factory” model design of schools no longer meets the needs of 21st century learners. A personalized, competency based approach to learning will close the achievement gap for struggling learners and offer additional choices for students capable of moving at a faster pace.

Accordingly, the District developed a five-year blended learning business plan to

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set priorities, focus and align energy and resources, and ensure that employees and other stakeholders are working towards common goals.

The Blended Learning Business Plan addresses four key areas:

1. Establish and retain high quality staff
2. Increase student achievement, engagement and motivation through personalized learning
3. Promote fiscal responsibility to align resources and funds to support and enhance the District of Innovation
4. Build and expand a network of strong positive relationships and partnerships with all stakeholders

E. Innovations

To achieve the District’s Mission and Board Goals, to align the District’s practices and operations with the District’s Business Plan priorities, and to meet the Blended Learning Business Plan goals, flexibility is required to exert local control, at both the District and campus levels to:

- Modify attendance requirements for class credit
- Adjust class size ratio requirements

The District requires local flexibility in the areas listed above to support each student in attaining the skills and mindset needed to succeed in the college/career pathway of their choice through personalized learning.

V. INHIBITING STATUTES TO THE BLENDED LEARNING BUSINESS PLAN

A. Modifications to Minimum Attendance Requirements for Class Credit

Providing engaging and challenging learning to all students requires the District have relief from Texas Education Code Section 25.092, which inhibits the goals of the Blended Learning Business Plan by not allowing the District to issue class credit or a final grade for a class if a student is not in attendance 90% of the time that a class is offered. Currently the law requires the District to award class credit to students based on “seat time” rather than based on content mastery. Exemption from this requirement will provide educational advantages to District students by promoting active learning through innovation in the methods, locations, and times instruction may be delivered to students, thereby accommodating Port Isabel High School students with a flexible attendance school day to facilitate blended learning, with some courses online, offered as independent study or projects while allowing for internships. By 2020, the required school day for all students will be

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shortened to further independent, personalized learning opportunities for students.

The overarching goal in the Blended Learning Business Plan within the focus area of providing engaging and challenging learning is to implement tools, resources, and professional development that support personalized learning for both students and teachers. According to the Clayton Christensen Institute blended learning is a formal education program which a student learns: (1) at least in part through online learning, with some element of student control over the time, place, path or pace; (2) at least in part in a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home; (3) and the modalities along each student’s learning path within a course or subject are connected to provide an integrated learning experience. Therefore, exemption from Section 25.092 will foster greater innovation to promote personalized learning and improve student achievement. In addition, exemption from this requirement will allow the District to provide a flexible high school schedule, coupled with a personalized learning experience based on relevant content, which will better prepare high school students for careers or higher education pathways.

Relief from Section 25.092 does not impact or alter existing compulsory attendance requirements or University Interscholastic League (UIL) rules. Moreover, opting out of Section 25.092 in no way limits or modifies a teacher’s right to determine the finality of a grade in accordance with Texas Education Code Section 28.0214, nor does it restrict or alter a teacher’s right to assign grades in accordance with Texas Education Code Section 28.0216.

B. Class Size Ratio

As the District implements the Blended Learning Business Plan, every student will spend a portion of each school day in a competency-based, personalized online learning experience. At the K-8 grade levels students will participate in Flipped and Station-Rotation models of instruction, which will provide the teacher the ability to work with small groups of students throughout the class day; thus allowing flexibility for class sizes in grade K-4.

According to Section 25:112 grades K-4 may not have a class size ratio of greater than 22:1 without requesting a Class Size exemption. The personalized learning experiences that will be available for each student as denoted in the Business Plan negates the necessity of obtaining approval from the School Board, requesting a waiver from TEA, and sending a notification letter to parents in the event a K-4 grade class exceeds the 22:1 ratio. The District is requesting relief from the requirement of a Class Size exemption and notification to parents (TEC 25.112 and 25.113). Based on historical data the District applies for a minimum of three Class Size Exemptions annually expending valuable time and resources in this process. As part of the implementation of the Blended Learning Business Plan, obtaining this flexibility will expedite the planning and implementation process, as well as

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save resources. An established district cap of 25:1 for K-4 will be in place on a case by case basis, always considering the subject to be taught, the teaching methodology to be used, and any need for individual instruction [25.112(c)].

VI. PROHIBITING EXEMPTIONS

Point Isabel ISD is appreciative of the opportunities to seek flexibility through the designation as a District of Innovation and understands certain sections of the Texas Education Code are prohibited exemptions. However, as the plan for the future of education evolves in meeting the diverse needs of 21st century learners, Point Isabel ISD will be in search of venues to address other areas of constraint to the individualized planning and instructional needs of students.

For example, as instruction transitions to a blended learning model, which allows students a flexible school day schedule, an analysis of the Attendance Accounting Handbook and associated rules such as, the Texas Education Code Section 42.006 will need to be addressed for potential flexibility. Furthering the implementation of the Blended Learning Business Plan, Port Isabel High School will require modification and flexibility to capture student attendance at various times, using a variety of methods during the day, including the ability to count students present for logging on remotely to the district adopted Learning Management System to be counted as present for ADA purposes and the 90% attendance rule.

Another example of flexibility required to fully implement the Blended Learning Business Plan is to allow TEKS aligned pathway courses to earn high school credit for required foundation core content. As the District implements the Blended Learning Business Plan, students will be afforded the opportunity to truly develop an individualized graduation plan aligned to their strengths and areas of interest, to meet their college and/or career goals. As students embark on this process of a personalized course pathway at the high school, the need to provide flexibility in the attainment of the foundation curriculum necessary to meet the four core subject requirements as denoted in Texas Education Code 28.025 and 28.002 will need to be addressed. For example, if a student has developed an individualized plan focused on a health science career, the incorporation of Medical Terminology as a fourth science credit would allow the student the flexibility to ensure a strong foundation for his/her transition to any postsecondary education system.

VII. PROJECT S.A.I.L. BLENDED LEARNING BUSINESS PLAN

Select the [Project S.A.I.L. Blended Learning Business Plan](#) link or scan the QR code to view Point Isabel ISD's blended learning business plan in its entirety. Adobe Acrobat/Reader version 8 or 9 is required to view the .pdf file.



VIII. LOCAL INNOVATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Dr. Lisa Garcia

Cecilia Castillo

Jimmy Vela

Henry LeVrier

Ana Holland

Calvin Byrd

Roxanne Harris

Abbie Mahan

Andy Platner

Dymphna Canales

Christie Esparza

Sonia Harry

Deborah Bickerton

Maribel Valdez

Noemi Guzman

Ana Greenwood

Nancy Gonzalez

Joey Rivera

Anne Francis

Dr. William Roach

Debra Wilson

Wen Moore

Blake Ramsey

Efren Rodriguez