



Fredericksburg Independent School District
Inspiring Excellence!
District of Innovation Plan 2022-2027

District Goals:

- 1- Fredericksburg ISD aspires to ensure that the Five-Year Strategic Plan is executed with fidelity.
- 2- Fredericksburg ISD will achieve academic excellence by continuously improving and delivering high quality rigorous instruction so ALL students will graduate college, military, and career ready.
- 3- Fredericksburg ISD will maintain financial excellence and maximize district resources.
- 4- Fredericksburg ISD will develop and implement a successful bond strategy in partnership with the community, parents, and schools.

Proposed Innovations:

Teacher Certification

TEC Code Requiring Exemption:

TEC §21.003: Requires that a person may not be employed as a teacher by a district unless the person holds an appropriate certification or permit issued by the State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC).

Innovation for Fisd:

District Goal 3

Fredericksburg ISD will maintain its current expectations for employee certification and will make every attempt to hire individuals with appropriate certifications for the positions in question. However, when that is not reasonably possible, the district will have the flexibility to hire individuals who are knowledgeable in the area and equipped to effectively perform the duties of the position without a teacher certification.

Fredericksburg ISD would like the ability to certify teachers in areas that are hard to fill and in high demand, to better meet the educational needs of our students. These areas would include, but are not limited to CTE, STEM, bilingual education, languages other than English, and advanced courses.

The flexibility to establish local teacher certification requirements when hiring hard to fill and high demand teachers will allow the district to:

- select from a larger and more experienced candidate pool for courses, and also establish a grow your own pathway to certification

- establish requirements for professionals transitioning to education from other careers
- hire CTE teaching staff with industry-standard professional certifications, or those not currently certified in accordance with TEA standards
- utilize the talents and skill of those in our community who would benefit the needs of our students

Implementation Considerations:

- Exemption from TEC 21.003 is limited to provide hiring flexibility in hard to fill areas, such as but not limited to CTE, STEM, LOTE, and advanced courses. All other instructional staff are required to hold valid SBEC certificates and will receive Chapter 21 contracts in accordance with policy and law.
- FISD will develop minimum required qualifications for individuals hired for such positions and will outline required professional development in the areas of student management, instructional strategies, curriculum, and parent engagement.
- Parents will be notified when students are instructed by personnel without SBEC certification. Notification will include industry certifications held by the CTE instructor.

First Day of Instruction

TEC Code Requiring Exemption:

TEC §25.0811: A school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.

Innovation for FISD:

District Goals 1 and 3

An exemption to this statute will provide the opportunity to develop a school calendar that positively impacts students by:

- Balancing the disparity in the number of instructional days in each semester
- Ending the first semester by Christmas break so that final exams for high school students do not extend beyond the break
- Matching FISD semesters to coincide with the calendar of colleges from which students are taking dual credit courses
- Providing flexibility for students to enroll in summer school, internships, employment, and professional certification experiences
- Allowing for more instruction time prior to state-mandated testing and retesting, as well as AP and SAT testing

This exemption will also support teacher growth by:

- Supporting the adult learning model by providing ongoing professional development throughout the year
- Allowing staff to prepare for the school year by decreasing the amount of professional development in August

Implementation Considerations:

- The Fisd calendar committee will convene annually to collaboratively develop and recommend a district calendar that is designed to promote the effective delivery of classroom instruction and school/district operations.
- Teacher contracts will remain at 187 days.

Probationary Contracts

TEC Code Requiring Exemption:

TEC §21.102: Probationary contracts may not exceed one year for an employee new to the district but who has been employed for at least five of the previous eight years in public education.

Innovation for Fisd:

District Goal 3

To employees new to the district but who have been employed for at least five of the previous eight years in public education, Fisd will offer a two-year probationary contract. This will give Fisd more than one year to support and develop teachers before determining whether or not to award a term contract. This flexibility provides several important benefits:

- Adequate time for teachers new to the district to participate in meaningful professional development.
- Extended support for teachers new to the district to ensure growth and retention.
- Additional opportunities for a campus administrator to observe the teacher, provide support, and more fully develop the staff member's effectiveness.

Implementation Considerations:

- After a period of two years, probationary teachers who demonstrate proficiency may be awarded a term contract.
- Fisd will develop criteria for documenting growth for a teacher on a probationary contract.

Transfer Student Timeframe

TEC Code Requiring Exemption:

TEC §25.036: The transfer timeframe is interpreted to be a period of one school year.

Innovation for Fisd:

District Goal 2

Fisd accepts transfer requests from students outside the district. Current law

requires FISD to enroll the student until the end of the school year. Transfer students are expected to follow the attendance requirements and all rules and regulations of the District. In cases where the student does not meet minimum attendance requirements, FISD loses funding.

In order to maintain fiscal and operational responsibility, FISD will be able to revoke a K-11th grade student's transfer at any time during the academic year based on disciplinary suspensions, DAEP placements, expulsions, attendance, and/or if the transfer student is in need of special services which exceed the state funding for that student.

Implementation Considerations:

- FISD will maintain its current transfer policy requiring nonresident students to file a transfer application each school year.
- In approving transfer requests, the availability of space, instructional staff, availability of programs and services, the student's disciplinary history records, work habits and attendance records will be evaluated.
- FISD will monitor the attendance and behavior of transfer students and evaluate the impact on district resources.

Grievance Policy

TEC Code Requiring Exemption:

TEC §26.011, 26A.001, 26A.002, and 26A.003 require the board of trustees of each school district to adopt a grievance procedure that complies with Chapter 26A under which the board shall address each grievance that the board receives concerning a violation of a right guaranteed by this Chapter 26, of a board of trustees policy, or of a provision of this title.

Innovation for FISD:

Partnership between community, parents, and schools is at the heart of the FISD DOI Plan and informs everything we do as a school district. An important part of that work is ensuring we have an inclusive grievance process that addresses the needs of our community, parents, students, and staff. Fredericksburg ISD has and will continue to adhere to an established grievance policy with procedures and timelines outlined in its Board's local policies DGBA, FNG, and GF. In considering the changes to our grievance processes required by SB 12, we see the above-referenced provisions in Chapters 26 and 26A of the Texas Education Code as potential barriers to our overall goals because of the potential negative impact posed by the array of changes required. For example:

- Diminished discretion in determining who will hear a particular grievance and at what level of the process it should begin may be too limiting for our relatively small school district. (TEC Section 26A.001(e)).
- Requirements related to adding documents or claims at later stages of the grievance process and new, longer timelines may serve to extend the overall length of the grievances process and prove frustrating for all involved. (TEC Section 26A.001(e)(5))
- Allowing the grievant to determine whether a Board-level grievance will be conducted in

open or closed session “unless otherwise required by law” may be harmful to staff and community morale and may create unnecessary legal issues related to Board-level grievance appeals. (TEC Section 26A.00a(e)(10)).

- Ambiguity created between the requirement to issue a decision on the merits of a grievance despite procedural errors or the type of relief requested versus newly established timelines which suggest dismissal may be appropriate on procedural grounds. (TEC Section 26A.001(e)(9), 26A.002).

Fredericksburg is confident that its existing grievance policy structure and practices ensure thorough documentation of each step in the grievance process and provide adequate time for complaints to be filed and for complaints to be heard. All records related to grievances, including submitted forms, communications, investigations, findings, resolutions, and any corrective actions are systematically maintained at the District level to ensure transparency, accountability, and compliance with legal and policy standards. The District is committed to monitoring the legality and appropriateness of every decision and action taken. The District is further committed to hearing, reviewing, and attempting to resolve all complaints, as well as to taking corrective action, where appropriate. Fredericksburg ISD’s long-standing grievance policies will ensure that all such complaints are carefully reviewed and that district responses are in alignment with state and federal regulations, as well as all other local board policies.

Implementation Considerations:

The District will not adopt a new policy contemplated under Texas Education Code 26A but will continue to process complaints pursuant to its currently adopted grievance policies. The District remains committed to ensuring that no Fisd personnel, trustees, or anyone acting on behalf of the District engages in retaliation toward an individual who has filed a grievance.

