

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
LULING INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**

AGENDA ITEM: Action Item	Date: February 19, 2026
SUBECT: Consideration/Possible Action Regarding Approval of Application for a Delay of Teacher Certification Requirements	Submitted by: Erin Warren Related Pages: 6 Pages
BACKGROUND INFORMATION: House Bill 2, passed during the 89 th Texas Legislative session, significantly restricts a District of Innovation's ability to employ teachers of record who are in the process of completing requirements for obtaining educator certification credentials. As a result, Texas Education Code §21.0032 now limits the subject areas in which a teacher who is not yet fully certified can be employed. Districts may elect to delay full compliance with TEC §21.0032 until the 2029-2030 school year through the submission of an application and certification compliance plan. A delayed compliance date would enable teachers currently employed by the district to complete certification requirements.	
RECOMMENDED ACTION: Move to approve the Application for a Delay of Teacher Certification Requirements	BUDGETARY INFO.

Superintendent's Approval:

Board President's Approval:



Application for a Delay of Teacher Certification Requirements, TEC §21.0032, and Certification Compliance Plan

Rationale

House Bill 2, passed during the 89th Texas Legislative session, significantly restricts a District of Innovation's ability to employ teachers of record who are in the process of completing requirements for obtaining educator certification credentials. As a result, Texas Education Code §21.0032 now limits the subject areas in which a teacher who is not yet fully certified can be employed.

New Restrictions on DOI plans regarding certification include the following:

Academic Year	DOI Restrictions
2025-2026	District maintains currently approved DOI plans and certification exemptions from TEC §21.0032.
2026-2027	District can no longer include K-5 reading and math teachers in certification exemptions.
2027-2028	District can no longer include any foundational subject area teachers in any grade level in certification exemptions.

Districts may elect to delay full compliance with TEC §21.0032 until the 2029-2030 school year through the submission of an application and certification compliance plan. A delayed compliance date for Luling ISD would enable teachers currently employed by the district to complete certification requirements and ensure that current classroom staffing needs are adequately addressed.

Certification Data

Over the last few years, Luling ISD has employed teachers who are in the process of completing certification requirements when a certified individual has not been available. An average of 10 uncertified teachers has been hired annually over the last three years.

Number of Uncertified Teachers Hired Annually

Academic Year	Total Uncertified New Hires	K-5 Reading and/or Math Placement	Core Subjects 6-12 Placement	Electives Placement
2022-2023	10	4	5	1
2023-2024	9	4	3	2
2024-2025	11	5	4	2
2025-2026	11	7	2	2

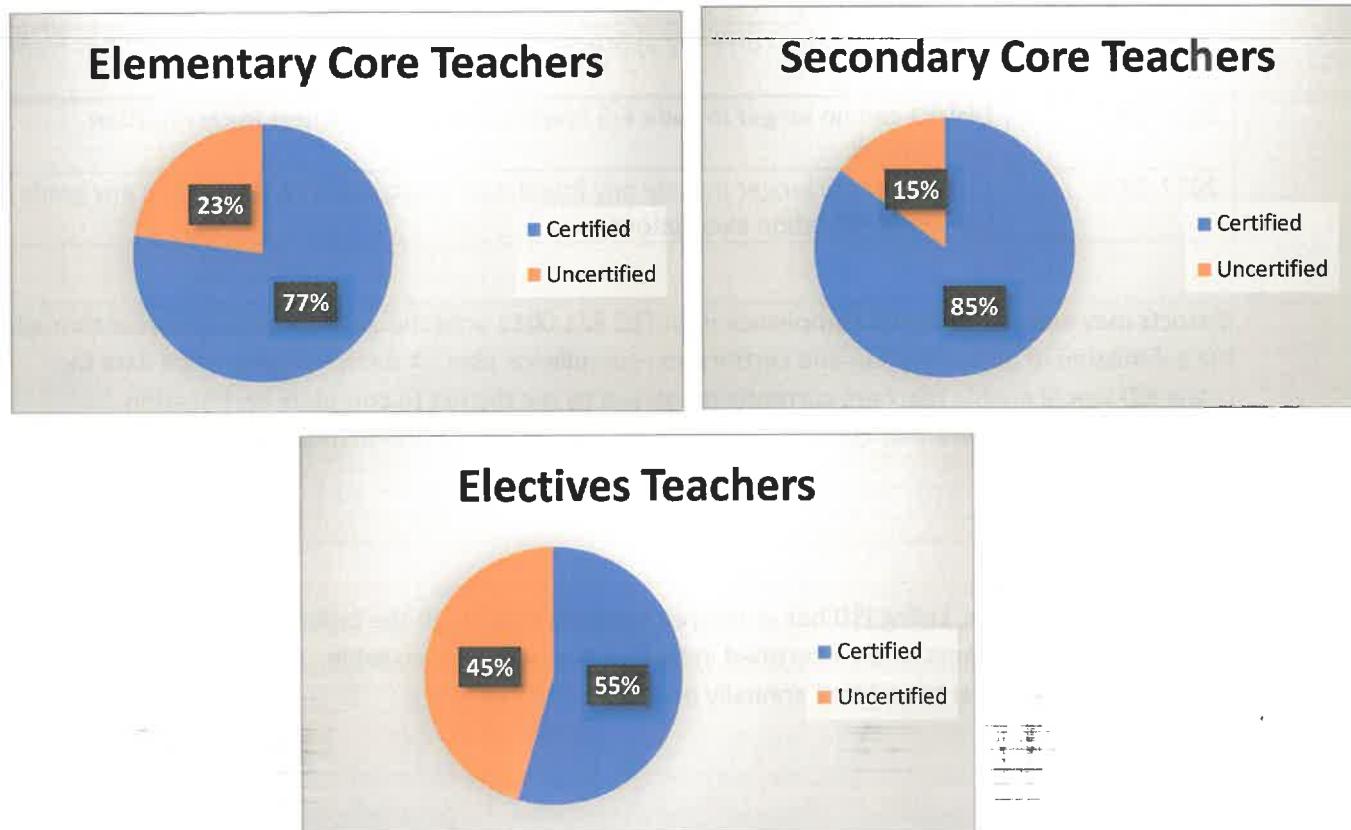
Luling ISD's current DOI plan requires uncertified teachers to become certified within 3 years of initial employment. As a result, Luling ISD has a total of 19 uncertified teachers at this time, representing 19% of the district's teacher workforce.

Current Number of Uncertified Teachers, 2025-2026

Total Uncertified Teachers Employed	K-5 Reading and/or Math Placement	Core Subjects 6-12 Placement	Electives Placement
19	10	5	4

The following graphics indicate the certification status of Luling ISD's current teacher workforce by teaching assignment.

Certification Status by Teaching Assignment, 2025-2026



Compliance Plan

Luling ISD will implement a compliance plan to eliminate reliance on uncertified teachers while ensuring instructional stability during the transition.

Plan Goals

Academic Year	Target Total Uncertified Core Area Teacher Count	Rationale
2025-2026	15	Maintain accurate certification and permit tracking for all instructional staff; Provide assigned mentors and documented instructional support; Monitor certification progress each semester.
2026-2027	11	Current Year 2/Year 3 uncertified teachers achieve certification; New hire candidates on a certification track prioritized for hire.
2027-2028	7	New hire candidates on a certification track prioritized for hire; Certification requirements completed in 1 year.
2028-2029	3	New hire candidates on a certification track prioritized for hire; Certification requirements completed in 1 year.
2029-2030	0	Full compliance with HB2 certification requirements; Only certified candidates hired for Foundation Curriculum courses.

Plan Strategies

1. Achieve Certification for Current Employees

As a condition of employment, Luling ISD has ensured that uncertified staff are enrolled in an Educator Preparation Program (EPP). This program may be a university-based program or an alternative certification program. To assist with completion of certification requirements, Luling ISD is implementing the following supports:

- **Structured Certification Check-In Meetings** are conducted by district administrative staff to document employee progress towards certification, strategize solutions to address barriers, and celebrate completion of certification requirement steps.
- **Clear Communication** is provided to employees regarding individual plan progress.
- **Mentorship and Instructional Coaching** to assist employee development in content area knowledge and skills is delivered through a documented schedule of PLCs, collaborative data meetings, planning days with specialists, and professional development activities.
- **Study Cohorts and/or Online Test-Prep Resources** are made available to help employees prepare for certification exams.

2. Utilize EPP Partnerships to Expand Candidate Field

Luling ISD has established a formal partnership with an Educator Preparation Program (EPP) to expand the candidate field and support certification efforts during the extension period. TeachWorthy, in coordination with Indiana Wesleyan University, will assist Luling ISD in

providing a high-quality certification pathway for teacher candidates. The preparation program includes structured coursework, exam preparation, clinical teaching support, and financial assistance. Through the TeachWorthy partnership, Luling ISD will be able to implement a Grow Your Own strategy to transition effective paraprofessionals and other auxiliary staff into effective certified teachers. The inaugural launch meeting for the 2026-2027 cohort is scheduled for February 25, 2026.

Luling ISD has also partnered with Texas State University to establish a residency program. Through this partnership, educator candidates will experience a high-quality, sustainable paid teacher residency while completing certification requirements. Luling ISD has been awarded a LASO 4 Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies Grant to build the residency program and will adhere with all program assurances outlined in the grant requirements.

3. Enhance District's Competitive Edge in Recruitment and Retention

Luling ISD experiences a highly competitive market when attracting and retaining effective instructional staff. To enhance the district's appeal for current and potential teachers, Luling ISD is committed to the following recruitment and retention strategies:

- **Positive Social Media Presence** highlights district celebrations, student activities and achievements, and staff camaraderie. A positive district image is critical to attracting and retaining effective teachers.
- **Educator Fairs and Network Participation** expand familiarity of candidates with the district, increase the applicant pool for open positions, and improve candidate quality.
- **Competitive Financial Incentives** are imperative to maintain marketability in this area of the state. Strategies include prioritizing competitive teacher salaries, implementing a robust Teacher Incentive Allotment designation plan, and incorporating a variety of stipends and bonuses to attract and retain staff in critical needs areas.

4. Phase Out Hiring of Uncertified Staff

Luling ISD will implement a targeted phase out of hiring any uncertified staff in foundational subject areas to meet the 2029-2030 goal of full compliance. This targeted phase out will reduce the overall percentage of uncertified staff in the district by 3.75% annually, thus ensuring HB 2 compliance by the 2029-2030 school year.



Teachworthy Memorandum of Understanding

Serving as a Letter of Collaboration and support for the Delayed Teacher Certification Plan

This MOU is designed to inform you of the types and levels of support provided by Teachworthy in partnership with Luling ISD to assist uncertified teachers in becoming fully certified.

The following areas of cooperation and support are offered by Teachworthy to Luling ISD, subject to mutual consent:

- Prepare a detailed Certification Plan for each candidate to outline the steps needed to complete the program successfully.
- Assign a personal Program Advisor who will be accessible to advise and support candidates. Teachworthy commits to replying to candidate questions and concerns within 24-48 hours to expedite their progress.
- Confirm payment options are clearly communicated.
- Support candidates in completing Teachworthy training courses within the curriculum, containing TEA standards of expectations, and evaluate mastery of content and performance-based assessments from trained evaluators who are expert educators.
 - Provide access to a live curriculum evaluator for support in areas of program implementation and curriculum assignments.
 - Provide multiple weekly office hours so that candidates can connect with instructors and Program Advisors.
 - Provide candidates with a live dashboard of data to show academic status and performance of progress in the curriculum and toward certification requirements.
- Provide two days of face-to-face nationally recognized Capturing Kids' Hearts training to help ensure that candidates have the skills to manage a self-regulating classroom and maintain a positive culture.
- Support each candidate with test preparation resources before granting test permission and provide detailed remediation plans if additional attempts are required.
- Send monthly status updates to encourage candidates to move forward toward full certification.
- Provide the district with monthly emails and a candidate database so that administrators can track each candidate's progress toward certification goals.
- Coach interns through a minimum of five formal classroom observations and six informal observations.
- Collaborate with the principal, mentor, and field supervisor of each intern to ensure success in effective classroom instruction and management.
- Share intern performance with campus administration and create improvement plans when necessary.
- Provide additional support and partnerships upon request of the district.

No amendment, consent, or waiver of terms of this Letter of Collaboration shall bind either party. Any such amendment, consent, or waiver shall be effective only in the specific instance and for the specified purpose given.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "jim christensen".

Dr. Jim Christensen

Executive Director

The teachworthy logo, identical to the one at the top of the page.

2026-28 Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies Grant (LASO 4)

Program Attachment: Educator Preparation Program (EPP) Verification and Commitment Form

School System Name: Luling Independent School District

Educator Preparation Program (EPP) Name: Texas State University

Question 1: Please select which of the following statements applies to the EPP.

- The EPP has a State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC)-approved Texas Teacher Residency Preparation Route (TTRPR).

If the above does not apply to the EPP, then the EPP is not eligible to partner with the school system for this grant.

Question 2: Does the educator preparation program agree to the following commitments?

- The EPP agrees to commit to partner with the school system to offer a high-quality, sustainable paid teacher residency.
- The EPP agrees to the EPP-school system partnership assurances outline in the LASO 4 Texas Strategic Staffing Grant for Residencies Grant program assurances.
- The EPP commits to the two-year strategic staffing design and implementation process, supported by technical assistance from the local education service center (ESC).

Question 3: Who will be the EPP primary point of contact for school system partners, education service centers, and TEA? This person may be different than the individual authorized to sign and submit this form.

Name: Dr. Jennifer Porterfield

Title: Associate Dean for Educator Preparation

Phone: 512-408-1540

Email: jporterfield@txstate.edu

Question 4 (Optional): Below, please share any additional contextual information the EPP would like to provide regarding the above responses.

Name of EPP Representative: Dr. Michael O'Malley

Title of EPP Representative: Dean, College of Education

Signature of EPP Representative: Michael P. O'Malley

Date: 11/26/2025

