

District of Innovation – Walnut Springs ISD

Garrett

Halbert

Flippen

<i>Davis</i>		<i>Snyder</i>		<i>Dickinson</i>	
Mills	Webb	Hamill	Wise	Gilbert	Grubbs
Trotter	Harbour	Carter	Reynolds	Whatley	Cox
Jackson	Stamp	Allred	Williams	Phillips	
Riley	Reynolds	Anderson	Heartsill	Brooks	Uloth
Prescher		Terrell		Pinkerton	Golightly

District of Innovation Timeline

Dec 11	Initial meeting with administrative staff to discuss preliminary thoughts and discuss possible members of the District of Innovation team
Dec 12	Board of Trustees approve resolution to hold a public hearing to discuss the possibility of using HB 1842 to become a District of Innovation
Mar 12	Board of Trustees approves a motion to pursue local District of Innovation plan;
Dec 12	Board of Trustees provides input on priority areas of focus
Feb 13	Administrators discuss timeline
Feb 13	Administrative staff discuss priority areas of focus
Feb 10	Administrators gather input from faculty/staff
Mar 12	Public hearing to explain and discuss the possibility of becoming a District of Innovation
Mar 12	Board of Trustees approves the members of the District of Innovation committee
May 14	Initial meeting of the District of Innovation committee
May 22	Second meeting of the District of Innovation committee
June 11	Public hearing on DoI (Board Meeting)
June 11	Presentation of District of Innovation plan to the School Board to consider recommendations
June 26	District of Innovation committee final approval
June 30	Post the District of Innovation plan on the district website for 30 days
July 30	DoI committee holds public meeting, passes plan by a unanimous vote; Notify Commissioner of Ed of the board's intention to vote on adoption of proposed plan
July 30	Board of Trustees approves the DoI plan
Aug 1	Begin the process of updating all policy changes with TASB; Begin the process of communicating with students, parents, teachers, community

TERM OF APPROVED PLAN: Five Years (July 17, 2020 – July 16, 2025)

Local Guidelines and Applicable Guidelines: Upon approval by the Walnut Springs ISD Board of Trustees, Walnut Springs ISD will begin implementation of the Local Innovation Plan in the upcoming school year, beginning with specific exemptions addressed in this plan above,

DISTRICT ADVISORY COUNCIL STATUTE

Subchapter F. District-Level and Site Based Decision-Making §11.251 Planning and Decision-Making Process - b,e; §11.252 District-Level Planning and Decision-Making §11.253 Campus Planning and Site-Based Decision-Making 28.004 d	BDF (Legal)
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Current Law	<p><i>Sec. 11.251 - The board of trustees of each independent school district shall ensure that a district improvement plan and improvement plans for each campus are developed, reviewed, and revised annually for the purpose of improving the performance of all students. The board shall annually approve district and campus performance objectives and shall ensure that the district and campus plans –</i></p> <p><i>(b) The board shall adopt a policy to establish a district- and campus-level planning and decision-making process that will involve the professional staff of the district, parents, and community members in establishing and reviewing the district's and campuses' educational plans, goals, performance objectives, and major classroom instructional programs. The board shall establish a procedure under which meetings are held regularly by district- and campus-level planning and decision-making committees that include representative professional staff, including, if practicable, at least one representative with the primary responsibility for educating students with disabilities, parents of students enrolled in the district, business representatives, and community members. The committees shall include a business representative without regard to whether the representative resides in the district or whether the business the person represents is located in the district. The board, or the board's designee, shall periodically meet with the district-level committee to review the district-level committee's deliberations.</i></p> <p><i>e) The board shall adopt a procedure, consistent with Section 21.407(a), for the professional staff in the district to nominate and elect the professional staff representatives who shall meet with the board or the board designee as required under this section. At least two-thirds of the elected professional staff representatives must be classroom teachers. The remaining staff representatives shall include both campus- and district-level professional staff members. If practicable, the committee membership shall include at least one professional staff representative with the primary responsibility for educating students with disabilities. Board policy must provide procedures for:(1) the selection of parents to the district-level and campus-level committees; and(2) the selection of community members and business representatives to serve on the district-level committee in a manner that provides for appropriate representation of the community's diversity.</i></p> <p><i>§11.252 - Each school district shall have a district improvement plan that is developed, evaluated, and revised annually, in accordance with district policy, by the superintendent with the assistance of the district-level committee established under Section 11.251.</i></p> <p><i>School Health Advisory Council</i></p> <p><i>Section 28.004 - The board of trustees of each school district shall 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.</i></p>
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Rationale for exemption	<p>Exemption from this law, will allow the District to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) develop a plan that will produce more relevant results to improve student achievement through a streamlined efficient process 2) avoid problems with scheduling required numbers of formal meetings 3) avoid multiple committees duplicating efforts <p>Local Considerations:</p> <p>Walnut Springs ISD has one campus and an enrollment of approximately 175 students, PK-12. The community has a population of roughly 700 residents. Employment opportunities are limited, resulting in parents working outside of the community. Parents' responsibilities at their workplace and home coupled with their interest in attending their students' activities makes it difficult to attend the scheduled meetings required by the state.</p> <p>Human resources and available parents are limited for these committees; and the same people are asked to serve on numerous committees. WSISD will, combine committees to have one group to meet, review, analyze, and respond to data pertinent to the campus/district as outlined in TEC Sections 39.053(c)(1)-(4).</p> <p>Portions of improvement plans required by federal obligations will be fulfilled.</p>
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Committee Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Solicitation of stakeholder input by alternative means be utilized in lieu of formal meetings. Allow meetings to be conducted via email which collect input from committee members and stakeholders. 2) Establishment of a committee for each local goal. Committee members will consist of employees, parents and community/business members. Input or concerns will be directed to “committee chairs” who will work with administration to ensure comprehensive local plans are developed. Committees will not be constrained by percentages established by state requirements. 3) Representation of all special populations and curriculum areas on committees 4) Evaluation annually of local plans to ensure progress toward goals. Annual needs assessment will be conducted to determine the need for updating goals and/or objectives. 5) Inclusion of both long and short-term goals will be included to help guide the district. 6) Completion of annual comprehensive needs assessment 7) Development of a strategic planning process will replace constraints of compliance items indicated in TEC 11.252 and 11.253 to better serve our unique population and needs.
Benefits for WSISD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Student performance will improve with the development of a plan that is a workable guide with more actionable goals. ✓ Less teacher distraction/burnout from juggling schedules to attend formal meetings. ✓ Parent engagement will increase by facilitating the ability of gathering parent input as committee members through expanded methods of collection. ✓ More input will be provided since often people are more comfortable if they are able to avoid speaking out in a meeting. ✓ Local plans will be more comprehensive when stakeholders are more involved with time constraints of scheduled meetings are removed.

TEACHER EVALUATIONS

	TEC 21.203;21.352	DNA Legal
Current Law	<i>The new teacher appraisal system issued by the state of Texas beginning in the 2016-17 school year is called the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS). Beginning in the 2017-18 school year, T-TESS will have a student achievement component included meaning a portion of teacher evaluations will include student achievement.</i>	
Rationale for exemption	<p>Exemption from this law, will allow the District to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) allow district to develop local expectations aligned with student achievement component of T-TESS but will include measurable objectives for teachers who do not teach tested classes. 2) will ensure that locally developed criteria of measured expectations align with needs and goals of the district <p>Local Considerations:</p>	
Committee Recommendations	1) include criterion that is measurable and comparable for all teachers	
Benefits for WSISD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Student achievement will improve with all teachers connecting learning in their areas with state testing expectations for other courses. ✓ All teachers will be more accountable for student growth measures 	

PLANNING AND PREPARATION PERIODS

	<p>Chapter 21 – Educators Subchapter I – Duties and Benefits §21.404 Planning and Preparation Time §21.405 Duty-Free Lunch</p>	DL (Legal)
Current Law	<p>Sec. 21.404. 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 under this section may not be less than 45 minutes within the instructional day. During a planning and preparation period, a classroom</p> <p>Sec. 21.405. Except as provided by Subsection (c), each classroom teacher or full-time librarian is entitled to at least a 30-minute lunch period free from all duties and responsibilities connected with the instruction and supervision of students. Each school district may set flexible or rotating schedules for each classroom teacher or full-time librarian in the district for the implementation of the duty-free lunch period.</p>	
Rationale for exemption	<p>Exemption from this law, will allow the District to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) have more flexibility when other factors take precedent. Such factors include testing days, field trips, conducting required drills, teacher collaboration during the school day, etc. 2) have the flexibility to adjust the staff members' utilization of time especially as it pertains to collaborative planning and best meeting the needs of the students. <p>Local Considerations: Exemption from this requirement will provide the district with the local control needed to determine how best to use staff time.</p> <p>Innovation: TEC Ch. 12A.003(b)(1)(A) innovative curriculum, instructional methods, and provisions regarding community participation, campus governance, and parental involvement</p>	
Committee Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Total number of minutes a teacher receives for planning and prep will not be reduced overall. The recommendation is that it be 1,080 minutes during a 24-day period. (This will closely coincide with the six-week grading period.) 2) Increments of no less than 30 minutes toward the minutes per day 3) Amounts and increments of time be consistently implemented throughout the district 	
Benefits for WSISD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Improved student achievement may be realized from teachers being able to schedule planning meetings with other teachers during the Planning and Prep or Duty-Free Lunch times rather than scheduling the meetings before or after school. ✓ Teachers' engagement with parents will increase with more flexibility with use of time. 	

TRANSFER STUDENTS

	TEC 25.036	(FDA Local)
Current Law	<p><i>State law allows a student to transfer annually from the child's school district of residence to another district in the state if both the receiving district and the applicant parent or guardian jointly approve and timely agree in writing to the transfer. In approving transfer requests, the availability of space and instructional staff, availability of programs and services, the student's disciplinary history, academic performance, and attendance records are also evaluated. Under Texas Education Code 25.036, a transfer is interpreted to be for a period of one school year.</i></p>	
Rationale for exemption	<p>Exemption from this law, will allow the District to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) ensure our responsibility to our resident students are best served. 2) have the option of rescinding a transfer at any time during the school year if the student violates district expectations of attendance, discipline, academic achievement, and/or falsifying documentation. This flexibility would allow the district the option of immediate revocation of a student's transfer status by the Board or designee at any time during the school year. <p>Local Considerations:</p> <p>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. Transfer students are expected to follow the attendance requirements, rules, and regulations of the district.</p> <p>WSISD's responsibility is to provide the best possible educational experience to the students of the district. Should a student who is not a resident of the district wish to attend school at WSISD, they may apply for a transfer. We are allowed to grant or deny that request.</p>	
Committee Recommendation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Regularly evaluate transfer students with regards to the availability of space and instructional staff, availability of programs and services, the student's disciplinary history records, work habits, and attendance records. 2) Update transfer request forms so parents are aware of the rules for WSISD 	
Benefits for WSISD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Student achievement at WSISD will improve if we are allowed to re-evaluate acceptance of transfer students during the school year. ✓ Resident students of WSISD will be served more effectively if WSISD is allowed to revoke transfers of students who are detracting from the learning experience of others. 	

SCHOOL START DATE

Chapter 25–Admission, Transfer, and Attendance–Subchapter C
 §25.0811 First Day of Instruction

(EB Legal)

Current Law	<i>Except as provided by this section, a school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.</i>
Rationale for exemption	<p>Exemption from this law, will allow the District to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) recoup “summer learning loss” by starting 2-3 weeks earlier in August thus reducing the length of time between the end of the previous school year and the beginning of the current school year. 2) develop benchmark BOY schedule that reflects where a student’s level is and have reviews of prior year learning done prior to Labor Day 3) provide for six weeks grading periods are more evenly distributed and end the semester prior to December break. <p>Local Considerations:</p>
Committee Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) continue to have 1st week of school not be a full week 2) beginning of year benchmarks scheduled in August
Benefits for WSISD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Student achievement would increase with students would receiving more instructional time prior to testing ✓ Teachers would have a more accurate assessment of where students are with regards to concepts with benchmarking time during August

SCHOOL DAY INTERRUPTIONS

Chapter 25—Admission, Transfer, and Attendance—Subchapter C
 §25.083 School Day Interruptions

Current Law	<i>The board of trustees of each school district shall adopt and strictly enforce a policy limiting interruptions of classes during the school day for nonacademic activities (such as announcements) to once during the school day except in the case of an emergency.</i>
Rationale for exemption	<p>Exemption from this law, will allow the District to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) allow for announcements to be made during the school day on days during which the normal schedule may not be followed. {Examples: picture days, state testing (State testing is completed for the day and regular classes will resume); release of students to special assemblies; etc.} <p>Local Considerations: While the district agrees with maximizing class time is crucial, this requirement is not practical. The district will continue to minimize classroom disruptions to the greatest extent possible.</p>
Committee Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) All call notifications should be limited to emergency situations or those that include a notification that pertains to all classes. 2) Individual classroom notifications via the intercom should be maintained when necessary as they are no less disruptive than a knock at the door to deliver notification. 3) Morning announcements/Pledges will still be at the beginning of 2nd period. Additional time will be built into 2nd period to allow for instructional period to not be reduced.
Benefits for WSISD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ All students and personnel would benefit from consistency of notifications. ✓

DESIGNATION OF A CAMPUS BEHAVIOR COORDINATOR

	Chapter 37 – Discipline: Law and Order §37.0012 Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator	(FO Legal/Local)
Current Law	<i>Senate Bill 107 amended the Texas Education Code by adding Section 37.0012, which requires the designation of a campus behavior coordinator on each campus. This designee is responsible for maintaining student discipline and the implementation of Chapter 37, Subchapter A.</i>	
Rationale for Exemption	Local Considerations: The proposal is for the district to abstain from the state requirement that each school have a designated campus behavior coordinator. WSISD’s approach to discipline is collaborative with multiple people providing emotional and social support to students, rather than just one person. Exemption from this requirement will allow the option of increasing collaboration regarding student discipline.	
Committee Recommendations	Include written discipline plan for distribution to students, parents, teachers, and administrators with clear expectations and consequences.	
Benefits for WSISD	✓ Student discipline will be more collaborative and teachers will be able to handle minor infractions with less disruption to the learning process	

LONG RANGE ENERGY PLAN TO REDUCE CONSUMPTION STATUTE

	Chapter 44-Fiscal Management Subchapter B §44.902 Long-Range Energy Plan to Reduce Consumption of Electric Energy	
Current Law	<i>This law requires districts to decrease electric consumption by 5% and to develop plans for that purpose.</i>	
Rationale for exemption	<p>Exemption from this law, will allow the District to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) base energy conservation planning based on campus and community needs. 2) incorporate planning with district improvement plan in which all stakeholders look at current conditions and short and long-term goals. This will allow stakeholders to have a more vested interest in participating in conserving our resources. <p>Local Considerations: Requiring steps to develop plans creates administrative paperwork, when districts are already seeking fiscal responsibility</p>	
Committee Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Teachers will assist with fiscal responsibility by promoting energy conservation in their classrooms by turning out lights when not in the room 2) Maintenance will assist by ensuring efficiency in HVAC usage is maximized 	
Benefits for WSISD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Students will develop skills promoting energy efficiency which will benefit them throughout their life. ✓ ISD will see more efficient consumption of energy thus reducing energy costs which will free up funds for use in academic areas 	