

Union Grove ISD
District of Innovation Plan (HB 1842)
2022-2027

Union Grove ISD is utilizing HB 1842, of the 84th Legislative Session, in order to have more local control in certain areas. HB 1842 allows a traditional public school to have some of the same local flexibility that public charter schools have always been allowed. We feel this is a great opportunity for our local district to tailor plans based on the needs of our students and community. This plan will be in effect for the (August 1, 2022) 2022-2023 school year through the 2026-2027 (July 31, 2027) school year. This plan may be amended at any time by the committee with approval of the Board of Trustees.

District of Innovation Committee

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|------------------------|---|
| 1. Kelly Moore | Superintendent |
| 2. Laurice Marshall | CFO Union Grove ISD |
| 3. Rachel Evers | Union Grove JH/HS Principal |
| 4. Sherrill Ballard | Union Grove Elementary Principal |
| 5. David Chatterton | Union Grove JH/HS Asst. Principal |
| 6. Robert Chadwick | Athletic Director |
| 7. Susan Bilnoski | Elementary Teacher |
| 8. Corie Littlejohn | Elementary Teacher |
| 9. Tina Burns | Junior High Teacher |
| 10. Bobby Painter | High School Teacher |
| 11. Jennifer Applegate | District Counselor |
| 12. Bethany Ledbetter | Special Programs |
| 13. Mandy Cox | School Librarian |
| 14. Betty Boyd | Union Grove Community Member |
| 15. Heather Caperton | Union Grove Community Member |
| 16. Christina O'Neal | Union Grove ISD Parent |
| 17. Jerry Croley | Union Grove ISD Parent |
| 18. Samantha Hulsebus | Union Grove ISD Parent |
| 19. Tammy Kessler | Union Grove ISD Parent and Business Owner |
| 20. BJ Vestal | Union Grove ISD Parent and Business Owner |

Union Grove Independent School District

District of Innovation Timeline

Monday, January 9, 2017	<p>7:00pm – Regularly Scheduled Board Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Superintendent discussed with the board members during the Superintendent Report the possibility of pursuing becoming a District of Innovation. Board Members responded positively and instructed the Superintendent to proceed.
Thursday, January 26th, 2017	<p>4:00 pm - Initial meeting with administrative staff and District Site-Base Committee to discuss preliminary thoughts, possible exemptions, and possible members of the District Innovation Committee. The District of Innovation Committee will consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Superintendent Administrative Staff Principals from Each Campus Two teachers from each campus Two – five parents and/or community members
Tuesday, February 14th, 2017	<p>8:00 p.m. – Regular Board Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board approved a resolution to hold a public hearing to discuss the possibility of using HB 1842 to become a District of Innovation Adjourn <p>8:05 p.m. - Public Hearing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain and discuss the possibility of using HB 1842 to become a District of Innovation. <p>8:10 p.m. - Regular Board Meeting Continued</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved a motion to pursue local “District of Innovation” plan Approve the members of the District of Innovation Committee Adjourn
Monday, March 20th, 2017	<p>4:00 p.m. - Meeting of the District of Innovation Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate them about HB 1842 and Districts of Innovation Discuss possible exemptions Decide which exemptions to pursue and include in our plan
Monday, March 20th, 2017	<p>4:00 p.m. - Meeting of the District Advisory Committee and the District of Innovation Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan was approved by a unanimous vote by the District Advisory Committee
February 27th, 2017 – current date	<p>Post proposed Union Grove ISD District of Innovation plan on the district website for thirty days.</p>
Wednesday, March 22nd, 2017	<p>Board will vote to notify Commissioner of Education of intent to vote on the adoption of the proposed District of Innovation Plan.</p>
Wednesday, March 22nd	<p>Send notification to Commissioner of Education.</p>
Monday, April 10th, 2017	<p>7:00 p.m. - Regular Board Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board of Trustees to approved the District of Innovation plan.
Tuesday, April 11th, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send notification to Commissioner of Education of Board’s approval of District of Innovation Plan. Update all policy changes with TASB

Thursday, February 6th, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4:00 p.m. - District of Innovation Committee approved amendment by a unanimous vote • 6:30 p.m. – Board of Trustees approved amendment to the Union Grove ISD District of Innovation plan as presented.
Friday, February 14th, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification of amendment sent to Commissioner of Education • Updated all policy changes with TASB
Monday, June 8th, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10:00 a.m. – District of Innovation Committee approved amendment by a unanimous vote
Monday, June 8th, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6:30 p.m. – Board of Trustees approved amendment to the Union Grove ISD District of Innovation plan as presented.
Tuesday, June 9th, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification of amendment sent to Commissioner of Education • Updated all policy changes with TASB
Tuesday, January 11, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification of intent to renew sent to Commissioner of Education • Posted on the Union Grove ISD Website: www.ugisd.org
Wednesday, January 12, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Monday, July 11, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6:30 p.m. – Board of Trustees approved amended DOI as recommended by the Commissioner of Education

1. School Start Date & Last Day of School

(TEC 25.0811)(TEC 25.0812)(EB LEGAL)

Currently

Students may not begin school before the 4th Monday of August and may not end before May 15. Districts may not receive a waiver from this restriction. For many years this was the rule, however, districts had the option of applying for a waiver to start earlier. The vast majority of districts applied for the waiver and would begin the 3rd Monday, some even going as early as the 2nd Monday. Several years ago the legislature took away all waivers and dictated that districts may not begin until the 4th Monday in August, with no exceptions. Recent legislation prevents the last day of school prior to May 15. Union Grove ISD, however; will provide a calendar that addresses student instruction and focused professional development plan in conjunction with the new instructional minutes rather than instructional day required. Local control of the instructional calendar affords the District the flexibility to end the school year prior to May 15, should the district deem it necessary and appropriate.

Innovation Plan

To allow for a calendar that fits the local needs of our community, emphasizes active learning, college & career readiness, and social and emotional needs of students, Union Grove ISD will:

- A. Provide flexibility to begin instruction earlier and develop a school calendar that meets the needs of the district.
 - a. This will enable Union Grove ISD to improve active learning by balancing the amount of instructional time in each semester.
 - b. This will allow teachers to better pace and deliver instruction before and after the winter break.
 - c. Union Grove ISD may adopt a calendar with a start date prior to the fourth Monday of August.
 - d. The goal is to improve the district attendance rate and student success through the flexibility in the calendar.

2. Submitting Waivers for Kindergarten – Grade 4 Class Size

(TEC 25.111)(TEC 25.112)(TEC25.113)(EEB LEGAL)

Currently

Kindergarten – 4th Grade classes are to be kept at a 22 student to 1 teacher ratio according to state law. When a class exceeds this limit, the district must complete a waiver with the Texas Education Agency. These waivers are never rejected by TEA. This is a bureaucratic step that serves no purpose.

Along with the waiver, it is required that a letter is sent home to each parent in the section that exceeds the 22:1 ratio, informing them the waiver has been submitted. Many times soon after the waiver is submitted, students move out of the district and we are below the 22:1 ratio. Additionally, hiring staff mid-year is not best practice. The statute does not take into consideration the impact of students being transferred to new classrooms in the middle of the school year.

Innovation Plan

While we certainly believe that small class size plays a positive role in the classroom, we do not believe it has a negative effect when you only add one or two more students. Many times it is not the number of the students but the makeup and chemistry of the classroom which influence the learning environment.

- a. UGISD will attempt to keep all K-4 core classrooms to a 22:1 ratio. However, in the event the class size exceeds this ratio, the superintendent will report to the Board of Trustees.
- b. In the event a K-4 core classroom reaches 25:1, the campus will notify the parents of the students in the classroom and inform them of the situation.
- c. A TEA waiver will not be necessary when a K-4 classroom exceeds the 22:1 ratio.
- d. This gives UGISD the flexibility without having the bureaucracy of waivers within the Texas Education Agency.

3. Teacher certification

(TEC 21.003) (DK LEGAL)(DK LOCAL)(DK EXHIBIT)

Currently

In the event a district cannot locate a certified teacher for a position or a teacher is teaching a subject outside of their certification, the district must submit a request to the Texas Education Agency. TEA then approves or denies this request. There is a lot of bureaucracy and unnecessary paperwork involved in the process and it restricts our district's flexibility to best serve our students.

Innovation Plan

Union Grove ISD will continue its quest for highly effective educators.

In order to best serve Union Grove ISD students, decisions on certification will be handled locally:

- a. The campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request to allow a certified teacher to teach one subject out of their certified field. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses which qualify this individual to teach this subject. The campus principal should only pursue this option when a certified and qualified teacher is not available or when this option would best serve the needs of the students. A teacher assigned to one subject out of their certification area should not be assigned to these courses for more than half of their work day and the arrangement should be re-evaluated at the end of each school year.
- b. This exemption will not apply to Special Education or Bilingual teachers. Teachers in these positions must continue to be SBEC certified
- c. An individual with experience in a CTE field or with a 4-year degree in a non-CTE field could be eligible to teach a vocational skill or course through a local teaching certificate. The principal will submit the request to the Superintendent with all the individual's credentials. The superintendent will then approve the request if they feel the individual could be an asset to students. The Superintendent will then report this action to the Board of Trustees prior to the individual beginning any employment. Local teaching certificates will be for one year. The employee will be eligible for a non-Chapter 21 contract.
- d. This will allow more flexibility in our scheduling and more options for our students in class offerings.

4. Probationary Contracts

(TEC 21.102(b)) (DCA LEGAL)(DCA LOCAL)

Currently

A probationary contract may not exceed one year for new teachers to our district who have been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment by the district. Under this circumstance, the district must either give the teacher a term contract or terminate their contract after their first year in the district.

Innovation Plan

Union Grove ISD would like to have the ability to renew the probationary contract one additional one-year period, for a maximum of two school years, for all teachers, counselors, librarians, or nurses that are new to Union Grove ISD who have been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of eight years preceding employment by the District.

5. Transfer Students

(TEC25.036)(FDA LOCAL)

Currently

A district may choose to accept, as transfers, students who do not meet District admission criteria. Under TEC 25.036, a transfer is interpreted to be for a period of one school year and prohibits mid-year revocation for any purpose.

Innovation Plan

Union Grove ISD maintains a transfer policy under FDA(LOCAL) requiring nonresident students wishing to transfer to file a transfer application each school year. In approving transfer requests, the availability of space and instructional staff, availability of programs and services, the student's disciplinary history records, work habits, and attendance records are also evaluated. Transfer students are expected to follow the attendance requirements and the rules and regulations of the District. TEC 25.036 has been interpreted to establish the acceptance of a transfer as a one year commitment by the District. The District is seeking to eliminate the provision of a one-year commitment in accepting transfer applications, allowing for immediate revocation, for the following circumstances:

- a. Student behavior warrants suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion;
- b. Student attendance falls below the TEA truancy standard.

6. Teacher and Principal Evaluation

(TEC 21.203)(TEC 21.352)(TEC 21.3541)(DNA LEGAL)(DNA LOCAL)

Currently

The state of Texas has used the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS), teacher appraisal system since 1997. The state has issued a new teacher appraisal system in 2016-2017, that is called the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS).

Districts currently have the authority to only formally appraise teachers once every five school years. Union Grove ISD teachers are formally evaluated annually.

Principals are evaluated annually on a locally developed plan.

Innovation Plan

A committee of administrators would have the option to develop a teacher evaluation system that would be a combination of PDAS, T-TESS, and other best practices to develop a local instrument and/or process that fits the needs and goals of UGISD.

- a. Union Grove ISD will utilize T-TESS or a locally developed teacher evaluation tool.
- b. This instrument will be developed with input from central administration and campus administration. It will use staff input, PDAS, T-TESS and any other relevant best practice.
- c. All teachers must be formally evaluated at a minimum of once every three years. Every teacher will receive a minimum of one, walk-through per semester.
- d. Probationary teachers will be evaluated every year.
- e. All teachers will have an annual summative conference to discuss the year and to set classroom goals and a staff development plan.
- f. Principals will continue to be evaluated annually on a locally developed plan.
- g. These locally developed plans should reflect the strengths, areas of concern, and goals for Union Grove ISD.

7. Contract Service Days

(Texas Education Code 21.401)

Currently

State law currently requires educators employed on a 10-month contract to provide a minimum of 187 days of service.

Innovation Plan

With the passage of Ed. Code 25.081 which changed the required days of instruction to minutes, the law did not address contract days for 10-month contract employees. The determination of how many days are required to fulfill an employee's contract should be a local decision.

8. Bank Depository Contract

(Texas Education Code 45.205 and 45.206)

Currently

The District must renew its depository contract every two years. The two-year contract term begins and ends in off numbered years. In accordance with the Texas Education Code, the District must use a uniform bid or proposal blank in the form prescribed by the State Board of Education.

Innovation Plan

The District is seeking an exemption from TEC 45.205 and 45.206 to allow the District's banking contract to be extended beyond the allowable contract term, if the District determines contract-pricing remains competitive and there is not operational or financial reason to send the District's banking services out for bid. This exemption lessens the administrative burden related to preparing and reviewing a Request for Proposal (RFP) when there is limited number of banking intuitions available to bid on the District's business. The District will only go out for bid if it is determined that contract-pricing is not competitive and there is an operational or financial reason to send the District's banking services out for bid. The District will continue with two year contracts for our banking depository.