



Waller
Independent School District
DISTRICT OF INNOVATION
LOCAL INNOVATION PLAN



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INTRODUCTION

The 84th Texas Legislature passed House Bill 1842 in the spring of 2015. HB 1842 provides public school districts the opportunity to become [Districts of Innovation \(DOI\)](#) and obtain exceptions from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code (TEC). Since then, more than 900 districts have become DOI. DOI may be exempt from certain state statutes to:

- take greater local control in decision-making about the educational and instructional model for students,
- have increased autonomy for state mandates that govern programming, and
- be empowered to innovate and plan differently - to think outside the box.

To qualify, an eligible school district must adopt a five-year innovation plan according to the Texas Education Code. Waller ISD (WISD) is utilizing HB 1842 to obtain more local control and provide additional flexibility for the success of the WISD family of staff, students, and its community.

OUR PROCESS

November 10, 2022	Board Resolution on District of Innovation
December 8, 2022	Public Hearing on District of Innovation
December 8, 2022	Board of Trustees Appoints District of Innovation Planning Committee
December 13, 2022	District of Innovation Planning Committee Meeting
December 20, 2022	District of Innovation Planning Committee Meeting
January 9, 2023	Innovation Plan Posted Online - 30 Days
January 9, 2023	Commissioner of Education Notified
February 8, 2023	DSBDMC Meeting on Innovation Plan - Majority Vote Required for Approval
February 9, 2023	School Board Considers Final Innovation Plan
February 10, 2023	Commissioner/TEA Notified of Approved Innovation Plan
February 10, 2023	District Posts Innovation Plan Online
February 9, 2028	Innovation Plan in Effect for 5 Years

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

First Name	Last Name	District Role
Brian	Ambridge	Business Representative
Chris	DeVault	Business Representative
Malcolm	Guerra	Business Representative, Parent, Community Member
Angie	Campbell Pulido	Campus/District Administrator
Angie	Davis	Campus/District Administrator
Kirsten	Omelan	Campus/District Administrator
Binal	Patel	Campus/District Administrator
Amy	Carranza	Campus/District Administrator, Parent
Melissa	Crosby	Campus/District Administrator, Parent
Stephanie	Fletcher	Campus/District Administrator, Parent
Hannah	Gates	Campus/District Administrator, Parent
Sarah	Marcus	Campus/District Administrator, Parent
Bennie	Mayes	Campus/District Administrator, Parent
Michelle	Sciba	Campus/District Administrator, Parent
Carole	Nemec	Community Member
Charlene	Stubblefield	Community Member
Heather	Stautmeister	Community Member, Business Representative
Joanna	Alvarado	Parent
Tiffany	Bice	Parent
Jason	Duncan	Parent
Tiffany	Graebner	Parent
Victoria	Ojeda	Parent
Jessica	Page	Parent
Cassandra	Posey	Parent
Laura	Schwab	Parent
Ashlee	Leiber	Parent, Community Member, Business Representative
Awbrey	Alvarado	Student
Zane	Hughes	Student
Kayla	Manteca	Student
Scott	Baehren	Teacher
LaShondra	Bonner	Teacher

Jessica	Bronikowski	Teacher
Kristina	Broussard	Teacher
Charlie	Cook	Teacher
Kaley	Council	Teacher
TJ	Dillon	Teacher
Shelby	Gomez	Teacher
Josh	Howard	Teacher
Maricela	Jimenez	Teacher
Allie	Lee	Teacher
Amy	Lee	Teacher
Gracie	Niver	Teacher
Elizabeth	Pettit	Teacher
Adrianna	Runnels	Teacher
Keisha	Scott	Teacher
Meredith	Silvas	Teacher
Candice	Smith	Teacher, Parent
Karina	Castillo	Teacher, Community Member
Judi	Estrada	Teacher, Parent
Ashley	Krolczyk	Teacher, Parent
Kelsey	Edmonds	Teacher, Parent, Community Member
Jessica	Sanchez	Teacher, Parent, Community Member

Facilitators (Non-Voting Attendees/Resource Staff)

First Name	Last Name	District Role
Audrey	Ambridge	Chief Financial Officer
Kelly	Baehren	Chief Academic Officer
Dean	Guerra	Dropout Prevention Specialist/Homeless & Foster Care Liaison
Eric	Meldahl	Director of Human Resources
Toni	Misak	Director of Curriculum & Accountability
Amanda	Thompson	Waller JH Assistant Principal
Meagan	White	School Improvement Officer

AREAS OF INNOVATION

Teacher Certifications

Education Code: [Chapter 21 - Subchapter B - §21.003 Certification Required](#) and [Chapter 21 - Subchapter B - §21.053 Presentation and Recording of Certificates](#) and [Chapter 21 - Subchapter B - §21.057 Parental Notification](#)

Innovation Goal: In order to provide flexibility in hiring and assigning instructional faculty, WISD proposes to exempt teachers from certification requirements to teach in non-certified areas with local determination and to relieve the District's obligation to notify parents when a non-certified teacher is assigned to teach one of these areas.

Proposed Innovation: WISD will develop provisions to allow non-certified professionals to be hired in specialized areas, such as the areas of Career & Technical Education and Dual Credit courses, based on industry/work-based experience or the possession of credentials to teach at the college level. Additionally, provisions will address teachers with out-of-state/country certifications and address critical needs areas. This exception will not apply to special education or bilingual/ESL content teachers.

Furthermore, if the District places a teacher in an area for which the teacher does not hold the requisite certificate, WISD will be exempt from state law requiring parental notification that a student has been assigned to a classroom with a non-certified teacher. The District will remain responsible for providing all requisite notices regarding teacher certification pursuant to the Every Student Succeeds Act, 20 U.S.C. § 6301 *et seq.* ("ESSA").

Probationary Contracts

Education Code: [Chapter 21 - Subchapter C - §21.102 Probationary Contract](#)

Innovation Goal: In order to allow WISD to retain qualified and committed employees and prevent avoidable personnel-related expenses, the District seeks flexibility to extend probationary contracts for teachers, which will allow a longer probationary/evaluative period during which the District can gauge a professional employee's effectiveness.

Proposed Innovation: The District will be permitted to issue a probationary contract for up to three years to teachers that have been employed in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment by the District.

Teacher Contract Days

Education Code: [Chapter 21 - Subchapter I - §21.401 Minimum Service Required](#)

Innovation Goal: In order to improve teacher morale and remain competitive with other school districts, WISD seeks flexibility in setting teacher contract days to better align with the 75,600 instructional minutes required of students in TEC §25.081.

Proposed Innovation: The determination of how many days are required to fulfill an employment contract should be a local decision. Teacher contracts should be able to be reduced with no decrease in pay, meaning the daily rate will still be based on 187 contract days.

Out-of-District Transfer Students

Education Code: [Chapter 25 - Subchapter B - §25.036 Transfer of Students](#)

Innovation Goal: WISD seeks to allow for transfers but hold transfer students accountable in the best interests of the student and our schools.

Proposed Innovation: WISD may revoke a student's transfer status during the school year if any of the following conditions occur: the student's behavior warrants suspension (in school or out-of-school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion; the student has three or more unexcused absences in a grading period; or the student fails to maintain satisfactory academic performance, as determined by the campus principal and superintendent and taking into account any applicable mitigating factors.

First Day of Instruction

Education Code: [Chapter 25 - Subchapter C - §25.0811 First Day of Instruction](#)

Innovation Goal: In order to meet the needs of our community, faculty/staff, and students, WISD seeks flexibility for the school year to begin before the fourth Monday in August.

Proposed Innovation: Develop local provisions to allow for flexibility regarding the start date of instruction for students.

Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator

Education Code: [Chapter 37 - Subchapter A - §37.0012 Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator](#)

Innovation Goal: In order to provide efficiency in campus operations, WISD seeks flexibility to designate multiple campus behavior coordinators as needed.

Proposed Innovation: Develop local processes allowing campuses the flexibility to designate multiple campus administrators to fulfill the role of the campus behavior coordinator.