Nursery Independent School District

District Of Innovation Plan
2026-2031

Renewal

Nursery Independent School District of Innovation Plan

Introduction

HB 1842 was passed during the 84th Texas Legislative Session and provides Texas public school districts the opportunity to be designated as Districts of Innovation. To access these flexibilities, a school district must adopt an innovation plan, as set forth in the Texas Education Code Chapter 12A.

Districts of Innovation may be exempted from a number of state statutes and will have:

- Great local control as the decision-makers over the educational and instructional model for students
- Increased freedom and flexibility, with accountability, relative to state mandates to govern educational programming; and
- Empowered to innovate.

Districts are not exempt from statutes including curriculum and graduation requirements, and academic and financial accountability.

Initial Process

On January 24, 2017, the Nursery Independent School District Board of Trustees initiated the process by passing a resolution to adopt a District of Innovation Plan in order to support innovation and local initiatives to improve student learning.

On March 29, 2017, the Nursery Independent School District Board of Trustees held a public hearing for public discussion on whether the district should develop a local innovation plan for the designation of the District of Innovation. With there being no objections, the Board of Trustees directed the Superintendent to form a District of Innovation Committee to discuss and draft this local innovation plan. The District of Innovation Plan Committee met on April 20, 2017 to discuss and develop the plan. A follow-up meeting to finalize the plan was deemed unnecessary at the conclusion of the meeting.

The plan was posted on the website for 30 days before being presented to the site-based decision-making committee on May 22, 2017. The plan was adopted for a five-year period beginning in the 2017/2018 school year through the 2021-2022 school year.

Renewal Term

The District of Innovation Plan is renewed for a five-year term. The revised and new DOI will become effective on July 23, 2026 and will remain in effect until July 23, 2031.

The District Leadership Team will monitor the effectiveness of the plan and recommend to the

Board of Trustees any suggested modifications to the plan.

Timeline / Activity

Timeline	Activity / Task
January 24, 2017	Board of Trustees passed resolution to initiate District of Innovation Plan
March 29, 2017	Board of Trustees held public hearing and appointed committee to draft the plan
April 20, 2017	Initial meeting of the District of Innovation committee to discuss and draft District of Innovation Plan
Unnecessary	Meeting to finalize District of Innovation Plan
April 20, 2017	Post District of Innovation Plan on Nursery Independent school district website
May 22, 2017	District site-based committee meeting
May Meeting	Board of Trustees vote on District of innovation plan
	Board Approved District of Innovation Plan submitted to the Commissioner of Education
April 25, 2022	Post the proposed District of Innovation Plan to the NISD Website.
April 25, 2022	Notify the Commissioner of Education in writing that the school board intends to renew the DOI. Include the intended adoption date of June 1, 2022. Include a link to the proposed plan
June 1, 2022	At the Board Meeting on June 1, 2022, and after waiting 30 days from the date the proposed plan was posted online, the District committee holds a public meeting and approves the final version of the DOI plan by a majority vote just prior to the Board Meeting. Board adopts the new DOI plan.
June 1, 2022	2nd Required Notification: Notify the Commissioner of Education in writing that the Board of Trustees has adopted the amended, renewed DOI Plan. Include the adoption date of June 1, 2022. Include a new link to the NISD website showing the new plan. Attach an updated checklist of exemptions for all sections of the education code
January, 2026	Administration reviewed the need for the DOI update due to recent legislation.

February 23/24, 2026	Shared revised DOI with the School Board and Community Members for revision. Posted on the District Website for 30 Days.
March 30, 2026	Public Hearing
March 30, 2026	NISD Board Votes on the DOI
March 31, 2026	NISD Superintendent Notifies the Commissioner of the approved plan, sends required documents, and posts the final approved DOI to the Website.
June 9, 2026	Amended DOI shared with committee members due to errors/legislative changes.
June 15, 2026	Post the amended District of Innovation Plan to the NISD Website for 30 Days
July 23, 2026	Public Hearing
July 23, 2026	NISD Board Votes on the DOI
July 24, 2026	NISD Superintendent Notifies the Commissioner of the approved plan, sends required documents, and posts the final approved DOI to the Website.

District of Innovation Committee Members

Name	**Position**
Dr. Larry Gajewskey	Superintendent Nursery ISD
Missy Yearwood	Board Member (Secretary)
Jennifer Southern	Administration
Cheryl Olsovsky/Karen Gonzalez	Community Member
Carla Gajewskey	Parent
Deanna Jacob	Parent
Addie Murray	Teacher
Sheena Vahalik	Counselor
Jake Helfer	Business
Eron Lantz	Teacher

Innovations

The district proposes flexibility in the following areas:

Uniform School Start Date (TEC 25.0811)
Submitting Waivers for Kindergarten-Grade 4 Class Size (TEC 25.112, 25.113)
Transfers (TEC 25.036)
Grievance Policy (TEC 26A.001, 26A.002, 26A.003)

Uniform School Start Date (TEC 25.0811) **(Renewed Unchanged)**

Texas Education Code Section 25.0811 states that a school district may not begin instruction before the fourth Monday in August.

Proposed

This flexibility of a start date allows the district to determine locally, on an annual basis,what best meets the needs of the students and community. This flexibility of the start date offers:

- The first and second semesters to be more equal in the number of days of instruction.
- An early start date permits students additional time prior to state assessments.

Local guidelines

The district will determine, on an annual basis, when each school year will begin.

Submitting Waivers for Kindergarten-Grade 4 Class Size (TEC 25.112,25.113) **(Renewed and Unchanged)**

Kindergarten-Grade 4 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. Along with the waiver, it is required that a letter is sent home to each parent in the class that exceeds the 22:1 ratio, informing them that the waiver has been submitted.

Proposed

While Nursery ISD believes that a small class size plays a positive role in the classroom, we do not believe that it has a negative effect when one or two students are added. It may not be the number of the students in the class but the makeup and chemistry of the classroom which influences the learning environment. Being exempt from the 22:1 ratio requirement will allow students to remain with the teacher and classmates that they began the year with, enabling continuity and stability that will support increased student achievement.

Local Guidelines

Nursery ISD will attempt to keep K-Grade 4 classrooms to the 22:1 ratio. In the event the class

size exceeds this ratio, the superintendent will report to the Board of Trustees. A TEA waiver will not be necessary when a K-Grade 4 classroom exceeds the 22:1 ratio.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Nursery ISD Innovation Plan is designed to create parameters within which the District will operate, so as to provide additional student opportunities. Adjustments to Board Policy will be researched and adopted where appropriate.

Transfer of Students (New, 2026)

NISD has a longstanding history of accepting transfer students outside the district, in accordance with Texas Education Code (TEC 25.036). Historically, a transfer is for one calendar year. As NISD continues to expand, adding a full, academic and extracurricular rich learning environment, the District wishes to add the following:

- A comprehensive review will be conducted at every progress report and reporting period, be that every 4 weeks.
- NISD Administration will review discipline, work output, tardies, absences, and all other factors that contribute the NISD Culture of work, citizenship, community, and family.
- Students who meet these requirements will be allowed to remain in NISD.

Grievance Policy (New, 2026) (Texas Education Code 26A.001, 26A.002, 26A.003)
NISD wishes to continue to utilize the current Grievance Policy in response to new legislation, Senate Bill 12. TEC Chapter 26A and SB12 require school districts to adopt grievance procedures under Texas Education Code Chapter 26 A to include:

- Allow the grievant to supplement records and add additional claims.
- Require a decision on the merits of grievance regardless of procedural errors.
- Extend grievance filing and appeal deadlines.
- Require recusal if the subject of grievance is involved.
- Require boards to consider extracurricular grievances if they involve local policy violations.

Proposed
Due to the nature and needs of NISD, the new timeline and requirements would place an undue burden on the administrative staff and faculty, creating timelines that are unreasonable. NISD wishes to preserve the current grievance polices and maintain local control on serious matters that impact the district. This policy and DOI request aligns with Victoria ISD, our feeder school for students seeking education services in grades 8-12.

- Exempt employee (DGBA) and community (GF) grievances from SB 12 requirements and continue following local district policies regarding the processing of these grievances.

- Retain flexibility in timelines, filing requirements, and grievance procedures for all grievance types (student, parent, employee, community) consistent with existing district policy.
- Maintain board discretion in addressing extracurricular grievances, except as otherwise required by federal or state law.