



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

### **Rationale**

House Bill 2, passed during the 89<sup>th</sup> 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:

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>DOI Restrictions</b>
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
<b>2022-2023</b>	10	4	5	1
<b>2023-2024</b>	9	4	3	2
<b>2024-2025</b>	11	5	4	2
<b>2025-2026</b>	11	7	2	2

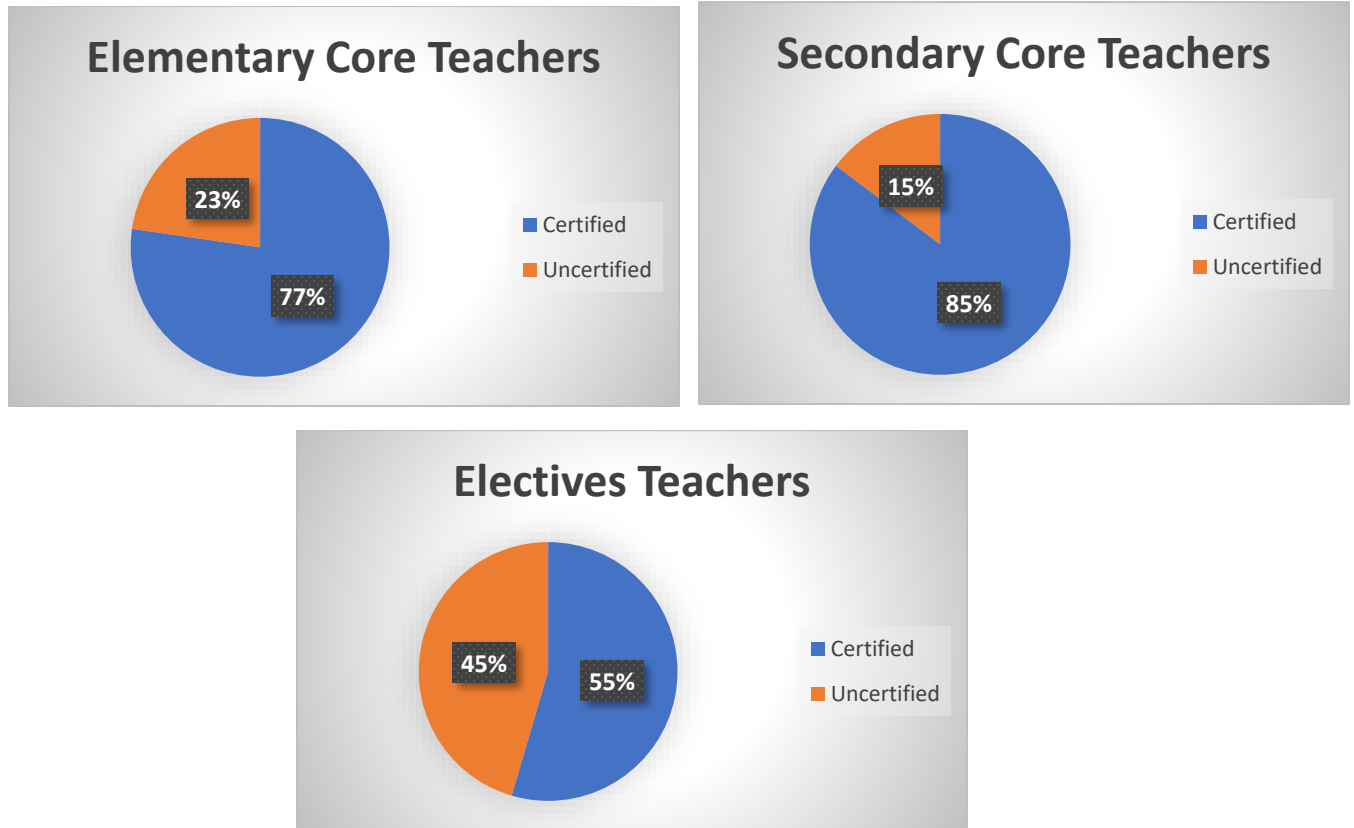
Luling ISD’s current DOI plan requires uncertified teachers to become certified within 3 years of initial employment. As a result, Luling ISD has a total of 19 uncertified teachers at this time, representing 19% of the district’s teacher workforce.

**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
<b>19</b>	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.
- **Financial Incentives** through TEC §21.0033 will be provided to uncertified staff who meet the eligibility criteria. This one-time \$1,000 incentive will be paid by the TEA to each eligible classroom teacher upon successful completion of the requirements for the issuance of a standard certificate. Eligibility criteria include: being employed as an uncertified first-year teacher in the 2022-23 or 2023-24 school year; still uncertified as

of Jan. 1, 2025; achieving a standard certificate by the end of the 2026-27 school year; and remaining continuously employed by the school district.

## **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.