

*West Sabine*

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**



**DISTRICT OF INNOVATION:  
LOCAL INNOVATION PLAN  
2018-2023**

*The purpose of this local innovation plan is to delineate and articulate the methodologies undertaken by the West Sabine Independent School District to escalate innovation. Intentionally, the WSISD Local Intervention Committee evaluated and isolated opportunities that would allow the District to persist in pursuit of unparalleled results through flexibility and greater local control. This increased flexibility and local control is provided to Texas public schools through realizing the designation as a District of Innovation.*

# District of Innovation

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## **District of Innovation**

**The Texas Legislature passed House Bill 1842 which provided the opportunity for Texas school districts to pursue the designation of District of Innovation. This bill allows local school districts to obtain exemptions from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code to afford more flexibility and local control for innovative programming.**

**Districts of Innovation may be exempt from a myriad of state statutes and will have:**

- Greater control as the decision maker over the educational and instructional model for students;**
- Increased freedom and flexibility, with accountability, relative to state mandates that govern educational programming; and**
- Empowerment to innovate and think differently**

**Districts are not exempt from statutes including curriculum, graduation requirements, academic and financial accountability.**

**In order to be qualified for the designation as a District of Innovation, a school district's most recent academic performance rating must at least be acceptable.**

**TERM: The West Sabine ISD Local Innovation Plan will begin in the fall of 2018 and continue until 2023.**



# District of Innovation

## The Overview

The process was initiated by either:

- A resolution of the board of trustees; or
- A petition signed by a majority of the members of the district-level advisory committee.

At the conclusion of the hearing, the board may appoint a committee to begin developing a plan in pursuit of becoming a District of innovation or simply decline to pursue the designation.

<b>This plan may be for up to five years in length and can address:</b>	
Site based decision making process	Minimum minutes of instruction
Uniform start date	Teacher certifications
Class Size ratio	Teacher contracts
The 90% attendance rule	Teacher benefits
Student discipline provisions	Teacher Appraisal System
<b>This plan may be amended, rescinded, or renewed</b>	



# District of Innovation

<b>West Sabine ISD Innovation Timeline and Process</b>	
Jan 2018	Resolution to begin the process of developing a by Board of Trustees
March 2018	Review Plan District of Innovation
Jan 2018-March 2018	WSISD Local Innovation Plan drafted
Feb 2018- June 2018	Committee discusses/revises LIP
April 2018	WSISD Board of Trustees reviews the Local Innovation Plan
May 2018	LIP posted on the district website and TEA notified of intent
June 2018	Public Hearing to discuss LIP
June 24, 2018	Board Approved LIP
July 2018	Plan Submitted to TEA
<b>The Local Innovation Plan (LIP) begins in 2018-19 and runs through 2022-2023</b>	



# District of Innovation

## District of Innovation Planning Committee Membership

*The Local Innovation Committee was comprised of various stakeholders who hold different perspectives in regard to district function. These individuals served to formulate this idea into a plan of action.*

<b>LOCAL INNOVATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS</b>	
<i>Justin Davis, Business</i>	<i>Tracee Collins, Parent</i>
<i>Josh Neal, Parent &amp; Business</i>	<i>Catherine Reeves, Parent &amp; Business</i>
<i>Jessica Wallace HS Teacher &amp; Parent</i>	<i>David Grant, Business &amp; Community</i>
<i>Scott Simmons, HS Teacher &amp; Parent</i>	<i>Jeff Richardson, Police Chief</i>
<i>Joe Lane, HS Teacher &amp; Parent</i>	<i>Carnelius Gilder, Academics</i>
<i>Terra White, Elem Teacher &amp; Parent</i>	<i>Karianna Grant, Assistant Principal</i>
<i>Tara Fuller, Elem Teacher &amp; Parent,</i>	<i>Debbie Lane, Principal</i>
<i>Deana Wolford, Elem Teacher</i>	<i>Ryan Fuller, Principal</i>
	<i>Mike Pate, Superintendent</i>



# District of Innovation

## The Local Innovation Plan

Teacher certifications:	TEC	§ 21.003, 21.053
	**District special education and bilingual must be SBEC certified.	

In 2013, during the 83<sup>rd</sup> Texas Legislature, House Bill 5 was passed affording students more personalized graduation plans. These individualized graduation plans can come through various educational pathways. In order to offer students avenues to pursue these varied graduation plans, districts must train existing staff or recruit new staff in order to expand curricular offerings.

For a specific example, many of the career pathways that fall under the endorsements, such as health services or engineering, require very specialized certification in that particular field. The Texas Education Code (21.003, 21.053) inhibit the development of post high school plans and improvement of work force skills to the extent these laws limit the District's ability to find qualified, good fits in what is already a shortage of applicants.

### **Innovative Practice:**

**In order to enable more students to obtain the educational benefit of career and technical courses, the District seeks the ability to establish its own local qualification requirements which will assist the District with hiring in trades and vocations such as welding, health sciences, architecture, career, and technical studies. This exemption will afford the District the flexibility to hire professionals with practical skills that fit the WSISD system.**



# District of Innovation

## The Local Innovation Plan

**Uniform school start and end date: TEC § 25.0811 & 25.0812**

The WSISD wishes to no longer be required to start school on or after the fourth Monday of August or not be permitted to conclude the school year prior to May 15. These requirements placed upon schools are greatly based on lobbying conducted on behalf of the business and tourism industries. These statute requirements do not take into account the wishes of local education agencies and even more importantly, the needs of students. As such, the WSISD seeks relief from Texas Education Code Section 25.0811 dictating that schools must not start prior to the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday in August. Additionally, the WSISD also seeks relief from Texas Education Code Section 25.0812 stipulating that the last day of instruction must not be set prior to May 15.

### **Innovative Practice:**

**The WSISD seeks local control over the start and end dates of a school year. The West Sabine ISD proposes starting school during the month of August and concluding the school year in May however we anticipate some changes to the length of the day (curricular requirements) which in turn determines the number of days of instruction from year to year. The primary goals of this change will be to better balance the days of instruction in each semester, ending the fall semester in December, afford greater flexibility in calendar options, and better align the district's calendar with junior colleges, universities and area districts.**



# District of Innovation

## The Local Innovation Plan

**Length of school day: TEC § 25.081 & SAAH § 3.8.1, 3.8.2.4**

The Texas Education Code 25.081 addresses the length of the instructional day by providing a definition of 420 minutes of instruction to encompass a day of instruction. WSISD seeks to develop an instructional calendar (2018-2019) of 171 days instead of the previous requirement of 180 days. These days will vary in length with 165 of the days being 455 minutes and 6 days will be 300 minutes in length.

Subsequent years will see instructional day / calendar changes dependent upon meeting the needs of the students. Attached are draft calendars for years 2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2021-2022 and 2022-2023.

### **Innovative Practice:**

**In acknowledging that extending the school day is tantamount to extending the impact of instruction for a student, the 184<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature of Texas through HB 2610 was a major change and provided greater flexibility to school districts. WSISD seeks to implement HB 2610 alongside HB 1842 to afford greater autonomy in calendar drafting and instructional delivery through innovation. Included as appendices are current year calendar, the approved calendar for 2018-19, and draft calendars for subsequent years. These calendars uphold instructional integrity, decrease expenditures, and reward students and staff.**



# District of Innovation

## The Local Innovation Plan

### **Teacher contracts: TEC § 21.401(a)(b)**

Texas Education Code Section 21.401(b) stipulates that a teacher must provide a minimum of 187 days of service. Under previous code, teachers were required to work 7 days beyond the 180 days of classroom instruction. WSISD seeks to utilize a 10-month professional contract for teachers ranging from some date in August to the following May.

During the course of those ten months, teacher will be expected to meet the 75,600 minutes of daily instruction as well as serve in his/her professional capacity during staff development days and teacher work days. As exempt employees, professional teachers may be asked to work beyond the traditional work hours during a day. It is possible that a teacher may be in service for 187 days. However, the assignments will be at discretion of the superintendent, or the superintendent's designee and the number of workdays will be based on the minutes of daily instruction chosen each year.

### **Innovative Practice:**

**Teacher contracts will more closely align with the 75,600 instructional minutes required for students and will also include staff development/workdays. This added flexibility will afford WSISD the opportunity to create a culture/climate that values an individual's time and empowers the ability to leverage that time in what will be an obsessive focus on student outcomes. Lastly, professional employees will receive annual salaries dependent upon the State Minimum Salary Schedule. Therefore, teachers will not see a reduction of pay when the 187 day requirement is not achieved due to the shortened instruction calendar (instruction is now measured in minutes rather than days).**



# District of Innovation

## The Local Innovation Plan

### **Site Based decision making: TEC § 11.251 & 28.004**

The WSISD seeks exemption from the site-based decision making process and the convening of the school health advisory committee and the many accompanying requirements falling under the governance of those two bodies. The statutory requirements as set forth by the Texas Education Code in Chapter 11 and 28 are burdensome, time consuming, and ultimately cause a misdirection of resources from the primary focus of schools: the education of students. Stakeholders will continue to be involved in the process, but one that meets the needs of the district, school, and community as opposed to the broad brush of statutory requirements leveled down from a one size fits all approach as detailed in the TEC §11.251 and TEC §28.004. This will consolidate the number of meetings and number of committees required by law and will better serve this community.

### **Innovative Practice:**

**In place of the SBDM and the SHAC, a Superintendent's Advisory Council (SAC) will be established, meet, review, analyze, and respond to both qualitative and quantitative data regarding the district's success and most importantly, students' success. This council will convene at least two times per year and generate the general direction of district resources and efforts. This consolidation of committees will yield greater opportunity for one council to address a multitude of needs as opposed to having so many different committee meetings throughout the year.**

