



Falls City ISD

Innovative Plan 2022-2027



Introduction

HB 1842 was passed during the 84th Texas Legislative Session in spring 2015. This bill provides Texas Public school districts the opportunity to be designated as Districts of Innovation. To access these flexibilities a school district must adopt a District of Innovation Plan.

Districts of Innovation provides opportunities for:

- Greater local control;
- Increased flexibility governing education programming; and
- Empowerment to innovate and think differently.

Districts are not exempt from statutes related to curriculum, graduation requirements, nor academic and financial accountability.

Duration

The term of the plan is for five year, beginning January 2022 and ending at the end of the 2026-2027 school year, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The Committee will continually monitor the effectiveness of the plan and recommend to the Board any suggested modifications to the plan.

TIMELINE

8/03/2021	Board Information Superintendent notified Commissioner of intent to adopt a DOI
10/20/2021	Adopting Resolution The Falls City ISD Board of Trustees will be asked to approve a resolution to explore the opportunity for FCISD to become a District of Innovation
11/17/2021	Public Hearing The Falls City Board of Trustees will hold a public hearing for public input on the District of Innovation opportunity.
11/17/2021	Appoint Committee The Falls City Board of Trustees will appoint the District Advisory Committee (DAC) to develop a District of Innovation Plan.
12/06/2021	Develop a Plan of Innovation The (DAC) will explore and develop a District of Innovation Plan.
12/15/2021	DAC Approves District of Innovation DAC will approve a District of Innovation Plan
12/15/2021	District Plan of Innovation Posted The Falls City ISD District of Innovation Plan posted on website for 30 days. Notify Commissioner of intent to adopt.
1/19/2021	Held Public Meeting in FCISD Board Room to discuss DOI
5/05/2022	Notified Commissioner of intent to adopt DOI
5/18/2022	District of Innovation Plan Approved by Board of Trustees The Falls City Board of Trustees will be asked to approve the Falls City ISD District of Innovation Plan. A copy of the approved District of Innovation Plan will be provided to the Texas Education Agency for posting on its website.



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1. Flexible Calendar

(EB LEGAL) (Ed. Code 25.0811)

Currently

Students may not begin school before the 4th Monday of August

Proposed

To allow a calendar that fits the local needs of our community, we would like to consider a flexible calendar option which may include an early start date. Students may begin the school year earlier than the fourth Monday of August.

Justification

A flexible calendar empowers the district to personalize learning, increase college and career readiness, and balance the amount of instructional time per semester. This will also allow for more flexible professional development opportunities for our staff.

2. Kindergarten through 4th Grade Class Size Waiver

(EEB LEGAL) (Ed. Code 25.112) (Ed. Code 25.113)

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.

Proposed

In the event a class size in kindergarten through fourth grade exceed twenty-two students and the 22:1 teacher to student ratio, the Superintendent will report to the Board of Trustees. Notifications to the parents will only be sent home in the event a Kindergarten through fourth grade class reaches a 24:1 student to teacher ratio.

Justification

In most cases at Falls City ISD, student to teacher ratio's that exceed 22:1 are for short periods of time. This measures give Falls City ISD flexibility when dealing with the situations without having the bureaucracy of waivers to the Texas Education Agency.



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3. Teacher certification

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

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.

Proposed

In order to best serve Falls City 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.

b. An individual with experience in foreign language or a 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.

Justification

The teacher certification proposal will allow more flexibility in our scheduling and will provide more options and offerings for our students, specifically secondary students will greater opportunities to access job and career related courses.

4. Probationary Contracts

(DCA LEGAL) (TEC 21.102)

Currently

For experienced teachers new to the district, the probationary period may not exceed one year if the person has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the previous eight years.

Proposed

For experienced teachers, counselors, or nurses new to the district that have been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight previous years, a probationary contract may be issued for up to two years from the last date of district employment.

Justification

This provision gives the district more time to evaluate the effectiveness of the employee over a longer period of time.



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5. Transfer Policy

(FDA Local) (TEC 25.036)

Currently

A district may choose to accept students as transfers, even if they are not entitled to admission in district, however, has been interpreted to require a student transfer to be for a period of one school year.

Proposed

A student's enrollment status may be revoked at any time of the year when the Superintendent determines that the student is assigned discipline consequences (in or out of school), has excessive attendance issues, or whose behavior interferes with the school district's ability to educate the student body. The decision to revoke a transfer student's enrollment can be made at any time of the instructional calendar. Students are able to reapply for transfer admission after one full school year following dismissal.

Justification

Falls City ISD transfer policy requires that all non-resident students who wish to transfer must file a transfer application each year and complete the transfer process in its entirety. 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. The ability to revoke a transfer at any time allows the school to take action should a student not meet the expectations outlined in the transfer process.

6. Teacher Contract Days

(DCB Legal) (DCB Local) (TEC 21.401)

Currently

Current education law in Chapter 21 defines a teacher contract as a 10 month contract equivalent to 187 days.

Proposed

Decrease teacher contract days from 187 days to a decreased amount with no effect on teacher salaries in an effort to better align teacher contract days to the 75,600 minutes required of students. Falls City ISD will present a recommendation to the Board of Trustees every year regarding the number of contract days as a part of the total compensation and benefits program for the district, better reflecting immediate local district needs.

Justification

Reducing the number of contract days to a level that better aligns with the minutes required from students through the entire school year will better serve the community, the staff, and the students at Falls City ISD. The reduced contractual days would increase the daily rate the district pays teachers, enhances efforts at teacher recruitment, and improves teacher morale.



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7. School Health Advisory Council

(TEC 28.004)

Currently

Currently the School Health Advisory Council is required to meet four times a year

Proposed

The Falls City ISD School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) will meet a minimum of one time per year. Additional meetings may be held if the SHAC committee, district administration, or board of trustees feel there is a need for additional meetings.

Justification

Falls City ISD's size and committee make up ensures that that committee members are aware of the needs of the district's students and are often able to review, advise, and revise plans using just one meeting a year.

8. Bank Depository Bid

(TEC 45.206)

Currently

At least 60 days before the end of the current depository contract the school must decide to use either competitive bidding or a request for proposal to choose a new depository.

Proposed

Falls City ISD would like to renew the depository contract with the current depository entity if the relationship is currently positive without going out for competitive bids or requests for proposal at the conclusion of a contract.

Justification

Falls City is a rural community located in Falls City Texas. There is only one bank in the school district. Going out for bid or requesting proposals is a time consuming processes that adds bureaucracy and paperwork to a process with little to no choice.



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9 - District and Campus Level Planning

(TEC §11.251, §11.252, §11.253)

Currently

State law requires that each campus and district shall have an improvement plan developed, evaluated, and revised annually. Under this statute the campus and district improvement plans must include nine compliance components and the improvement planning committees must hold at least one public meeting each year.

Proposed

Falls City ISD will continue to provide collaborative improvement plans being reflective of action oriented tasks and measurable goals. The documents, however, will no longer restrict and overburden the content of the plans to encompass the previously included items relative only to compliance rather than relevant actions aimed at progress toward goals.

Justification

The nature of the components indicated in the standards references often make the campus and district improvement plans cumbersome compliance documents rather than workable guides for actionable goals.