

HOUSTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Academy of Innovation

A briefing for community, government, and industry partners



Thursday, June 4, 2026 • 1:00 p.m.

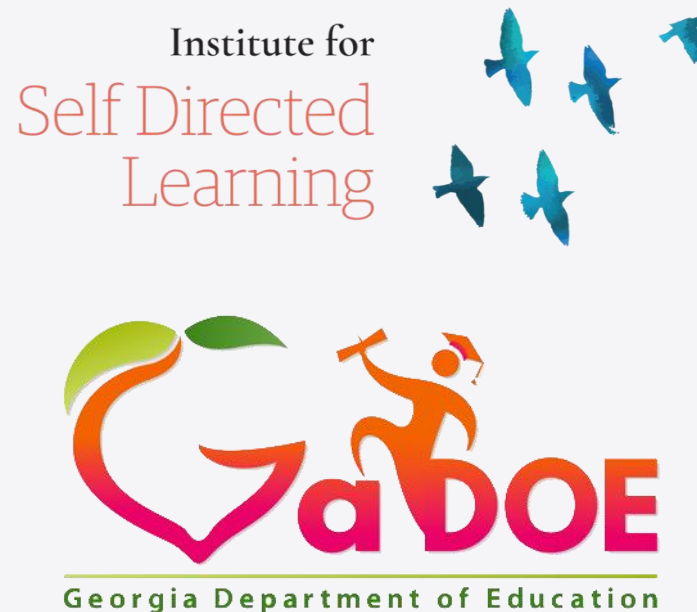
Houston County School District Central Office • Perry, Georgia

We are innovating our offerings

Selected: Houston is 1 of 10.

Georgia's Innovative Learning Models Initiative.

An initiative to help school districts develop innovative learning models to meet the needs of students and families. We will work to design new school models that increase flexibility, strengthen student engagement, and respond to community needs.



**We're not chasing
what's next.**

***We're helping
define it.***

THE PROMISE

One commitment that drives every decision we make.

Every Innovator graduates with a **public, verifiable portfolio** of real work, done for **real clients** across our community.

Aol is not a magnet program or a competing school. It is a design lab whose best practices are intended, over time, to travel into every Houston County school.

WHY NOW

The world our graduates enter has already changed.

01

AI has compressed generic knowledge work

Employers and universities are screening for evidence of real making, real shipping, and judgment under uncertainty, not just grades and seat time.

02

The credential market has fragmented

Stackable industry credentials, apprenticeship hours, and verified portfolios now sit alongside the transcript and often carry equal weight in the careers our students want.

03

Middle Georgia has the ingredients

A sitting district committed to the work, Robins AFB in our backyard, strong defense and aerospace partners, multiple post-secondary partners within reach, and a community that wants its students to thrive locally.

THE MODEL AT A GLANCE

How time, place, and credit work at AoI.

1**Virtual core, four days a week**

Students take core academic coursework virtually. Georgia standards are honored, freeing time for deep, project-based work.

2**Lab Day, once a week**

Innovators come together at the Innovation Lab for hands-on building, public critique, and partner sessions.

3**Innovation Sprints**

Six- to nine-week cycles in which student teams design, build, ship, and defend real work for a real client.

4**Mastery, not seat time**

Instead of courses, students receive credit as they work through each sprint. We value real work over seat time.

WHAT INNOVATORS BUILD

Every Sprint, regardless of topic, is built on the same five ingredients.

1

STEM at the core

Real science, math, engineering, or technology in every project — data to analyze, a system to model, something to measure, calculate, or design.

2

AI as a tool

Innovators use AI to research, draft, prototype, and critique their own work — and learn when to turn it off. AI fluency is treated as a literacy.

3

Hands-on making

Every Sprint produces something tangible — a prototype, a video, a website, a kit, an event, a research brief — that Innovators can show, use, and improve.

4

Mentors throughout

Partner mentors help shape the project at the start and coach Innovators through the build — at the Lab, virtually, or in short check-ins along the way.

5

Built over weeks

Sprints are long enough for students to wrestle with a real problem, take feedback, and revise — not one-and-done assignments.

THE INNOVATION LAB

Where Lab Day happens, and where partners see the work up close.

WHAT'S IN THE LAB

- Tiered drone fleet — Hawk F450 Drone Kits, DJI Neo 2, DJI Mini
- 14 hydroponic towers with sensor + dashboard infrastructure
- 3D printer bank, xTool laser cutter, soldering stations
- Microbit electronics, sensors, fabrication materials
- Mac mini running local AI infrastructure (LIA2)
- Classroom arcade cabinet — accumulating student work
- Audio recording + editing equipment for podcast development
- CNC machines for manufacturing prototypes
- Cardboard jigsaw for prototyping buildings, furniture, structures
- Project tables with multimedia displays for collaboration
- Maker space environment with supply carts

LAB DAY, ONCE A WEEK

A working studio, not a classroom.

Hour 1

Practitioner kickoffs, partner sessions, project briefs from real clients.

Hour 2

Teams build, prototype, and consult coaches and outside mentors.

Hour 3

Critique, iteration, defense panels — work shown publicly and scored.

FALL 2026 SPRINT SLATE

Six sprints — drafted, in motion, and ready for partner shaping.

SPRINT 01

Line of Sight

Drones

Defense · Aerospace · Public Safety

SPRINT 02

Living Systems

Hydroponics

Ag-tech · Sustainability · Supply

SPRINT 03

By Design

Maker / Entrepreneur

Design for real clients with real constraints

SPRINT 04

Play Tested

Game Design + Arcade

Entertainment · Learning · Training

SPRINT 05

In Their Hands

Sensory Toy

Empathy-driven design for a specific child

SPRINT 06

Public Record

History Markers

Civic-facing accumulating installation

Each Sprint runs ~6 weeks. The first cohort runs four cycles in the inaugural year.

LIA2 · AI LEARNING PLATFORM

Teaching students to think **with** AI, not depend on AI.

LIA2 is an AI-powered educational platform designed to prepare students for an AI-driven future through **authentic, project-based learning.**

An AI thinking partner, built for the classroom we want.

LIA2 · AI LEARNING PLATFORM

Developing the future-ready learner.

01

Digital Citizenship

- Privacy and data protection
- Ethical AI use
- Bias awareness and online responsibility

02

AI Literacy

- Understand how AI works
- Evaluate AI-generated information
- Recognize strengths, limitations, and hallucinations

03

AI Agency

- Prompting and communication
- Human oversight and decision-making
- Designing AI-powered solutions

04

Applied Innovation

- Subject-specific AI coaches
- Project support and reflection
- Real-world problem solving
- Mentor-guided innovation sprints

WHAT SETS LIA2 APART

Earned, not given. Private by design.

Earned, not given

Students **unlock AI access by demonstrating understanding** — not just by signing in. The platform asks better questions until the thinking is the student's own, so every answer is earned.

18 / 24

Thinking score required to unlock AI access.

Private by design

- Runs on-site, on hardware that lives in the Innovation Lab.
- No student work or prompts sent to outside model providers.
- Built around FERPA, the federal student-privacy standard, from day one.

The model thinks alongside students — and the data stays where the students are.

WHY LIA2 IS DIFFERENT

Most AI tools provide answers.

LIA2 develops **informed, ethical, and capable learners** who know **when to use AI, when to question AI, and when to think independently.**

KNOW

When to use AI

KNOW

When to question AI

KNOW

**When to think
independently**

WHAT WE'RE ASKING TODAY

We are not asking for a commitment. We are asking for an honest conversation.

01

What should we be paying attention to?

You see the workforce, the economy, the community, and the students we're trying to serve from angles we don't. Tell us how students could benefit from your real-world expertise.

02

Who else needs to be at the table?

If one or two names come to mind, colleagues, organizations, partners we haven't yet met, an introduction from you is worth ten cold calls from us. Who can we reach out to from your network?

03

Where might your organization fit?

If something today sparked an idea, a Sprint to sponsor, a panel to sit on, a brief to bring, a Lab visit to host, we'd love to keep the conversation going. We're also looking for places to host students.

For those ready to move further today, we'd be glad to start that conversation here.