Wink-Loving I.S.D.

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WINK-LOVING INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
District of Innovation
2022-2027
BOARD UPDATED – June 16, 2025

Purpose

House Bill (HB) 1842, passes during the 84th Legislative Session, allows Texas public school districts to access most of the flexibilities available to Texas' open-enrollment charter schools. To access these flexibilities, a school district must adopt an innovation plan as set forth in Texas Education Code, Chapter 12A and the Texas Education Agency rules. The adoption of the District of Innovation plan allows District flexibility to improve the educational environment for the benefit of students and the community.

Term

The term of the plan is five years, beginning January 27, 2022 and ending January 26, 2027, unless terminated or amended by the WLISD Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. If, during the term of this plan, other areas of operations are to be considered for flexibility as part of HB 1842, the Board will nominate a new committee to consider and propose additional exemption in the form of an amendment. Amendments adopted by the Board will adhere to the terms of the original plan. The District may not implement two separate plans.

WLISD District of Innovation Timeline

- November 3, 2021 – Reviewed District of Innovation (DOI) plan with District Site-Based Committee and discussed renewal process. – WLISD Board Room. 2:00 p.m.
- December 3, 2021 – Published Draft Plan on WLISD Website for 30 days
- January 4, 2022 – District of Innovation (DOI) Committee Meeting (Public Meeting) – WLISD Board Room. 10:00 a.m.
- January 4, 2022 – DOI Committee vote on "Final" District of Innovation Plan
- January 27, 2022 – Board of Trustees Vote to Approve District of Innovation Plan.

WLISD District of Innovation Committee Members

Scotty Carman, Superintendent
Kittie Gibson, High School Principal
Lance Wineinger, Elementary Principal
Crystal Payne – Dean of Students
Luis Salcido, Director of Special Education
Geanna Coker, Business Manager
Alisa Graves, Elementary Teacher
Dana Fernandes, Elementary Teacher
Susan Abbott, Junior High Teacher
Judy White, High School Teacher
Isela Flores, WLISD Parent
Charity Smith, Business Representative
Courtney Woody, District Nurse

WLISD Innovations

Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator – *[FO(LEGAL); FO(LOCAL); TEC § 37.0012]*

Current Law
Section 37.0012 of the Texas Education Code requires that a person be designated to serve as the Campus Behavior Coordinator on each campus. This designee is responsible for maintaining student discipline and the implementation of Chapter 37.

Plan
The District is committed to ensuring a collaborative approach to discipline compliant with Chapter 37. This plan will allow a campus administrator to serve in the capacity of the Campus Behavior Coordinator as part of their job description.

School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) Meetings – *[BDF(LEGAL); DCB(LOCAL); TEC § 28.004]*

Current Law
Texas Education Code Section 28.004 requires the school board of each school district to establish a local school health advisory council to assist the district in ensuring that local community values are reflected in the district's health education instruction. Further, the law requires the health advisory council to meet at least four times each year.

Plan
Because of the size of the District, this plan exempts the District from the statutory provision above that requires the advisory council to meet at least four times each year. This innovation will be implemented by the District as follows:

- The SHAC will meet twice per year–once in the Fall and once in the Spring.
- This exemption directly supports the District's commitment to health education and instruction.

Planning and Preparation Time – *[DL(LEGAL); TEC § 21.404]*

Current Law
Under Section 21.404 of the Texas Education Code, each classroom teacher is entitled to at least 450 minutes within each two-week period for instructional preparation, including parent-teacher conferences, evaluating students' work, and planning. A planning and preparation period may not be less than 45 minutes within the instructional day, and during a planning and preparation period, a classroom teacher may not be required to participate in any other activity.

Plan
The District is committed to providing each teacher with ongoing and consistent training and planning time to support student achievement. As a part of fulfilling this commitment, the District requires each teacher to participate in group planning and collaboration, such as "Wildcat Wednesday", for at least 1 hour and 20 minutes during each two-week period.

Minimum Attendance for Class Credit – *[FEC(LOCAL); TEC § 25.092]*

Current Law
Texas Education Code Section 25.092 requires students to attend class 90 percent of the school days the class is offered in order to obtain credit.

Plan
This plan will allow the District to award class credit based content mastery rather than seat time. This innovation will be implemented by the District as follows:

- Students that have not met the required 90% rule will be referred to the attendance/grade placement committee on their respective campus.
- This committee will look at content mastery, extenuating reasons for absences, and assessment scores.
- Based on a review of the student's file, this committee will decide if credit should be awarded.
- This committee may require make-up days or summer school attendance to award credit, if content mastery is not achieved.

Student/Teacher Ratios and Class Size – *[EBB(LEGAL); TEC § 25.111, 25.112, 25.113]*

Current Law
Under Section 25.111 of the Texas Education Code, a school must employ a sufficient number of teachers to maintain an average ratio of not less than 1 teacher to 20 students. Pre-kindergarten through 4th grade class sizes must remain at or below a ratio of 22 students to 1 teacher.

Plan
Local control of class sizes would provide the District with the ability to pursue different instruction delivery models in order to afford students innovative learning experiences. This innovation will be implemented by the District as follows:

- Class Size Limits Pre-K – 4th Grade
    - 23:1 Notify the Superintendent
    - 24:1 Notify the Board of Trustees and Superintendent
    - 25:1 Notify the Parents, Board of Trustees, and Superintendent

Teacher Contract Days – *[DCB(LEGAL); DCB(LOCAL); TEC § 21.401]*

Current Law
Texas Education Code Section 21.401 requires a contract between a school district and an educator to be for a minimum of 10 months' service. Further, an educator under a 10-month contract must provide a minimum of 187 days of service.

Plan
This plan will allow the District to have local control over the number of teacher contract days. More specifically, this plan will provide flexibility to better align teacher service days with instructional days. This innovation will be implemented by the District as follows:

- Teachers will be required to attend a minimum of [7] days beyond the scheduled number of student instruction days.
- Staff development will include professional development and workdays for teachers.
- This proposal will enhance teacher recruitment and retention and improve teacher morale.

Minimum Minutes of Instruction – *[EC(LEGAL); EB(LEGAL); TEC § 25.081, 25.083]*

Current Law

Texas Education Code Section 25.081 requires each school district to operate for at least 75,600 minutes each year, including time allocated for instruction, intermissions, and recesses for students. Lastly, TEC §25.083(a) limits a district's ability and authority to make nonemergency announcements to once per day.

Plan

This plan will allow the District to have local control over scheduling and the flexibility to alter the length of the school day when deemed to be necessary based on certain circumstances. Specifically, this plan will (1) reduce the number of days following Spring STAAR/EOC assessments, (2) aid in balancing semesters for a more uniform grading period each six-weeks, (3) allow the District to close in the event of weather or health emergencies without having to seek a waiver from TEA, and (4) provide flexibility in scheduling extracurricular events.

Additionally, exempting the District from the restrictions under TEC § 25.083 will allow each campus the ability to make non-emergency announcements throughout the day on an as needed basis. While the District is committed to keeping announcements at a minimum, there are certain situations where non-emergency announcements are essential to communicate pertinent procedural and regulatory information.

Contract Employees – *[TEC § 21.102]*

Current Law

Texas Education Code Section 21.0811, person who is employed as a teacher by the district for the first time or who has not been employed by the district for two consecutive years, must be issued a probationary contract. Currently, the term of a probationary contract cannot exceed one year.

Plan

This will allow local control over a probationary or term contract. The District will have the option to increase the length of a probationary contract for incoming teachers that were previously on a term contract in another district. This innovation will be implemented by the District as follows:

- The District will have the option to increase a probationary contract term to three years for incoming teachers that were previously on a term contract in another district. This will allow the District to mentor the teacher before issuing a term contract.
- District may, however, offer a term contract to an incoming teacher for the purposes of recruitment as long as the teacher meets the needs of the District and is certified in the subject area.

Teacher Certification – *[DK(LEGAL); DK(LOCAL); DK(EXHIBIT); TEC § 21.003, 21.057]*

Current Law

A district must place a certified teacher in the instructional classroom. In the event a district cannot secure a certified teacher, or a teacher is teaching a subject outside of their certification, the district must submit a request to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and provide notification to the parents of each student assigned to a class taught by the non-certified teacher. TEA may then approve or deny the request.

Plan

In order to best serve WLISD students, this plan will allow decisions on certification to be handled locally. The current state teacher certification requirements inhibit the District's ability to hire teachers to teach hard-to-fill, high demand, dual credit, and career and technical courses. These requirements also inhibit the District's ability to hire teachers moving in with out-of-state credentials. In order to enable more students to obtain the educational benefit of such course offerings, the District seeks to establish its own local qualification requirements and its own requirements for training of professionals and experts to teach such courses in lieu of the requirements set forth under the law. This innovation will be implemented by the District as follows:

- Campus Principal may request that the Superintendent allow a certified teacher to teach subject or subjects out of their certified field without seeking approval from TEA. The Principal must specify the reason for the request and document the credentials the certified teacher possesses which would qualify them to teach outside their acquired field.
- In addition, this exemption will enrich applicant pools by allowing the District to hire candidates who are actively pursuing or currently possess a bachelor's degree to teach a content area course if a certified teacher is not available to teach the course. The Principal will notify the Superintendent of applicable candidates, provide reasons demonstrating their qualifications to teach a content area course, and document the credentials of the candidate.
- An individual with Career and or Technology experience may be considered for a vocational skill or course through a local teaching certificate. The Principal must notify the Superintendent, specify the reason for the request, and document the credentials the individual possesses which would qualify them to teach within the District. The Superintendent will provide the Board of Trustees with this information and seek Board approval of the hiring. Local certificates will be issued for one school year at a time. The Superintendent may, at their discretion, issue local certificates for additional one school year terms as necessary. Any Career and Technology teacher hired under this exemption will be hired as an at-will employee.

Uniform School Start Date and End Date – *[EB(LEGAL); TEC § 25.0811, 25.0812]*

Current Law

Texas Education Code Sections 25.0811 and 25.0812 state that a school district may not begin instruction for students for a school before the 4th Monday of August.

Plan

This plan will allow the District to create a calendar that meets community needs and offers a more balanced schedule through the flexible design of the instructional periods. Specifically, the flexibility will allow the District to annually determine, at the local level, what start and end dates best meet the needs of the students and the community. This innovation will be implemented by the District as follows:

- The District will begin instruction prior to the statutory start date which will help enable students to enroll in college courses that start in early June, avoiding a hurdle that otherwise might hinder students' college and career readiness.
- Removing the uniform start date will also allow the District to start classes on a Wednesday or Thursday, as a short week, easing the back-to-school transition for students.

Counselor Work Time – *[DP(LOCAL); TEC § 33.006]*

Current law

Texas Education Code Section 33.006 states that a school counselor must "spend at least 80 percent of the school counselor's total work time on duties that components of a counseling program developed under Section 33.005." Further, "time spent in administering assessment instruments or providing other assistance in connection with assessment instruments, except time spent in interpreting data from assessment instruments, is not considered time spent on counseling."

Plan

Due to staffing limitations, this plan exempts the District from the statutory provision above that requires school counselors to spend at least 80 percent of the counselor's total work time on duties that are components of a counseling program. This exemption directly supports the District's commitment to high academic achievement. This innovation will be implemented by the District as follows:

- The District is committed to ensuring that the academic and emotional needs of all students are met. In order to accomplish this goal with limited staffing, the District must balance the roles of academic guidance, emotional support, and other administrative tasks in each counselor's workload.
- In addition to the role of providing student support through individual and crisis counseling, this exemption will allow the District to enhance the work of school personnel and parents through the counselor's role of guiding student goal setting and planning by promoting understanding of standardized test results and other assessment data.
- Additionally, through annual auditing, the counselor will support the District to inform accountability, action plans, time management, and systemic change. In doing so, the counselor will be useful in providing parent and guardian consultation to foster each student's educational, career, personal, and social development.