



District of Innovation Plan  
January 25, 2022 - January 25, 2027

## **District of Innovation Committee & District Planning Committee**

Frank Molinar, Superintendent  
David Bitters, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations  
Chris Jenkins, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction  
Charmaine Rambo, Human Resources Assistant Director  
Kim Alexander, Business Director  
Christie Beaty, Assessment Director  
Desiree Coyle, Communications Director  
Heather Crow, PK-12 Education Director  
Theresa Paschall, Counseling & Student Services Director  
Amy Ferguson, Bilingual/ESL Services Director  
Karen Gonzales, Ph.D., Early Childhood Director  
Kerry Cooper, Special Programs Director  
Maggie Howard, CTE Director  
Tracy James, Health Services Coordinator

Kaycee Blevins, Teacher  
Rosemary Cantu, Teacher  
Steven Dexter, Teacher  
Danielle Flores, Teacher  
Marisela Perez, Teacher  
Abby Tyler, Teacher  
Jennifer Rollins, Teacher  
Shawna Vrvilo, Teacher

Lauren Alexander, Special Programs Representative  
Connie Bitters, Non-Teaching Campus-Based Professional

Shannon Soucy, Parent Representative  
Suzanne Kelly, Parent Representative

Joanna Parker, Business Representative  
Amy Scieneaux, Community Representative

## **White Settlement ISD District of Innovation Plan**

### **I. Introduction**

A District of Innovation is a concept passed by the 84<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session in House Bill 1842 that allows school districts greater local control and flexibility regarding certain provisions of the Texas Education Code in an effort to utilize the designation to better serve students.

### **White Settlement ISD District of Innovation Timeline**

#### **January 11, 2017**

- Discussion of District of Innovation by District Planning Committee

#### **January 17, 2017**

- Updated School Board about District of Innovation discussion with District Planning Committee

#### **February 15, 2017**

- District Executive Team discussion of possible District of Innovation exemptions

#### **February 21, 2017**

- Resolution Passed at regular school board meeting in open session
- School Board appointed Superintendent to form a District of Innovation Planning Committee and develop plan in conjunction with District Planning Committee
- School Board set a public hearing for final plan to be presented for March 30<sup>th</sup>

#### **February 23, 2017**

- District of Innovation Planning Committee met to draft plan

#### **March 2, 2017**

- District of Innovation Planning Committee presented preliminary plan to Leadership Team to gather feedback

#### **March 8, 2017**

- District of Innovation Planning Committee presented preliminary plan to District Planning Committee to gather feedback and approval

#### **March 23, 2017**

- District of Innovation Planning Committee met to draft Final Plan based on stakeholder feedback

#### **March 30, 2017**

- District of Innovation Planning Committee presented Final Plan at the public hearing prior to the regular board meeting

#### **March 31, 2017**

- Final Plan posted for 30 days (March 31 – April 30)
- Notified Commissioner of Education – certified letter from Board President

**April 3, 2017 – April 28, 2017**

- Individual Campus Meetings on District of Innovation Plan & 2017-2018 Academic Calendar

**May 9, 2017**

- School Board adopts Final District of Innovation Plan

**July 10, 2018**

- District of Innovation Planning Committee met to discuss amending the original plan

**July 17, 2018**

- District of Innovation Planning Committee presented Final Plan at the called School Board Meeting

**July 22, 2018**

- Final Plan posted for 30 days (July 22 – August 21)

**August 21, 2018**

- School Board adopts Final Amended District of Innovation Plan

**August 12, 2019**

- District of Innovation Planning Committee met to discuss amending the plan

**August 20, 2019**

- District of Innovation Planning Committee presented Amended Plan at the called School Board Meeting

**September 17, 2019**

- School Board adopts Final Amended District of Innovation Plan

**September 22, 2021**

- District of Innovation Planning Committee met to discuss renewing the plan

**October 27, 2021**

- Public meeting was held to approve the Final Proposed Version of the District of Innovation Plan

**November 30, 2021**

- Final Proposed DOI Plan posted on district website (Nov. 30 – Jan. 3)
- Notified Commissioner of Education – certified letter from Board President

**January 24, 2022**

- School Board adopts Final District of Innovation Plan
- Final District of Innovation Plan will take effect immediately

**February 15, 2023**

- District of Innovation Planning Committee met to discuss amending the plan (EHAA Local)

**April 20, 2023**

- District of Innovation Planning Committee met to discuss amending the plan (DCB Legal, Local)

## **May 15, 2023**

- District of Innovation Planning Committee presented Amended Plan at the called School Board Meeting
- School Board adopts Final Amended District of Innovation Plan
- Final District of Innovation Plan will take effect immediately

## **June 12, 2024**

- District of Innovation Planning Committee met to discuss amending the plan (TEC 25.0344)

## **June 17, 2024**

- School Board adopts Final Amended District of Innovation Plan
- Final District of Innovation Plan will take effect immediately

## **II. Term**

The term of the Local Innovation Plan is for five years, beginning January 25, 2022, and ending January 25, 2027, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The committee will revisit the plan annually to ensure that the recommendations are still in line with the needs of the district. Any amendments recommended would be posted on the website for 30 days and require approval of the Innovation Committee and the Board of Trustees.

## **III. A Comprehensive Educational Program**

The Plan's comprehensive educational program is guided by and aligned with White Settlement ISD's Mission, Vision, Motto, and Belief Statements.

### Mission Statement:

Fostering a culture of excellence and empowering Brewer Bears to be innovators and leaders of tomorrow by providing premier education.

### Vision Statement:

Developing passion to learn...discovering purpose for tomorrow.

### Motto:

Think Big...Bears Do!

### Belief Statements:

We Believe:

- ALL Students are our top priority
- Every student has value and purpose
- Our students deserve a passionate teacher in every classroom every day
- A safe, secure, and enriched environment enhances learning
- Learning is a shared responsibility that requires active involvement by students, staff, families, and the community
- Continuous professional growth is essential for student success

#### **IV. Innovations Recommended:**

##### **A. First Day of Instruction** (EB LEGAL) (TEC 25.0811)

###### Current Law

FIRST DAY OF INSTRUCTION. (a) Except as provided by this section, a school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.

###### **Proposed Plan**

White Settlement ISD would like to have the flexibility to develop the academic calendar that better fits the needs of the community and start earlier than the fourth Monday of August. This would allow the District Planning Committee to better balance the first and second semesters and provide more instructional days prior to state testing when developing the academic calendar.

##### **B. Teacher Certification** (DK LEGAL) (TEC 21.003)

###### Current Law

CERTIFICATION REQUIRED. (a) A person may not be employed as a teacher by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued as provided by Subchapter B.

###### **Proposed Plan**

White Settlement ISD would like to make decisions regarding certifications locally based on the needs of the campus and students. WSISD would like the flexibility to consider entering into at-will employment agreements with non-certified individuals who have industry experience in a CTE field, who are proficient in the LOTE educational field, *or who are proficient in the Fine Arts educational field.*

##### **C. Probationary Contracts** (DCA LEGAL) (TEC 21.102)

###### Current Law

PROBATIONARY CONTRACT. (b) A probationary contract may not be for a term exceeding one school year... except that the probationary period may not exceed one year for a person who has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment by the district.

###### **Proposed Plan**

White Settlement ISD would like to issue a probationary contract for up to two years for experienced teachers, counselors, or nurses to allow for the district to better evaluate the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom.

#### **D. Class Size Waiver**

(EEB LEGAL) (TEC 25.112)

##### Current Law

CLASS SIZE. (a) Except as otherwise authorized by this section, a school district may not enroll more than 22 students in a kindergarten, first, second, third, or fourth grade class.

##### **Proposed Plan**

White Settlement ISD's goal is to continue ensuring a 22:1 classroom ratio; however, the district would like the flexibility to exceed the 22:1 ratio in the event of unforeseen enrollment growth.

#### **E. Teacher and Principal Appraisal System**

(DNA LEGAL, DNA LOCAL) (TEC 21.352; TEC 21.3541)

##### Current Law

(a) In appraising teachers, each school district shall use:

- (1) The appraisal process and performance criteria developed by the commissioner; or
- (2) An appraisal process and performance criteria:
  - (A) Developed by the district-and campus-level committees established under Section 11.251;
  - (B) Containing the items described by Sections 21.351(a)(1) and (2); and
  - (C) Adopted by the Board of Trustees

##### **Proposed Plan**

White Settlement ISD would like the flexibility to modify T-TESS and T-PSS to a locally developed evaluation system to better meet the needs of teachers and administrators. Removing the 20% student growth measure from the teacher appraisal system results in a more equitable and accurate appraisal for teachers across curriculum.

#### **F. Student Health Advisory Council**

(BDF LEGAL) (TEC 28.004 (d-1)-(j-1))

##### Current Law

Texas Education Code § 28.004 (d-1) – (j-1), passed during the 87th legislative session, implements strict meeting requirements for a local school health advisory council (SHAC), requires the Board to adopt a resolution convening SHAC to make recommendations regarding human sexuality curriculum, requires SHAC to hold two public meetings on the human sexuality curriculum materials, and requires the Board to take action on the SHAC recommendations.

##### **Proposed Plan**

White Settlement ISD seeks exemption from requiring the Board of Trustees to pass a resolution convening SHAC to make recommendations on human sexuality curriculum, instruction on prevention of child abuse, family violence, dating violence, and sex trafficking requiring SHAC to hold two public meetings, and requiring the Board of Trustees to take action on the SHAC recommendations. The Board of Trustees will still rely on SHAC to advise and make recommendations for the human sexuality curriculum prior Board approval, but the District is seeking relief from the procedural requirements under the law.

White Settlement ISD is seeking an exemption from the SHAC meeting requirements under the law. SHAC is made up of employees and members of the public, which makes scheduling a meeting particularly challenging. Exemption from the SHAC meeting requirements under the law will allow for greater flexibility in regard to scheduling meetings and will allow for the meetings to run more efficiently. White Settlement ISD will continue to emphasize transparency in the process and will ensure that parents have the necessary access to curriculum and instructional materials.

**G. Teacher Contract Days – Minimum Service Required**  
(DCB LEGAL) (TEC 21.401)

Current law

Texas Education Code § 21.401 currently requires a contract between the District and an educator to be a minimum of 10 months. Additionally, an educator employed under a 10-month contract must provide a minimum of 187 days of service.

**Proposed plan**

White Settlement ISD would like to have the flexibility to reduce the number of teacher contract days from 187 with no effect on teacher salaries.

**H. Transfer Of Students Who Are Children of Peace Officers/ Servicemembers**  
(FDA LEGAL) (FDB LEGAL) (TEC 25.0344)

Current law

Texas Education Code § 25.0344 (b) currently requires the board of trustees to transfer the student(s) of a peace officer or servicemember to another district campus or to another school district under an agreement pursuant to Texas Education Code § 25.035.

**Proposed plan**

White Settlement ISD is seeking exemption from the transfer requirements for student(s) of a peace officer or servicemember under the law. Exemption from the transfer requirements will allow White Settlement ISD to adequately prepare and plan for enrollment within its district. The District relies on the creation of campus attendance zones to assist in planning for each school year, including the assignment of appropriate resources and staff to individual campuses. White Settlement will continue to process student transfer requests in compliance with Board Policies FDA (LOCAL) and FDB (LOCAL).

**V. Implementation**

This Innovation Plan is designed to create parameters within which White Settlement ISD will operate, in order to provide additional student opportunities. Specific implementation plans will be developed by the appropriate departments. Adjustments to Board Policy will be researched and adopted where appropriate.