

District of Innovation Plan



Tidehaven ISD

August 1, 2022 – July 31, 2027

Approved by the TISD Board of Trustees on April 25, 2022

TISD District of Innovation Committee Members

Committee Member:	Committee Role:
Stacie Murry	Principal
Kelsey Capak	Teacher
Joy Janish	Teacher
Bailey Sevcik	Teacher
Kim Philyaw	Instructional Aide
Merideth Dodd	Principal
Casey Bartek	Teacher
Rae Ann Mitchell	Teacher
Angela Dyer	Instructional Aide
Meredith Holub	Parent
Emily Gardner	Principal
Carrie York	Teacher
Molly Poulton	Teacher
Tiffany Duran	Instructional Aide
Laurie Bonnett	Parent
Joey Rosalez	Principal
Heather Griffith	Teacher
Barbara Vivion	Teacher
Amber Miles	Teacher
Danyelle Ruzick	Teacher
Dr. Andrew Seigrist	Superintendent
Dr. Patrick Talbert	Assistant Superintendent
Debra Taska	Administrative Assistant
Kathy Boyett	Curriculum
Amy Kubecka	Special Programs

TISD District Innovation Plan

Tidehaven ISD became a District of Innovation on August 1, 2017, with the approval of the Texas Education Agency. The initial plan is in effect through July 31, 2022. However, based on the requirements in TEC, Chapter 12A and its regulations, Texas public school districts must apply to renew their plan every five years. Tidehaven ISD is taking this opportunity to renew its current plan and to seek additional amendments. The 84th Texas Legislature created Texas Education Code (TEC) Chapter 12A, Districts of Innovation opportunity in 2015. As an approved District of Innovation, school districts may access many of the flexibilities available to Texas' open enrollment charter schools which allows a school district to gain exemption from many Texas Education Code requirements.

TEA approved Tidehaven ISD's initial plan that allowed exemptions from the following legal requirements. The district now seeks to renew these exemptions:

- SCHOOL START DATE (TEC 25.0811)
- LAST DAY OF SCHOOL (TEC 25.0812)
- TEACHER CONTRACT DAYS / CONTRACT SERVICE DAYS (TEC 21.401)
- TRANSFER POLICY (TEC 25.036)
- TEACHER CERTIFICATIONS (TEC 21.003a, 21.053, 21.057a-e)
- PROBATIONARY CONTRACTS (TEC 21.102)

Tidehaven ISD also seeks exemption from the following Texas Education Code requirements:

- SITE BASED DECISION MAKING (TEC 11.251, TEC 11.252, TEC 11.253)
- SUSPENSION (TEC 37.005)
- DAEP REQUIREMENT OF CERTIFIED TEACHERS / DAEP CLASS SIZE WAIVER (TEC 37.008)
- MENTOR TEACHERS (TEC 21.458)
- CLASS SIZE WAIVER REQUEST (TEC 25.112)
- PARENT NOTIFICATION (TEC 25.113)
- REMOVAL OF UNWANTED VISITORS (TEC 37.105)
- ABSENCES FOR COLLEGE AND MILITARY DAYS (TEC 25.087 (b-2) (b-5))
- EXPULSION FROM DAEP FOR PERSISTENT MISCONDUCT (TEC 37.007 (c))
- BANK DEPOSITORY CONTRACT (TEC 45.205, 45.206)

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SCHOOL START DATE (TEC 25.0811)

Texas law states that a school district may not begin student instruction before the fourth Monday in August unless it is year-round district.

Renewed:

- TISD may choose a school start date that best meets the students'/district's needs.
- The school start day may be prior to the fourth Monday of August.

LAST DAY OF SCHOOL: (TEC 25.0812)

A school district may not schedule the last day of school for students for a school year before May 15.

Renewed:

- TISD may end the school year prior to May 15th of the spring semester if that date best suits the needs of the TISD students/district.
- TISD shall continue to meet the state requirement of 75,600 minutes of instruction.

TRANSFER POLICY: (TEC 25.036)

Any child, other than a high school graduate, who is younger than 21 years of age and eligible for enrollment on September 1 of any school year may transfer annually from the child's school district of residence to another district in this state if both the receiving district and the applicant parent or guardian or person having lawful control of the child jointly approve and timely agree in writing to the transfer. A transfer agreement under this section shall be filed and preserved as a receiving district record for audit purposes of the agency.

Renewed:

TISD campus principals would be allowed to review and possibly rescind a student's transfer at any time during the school year.

TEACHER CONTRACT DAYS / CONTRACT SERVICE DAYS: (TEC 21.401)

A contract between a school district and an educator must be for a minimum of 10 months' service. An educator employed under a 10-month contract must provide a minimum of 187 days of service.

Renewed:

- The contract between the TISD school district and an educator will be a 10-month contract with the number of days of service dependent on each school year's individual calendar.
- The number of days of service will not exceed 187 days of service.

PROBATIONARY CONTRACTS: (TEC 21.102)

A probationary contract may be renewed for two additional one-year periods, for a maximum permissible probationary contract period of three school years, 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.

Renewed:

- Newly hired teachers/counselors who do not have five years within the last eight years of public school teaching experience may have their probationary period extended from one year to two years.
- The option of extending the probationary period would be at the discretion of the district.

TEACHER CERTIFICATIONS: (TEC 21.003a, 21.053, 21.057a-e)

21.003a A person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern or teacher trainee, librarian, educational aide, administrator, educational diagnostician, or school counselor by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued as provided by Subchapter B.

21.057a-e A school district that assigns an inappropriately certified or uncertified teacher to the same classroom for more than 30 consecutive instructional days during the same school year shall provide written notice of the assignment to a parent or guardian of each student in that classroom.

Renewed:

In order to best serve the students of TISD, decisions on teacher certifications will be handled locally. The TISD Board of Trustees will have final approval of all locally issued district-teaching permits.

- The campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request to have a certified teacher teach a subject(s) outside of their certification field. The principal must provide reasoning for the request and document the credentials that make the assigned teacher qualified to teach the subject(s).
- In order to provide more flexibility in scheduling and course offerings, as well as to eliminate teacher shortages in high-need areas, TISD may issue a local teaching certificate to non-certified but highly qualified professionals.
- In order to be eligible for a TISD local teaching certificate, a candidate in the core subject areas of social studies, math, science, and English language arts must hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited university. Individuals with skills in CTE including industry professionals, those with proven skills, and trade-related professionals may be eligible to teach vocational classes. Candidates with real-life experience and industry certifications may also qualify for a local teaching certificate.
- The campus principal may submit to the superintendent a written request that documents the credentials the person possesses that would qualify the individual to teach under a local teaching certificate. If TISD assigns a teacher to teach a subject(s) outside of the teacher's certification area, the district will not be required to provide written notice of the assignment to parents / guardians.
- If TISD allows a teacher to teach a subject(s) outside of the teacher's certification area, the district will not be required to provide written notice of the assignment to parent/guardians.
- Tidehaven ISD understands that this exemption do not apply to special education and bilingual/ESL teachers. Those employed in special education and bilingual/ESL must continue to be SBEC certified.

Tidehaven ISD seeks to add these additional exemptions to the district's current DOI plan:

SITE BASED DECISION MAKING: (TEC 11.251, TEC 11.252, TEC 11.253)

The current requirements to select SBDM committee members removes flexibility in determining who is able to serve in this capacity. The inflexibility of the requirements that must be addressed by the improvement plan often make the plans burdensome documents which meet the letter of the law but are not realistic guides which allow a district to meet its goals.

New Amendment:

- Return Site-Based Decision-Making back to Tidehaven ISD by allowing the district to determine the makeup of the committee and which decisions will be referred to the committee, except those otherwise prescribed by law.
- Tidehaven ISD remains committed to including a broad spectrum of stakeholders who contribute ideas and recommendations when identifying needs and addressing goals.
- TISD shall continue to involve multiple stakeholders that are representative of our community; however, TISD would not be required to meet the arbitrary percentages currently in effect under the TEC.
- Rather than focusing on required parameters, TISD's committees can focus on identifying issues and concerns that affect students and then establishing plans with clear, measurable goals.
- This proposed exemption would not apply to any federal law requirements.

SUSPENSION: (TEC§37.005)

A principal or administrator may suspend a student under TEC 37.005 for a maximum of three (3) days. Currently, no student below grade three may be placed in out-of-school suspension unless, while on school property or at a school event on or off school property, the student engages in conduct related to (1) carrying an unlawful or prohibited weapon, (2) the elements of a violent assault, sexual assault, aggravated assault, or aggravated sexual assault, or (3) selling, giving or delivering, possessing, using, or being under the influence of any amount of marihuana, a controlled substance, a dangerous drug, or an alcoholic beverage.

New amendment:

- TISD proposes that students who engage persistent disruptive behavior or who exhibit behavior that threatens the safety and security of the campus, staff, or students may be removed from campus for longer than three days. This extended suspension period would allow the campus administrator to thoroughly investigate the incident as the administrator would have time to examine disability, disciplinary history, intent, and other mitigating factors.
- TISD also proposes that a campus administrator may place a student below grade three in out-of-school suspension when the administrator determines that such action is necessary to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment. TEC 37.005 limits campus administrators from taking the sometime necessary action of removing a student from campus, regardless of age.
- Relief from TEC 37.005 would allow TISD administrators to use their professional judgement to make decisions about their own students.
- The extended suspension period would allow administrators sufficient time to create an effective, customized student support plan that considers all options that affect the student, as well as overall campus and student safety.
- The extended suspension period would also insure that each student's case receives fair and in-depth attention with input from all relevant parties.

WAIVER for CLASS SIZE (TEC 25.112):

Currently a district must submit a written request for a class size exception waiver for any classrooms in prekindergarten - fourth grade that exceed the 22-student class size limit. A district seeking an exemption must notify the commissioner and apply for the exemption not later than the later of (1) October 1st or (2) the 30th day after the first school day the district exceeds the limit. Note: class size limits do not apply to physical education classes or fine arts classes. TEC 25.112 requires districts to maintain a 22:1 student to teacher ratio in Kindergarten through fourth (4th) grade.

New Amendment:

- TISD strives to keep the student/teacher ratio at or below the required 22:1 number; however, fluctuation in student populations may occasionally cause classrooms in Kindergarten through fourth grade to reach or exceed the limit of the 22:1 student to teacher ratio.
- TISD requests local control to allow the district to exceed the 22:1 student to teacher ratio on those occasions without submitting an appeal for a waiver from TEA.
- TEA customarily approves waiver requests making the entire process unnecessary.
- Rather than submitting an appeal for a class size waiver to the Texas Education Agency, TISD requests that with the approval of the Superintendent and the TISD Board of Trustees, a principal may authorize a classroom to house one to two students above the preferred ratio.

PARENT NOTIFICATION (TEC 25.113):

TEC 25.113 requires districts to notify parents when exceptions to the 22:1 ratio occur.

New Amendment:

- TISD requests exemption from the requirement of notifying parents when a classroom population exceeds the 22:1 ratio.
- Requiring mandatory parent notification is an unnecessary layer of paperwork as a classroom's ratio may fluctuate over and under the 22:1 ratio multiple times during a school year.

REMOVAL OF UNWANTED VISITORS (TEC 37.105):

TEC 37.105 requires that any parent, visitor, or guest who is behaving in a manner inappropriate for a school setting must be given a verbal warning prior to (1) being ejected from the event or (2) refused entry to an event. A school administrator, school resource officer, or school district peace officer of a school district may refuse to allow a person to enter into or may eject a person from property under the district's control if the person refuses to leave peaceably on request. The guest must also be given notice of how to appeal the ejection.

New Amendment:

- TISD requests relief from TEC 37.105 to insure the safety and security of the district and its patrons.
- Relief would allow designated staff members the authority to immediately remove anyone whose behavior is inappropriate without a prior verbal warning.

MENTOR TEACHERS: (TEC 21.458)

TEC 21.458 sets specific parameters for both teacher mentors and teacher mentees. One requirement is that a district may assign a mentor teacher only to a mentee teacher who has less than two years of teaching experience. TEC 21.458 also requires teacher mentors to meet specific requirements regarding training, timelines, and leadership skills.

New Amendment:

- TISD believes that any teacher, no matter the years of experience, may at times benefit from working with a mentor.
- TISD believes having the flexibility to set up a mentor/mentee relationship will benefit teachers and students.
- TISD requests that district and campus administrators be permitted to select district teachers to serve as mentors without the confines of TEC 21.458.
- TISD will carefully consider factors such as experience, content knowledge, and instructional abilities prior to identifying a teacher as a mentor.

DAEP REQUIREMENT OF CERTIFIED TEACHERS: (TEC 37.008)

The current requirements for a district's disciplinary alternative education program states that a district may only employ teachers in DAEP who meet all certification requirements established under Subchapter B (Purpose), Chapter 21 (Educators.)

New Amendment:

- TISD requests that the district be allowed the flexibility of using non-certified para-professionals to provide instruction and supervision of DAEP students. These paraprofessionals would be required to complete training in behavior management strategies and techniques.
- The DAEP para-professional would work in close contact with the classroom teacher and other instructional specialists.

DAEP CLASS SIZE WAIVER (TEC 37.008)

TEC 37.008(a)(7) requires districts to maintain a teacher-to-student ratio in DAEP of one teacher for each fifteen (15) students in elementary through high school grades.

New Amendment:

- Flexibility in class size would allow TISD to meet all DAEP students' academic and behavioral needs.
- A group exceeding fifteen DAEP students per teacher is productive when those students are motivated to work, have few disciplinary issues, and are not negatively impacted by disruptive students.
- Placing those DAEP students who need intensive behavioral and academic support in a separate room will lessen the negative impact these students have on fellow DAEP students even as it may create the need for a separate DAEP class with more than fifteen students.
- TISD will strive to maintain the fifteen to one ratio when these parameters provide the best educational and behavioral support for all DAEP students.
- In addition, as a small rural district, TISD has a limited number of personnel. Should the number of students assigned to DAEP exceed the mandated fifteen-to-one ratio, TISD may not have sufficient staff to open a second DAEP classroom. The district needs the option to increase the DAEP teacher to student ratio.

ABSENCES FOR COLLEGE AND MILITARY DAYS (TEC 25.087 (b-2) (b-5))

TEC 25.087 (b 2) allows a district to excuse two days during a student's junior year and two days during a student's senior year to visit an accredited institution of higher education. TEC 25.087 (b 5) allows a district to excuse a student who is seventeen or older for a maximum of four (4) days during the student's high school years to pursue enlistment in a branch of the armed services of the United States or the Texas National Guard.

New Amendment:

- TISD believes that increasing the number of days a junior/senior is excused from school for the purpose of college, university, or military visits would have a positive impact on the College, Career, and/or Military readiness rate for the district.
- Increasing the number of days would also provide additional travel time for students and parents particularly as TISD is a rural district without close access to college, university, or military locations.
- TISD requests the flexibility to excuse three (3) days during a student's junior year and three (3) days during a student's senior year for visits to accredited institutions of higher education.
- TISD requests the flexibility to excuse a student who is seventeen or older for a maximum of six (6) days during the student's high school years to pursue enlistment in a branch of the armed services of the United State or the Texas National Guard.

BANK DEPOSITORY CONTRACT (TEC 45.205, 45.206)

Currently, the District must renew its depository contract every two years. The two-year contract term begins and ends in odd-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.

New Amendment:

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 no 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 a limited number of banking institutions 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.

EXPULSION FROM DAEP FOR PERSISTENT MISCONDUCT (TEC 37.007 (c))

A student may be expelled if the student, while placed in a (DAEP) disciplinary alternative education program, engages in documented serious misbehavior while on the campus despite documented behavioral interventions. For purposes of this subsection, “serious misbehavior” means: (1) deliberate violent behavior that poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others; (2) extortion, meaning the gaining of money or other property by force or threat; (3) conduct that constitutes coercion, as defined by Section [1.07](#) Penal Code; or (4) conduct that constitutes the offense of: (A) public lewdness under Section [21.07](#) Penal Code; (B) indecent exposure under Section [21.08](#) Penal Code; (C) criminal mischief under Section [28.03](#) Penal Code; (D) personal hazing under Section [37.152](#) or (E) harassment under Section [42.07](#) (a)(1), Penal Code, of a student or district employee.

New Amendment:

- Some students persistently disrupt the learning environment while in the traditional classroom and continue their disruptive behavior when moved to a DAEP alternative classroom.
- These students’ disruptive behavior negatively affects the learning environment and the safety of everyone in the DAEP setting including the instructor and the other students.
- Relief from TEC 37.007 (C) would allow the campus principal with the approval of the superintendent to expel a DAEP student for persistent misconduct after all other interventions have failed.