

Gary ISD

District of Innovation Plan



Developed in cooperation with and approval by the
District-Wide Improvement Committee
2022 through 2027

Gary Independent School District

Board of Trustees

Stacy Cranford, President

Chris Daniels, Vice President

Cody Pierce

Greg Ransom

Zack McBride

Shane Woodfin

Jason Prewitt

Administrative Staff

Todd Greer, Superintendent

Jason Woodfin, Assistant Superintendent of Finance

Campus Administration

Brittney Davis, Elementary Principal

Samantha Kennedy, Secondary Principal

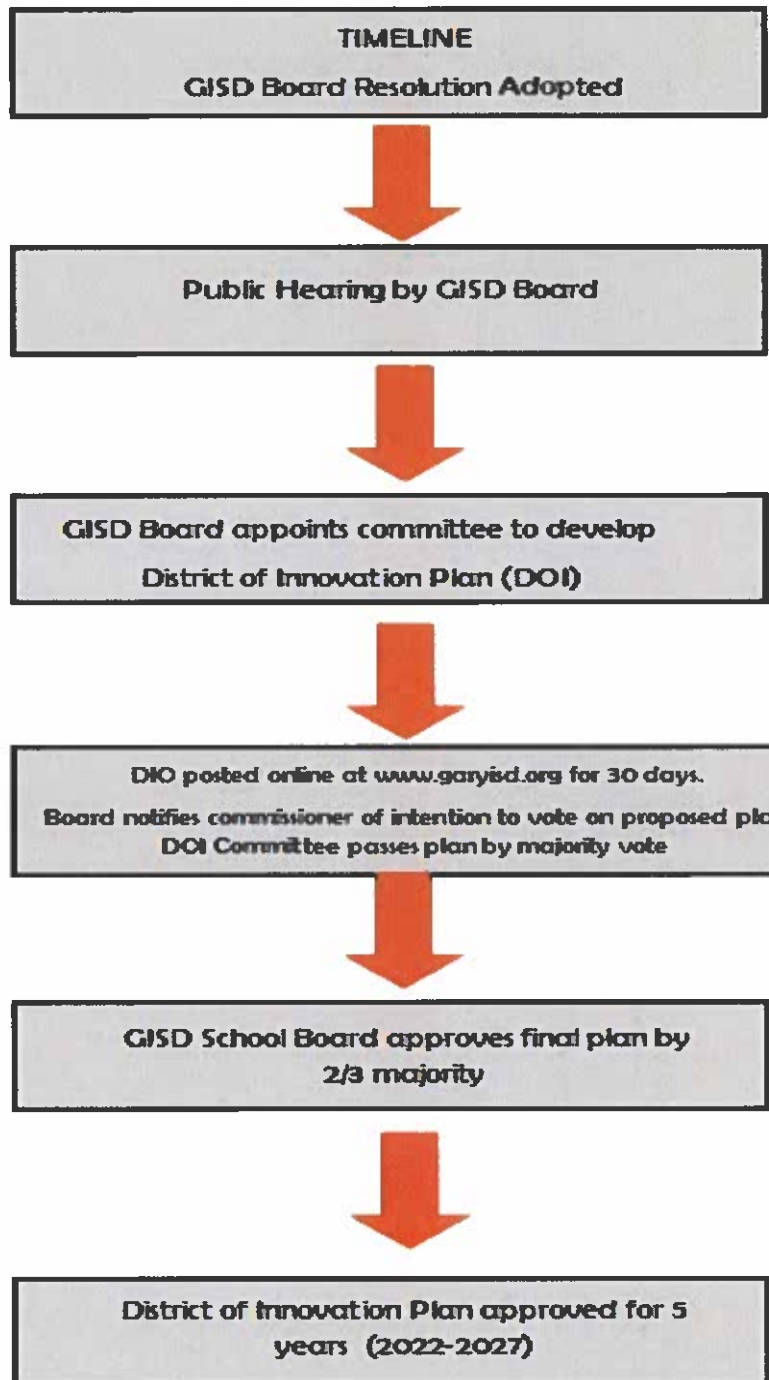
Leigh Ann Daniels, Elementary Counselor

Zach Davis, Secondary Counselor

District Of Innovation Committee Members
2022-2023



Name	Position
Todd Greer	Superintendent
Jason Woodfin	Assistant Superintendent of Finance
Brittney Davis	Elementary Principal
Samantha Kennedy	Secondary Principal
Vanessa Winters	Teacher
Jimmy Wallace	Teacher
Leigh Ann Daniels	Counselor
Luke Miller	Teacher
Chris Daniels	Board Member/Community Member
Leanne Seals	Parent
Jessica Prewitt	Parent



INNOVATION DISTRICTS

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT A DISTRICT OF INNOVATION

WHEREAS Education Code 12A.001 provides that a district is eligible for designation as a district of innovation if the district's most recent performance rating under Section 39.054 reflects at least acceptable performance, and that consideration of designation as a district of innovation may be initiated by a resolution adopted by the board of trustees of the district; and

WHEREAS the Gary Independent School District's most recent performance rating under Education Code 39.054 reflects at least acceptable performance.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of Gary Independent School District by adoption of this resolution initiates the process under Education Code Chapter 12A to become a district of innovation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that after this resolution is signed by the Board, a public hearing shall be held to consider whether the District should develop a local innovation plan for the designation of the District as a district of innovation and that after the public hearing the Board of Trustees of shall appoint a committee to develop a local innovation plan or decline to pursue designation as a district of innovation.

Adopted this 19 day of August, 2022, by the Board of Trustees.


Presiding Officer


Secretary

1. School Start Date

(EB LEGAL) (Ed. Code 25.0811)

Currently

Students may not begin school before the 4th Monday of August. For many years this was the rule; however, districts had the option of applying for a waiver to start earlier. The vast majority of districts applied for the waiver and would begin the 3rd Monday, some even going as early as the 2nd Monday.

The Texas tourism groups lobbied to have this stopped because they believed it was hurting their tourism business. Therefore, several years ago the legislature took away all waivers and dictated that districts may not begin until the 4th Monday, with no exceptions.

Proposed (DOI renewal approved by Board of Trustees on February 22, 2027)

To allow for a calendar that fits the local needs of our community, we would like to consider removing the mandatory start date which would better benefit our students. Local control of the instructional calendar affords Gary ISD the flexibility to begin the school year before the 4th Monday in August. The goal is to improve the district attendance rate and student success through the flexibility in the calendar.

2. Submitting Waivers for Kindergarten – Grade 4 Class Size

(EEB LEGAL) (Ed. Code 25.111) (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. These waivers are never rejected by TEA. This is a bureaucratic step that serves no purpose.

Along with the waiver, it is required that a letter is sent home to each parent in the section that exceeds 22:1 ratio, informing them the waiver has been submitted. Many times, soon after the waiver is submitted, students move out of the district and we are below the 22:1 ratio.

Proposed (DOI renewal approved by Board of Trustees on February 22, 2027)

While we certainly believe that small class size plays a positive role in the classroom, we do not believe it has a negative effect when you only add one or two more students. Many times, it is not the number of the students but the makeup and chemistry of the classroom which influence the learning environment.

- a. GISD will attempt to keep all K-4th core classrooms to a 22:1 ratio. However, in the event the class size exceeds this ratio, the superintendent will report to the Board of Trustees.
- b. In the event a K-4th core classroom reaches 25:1, the campus will notify the parents of the students in the classroom and inform them of the situation. A class size exemption will allow the district the flexibility based

on financial and staffing needs to adjust class size accordingly. Our goal will remain to have small class sizes.

c. A TEA waiver will not be necessary when a K-4th classroom exceeds the 22:1 ratio.

d. This gives GISD the flexibility without having the bureaucracy of waivers within the Texas Education Agency.

3. Teacher Certification

(DK LEGAL, DK LOCAL, DK EXHIBIT) (Ed. Code 21.003, 21.057)

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. There is a lot of bureaucracy and unnecessary paperwork involved in the process.

Proposed (DOI renewal approved by Board of Trustees on February 22, 2027)

In order to best serve GISD students, decisions on certification will be handled locally.

a. The campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request to allow a noncertified teacher to teach the subject or class pending action by the commissioner. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials the non-certified teacher possess which qualify this individual to teach this subject. However special education and bilingual/ESL teachers must continue to be SBEC certified.

b. An individual with experience in 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.

- c. This will allow more flexibility in our scheduling and more options for our students in class offerings.

4. Inter-District Transfers

(FDA LEGAL, FDA LOCAL) (Ed. Code 25.036)

Currently

Inter-district transfers, if approved, are for one school year.

Proposed (DOI amendment approved by Board of Trustees on February 21, 2027)

Transfer students are expected to follow the attendance requirements and all policies of the district. In the rare event, a student has excessive absences, excessive discipline, assigned DAEP, or other behavior the campus principal feels is detrimental to the success of the student or campus, the student's transfer may be immediately revoked and the student returned to the district where they reside or another education setting at the discretion of the parent.

5. Probationary Contracts

(DCA LEGAL) (Ed. Code 21-102)

Currently

A probationary contract may not exceed one year for new teachers to our district who have been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment by the district. Under this circumstance, the district must either give the teacher a term contract or terminate their contract after their first year in the district.

Proposed (DOI renewal approved by Board of Trustees on February 22, 2027)

Gary ISD would like to have the ability to renew the probationary contract for one additional one-year period, for a maximum of two school years, for all teachers that are new to the district who have been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of eight years preceding employment by the District.