



FORT DAVIS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

P.O. Box 1339
Fort Davis, TX 79734

DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLAN 2023-2028

HB 1842, passed during the 84th Texas Legislative Session, gives traditional public school districts the authority to exercise more flexibility in various district operations in a manner that best suits the needs of their district and community. This authority can be accessed by following a process that meets certain timelines, committee appointments, plan development and posting, committee approval, and finally board of trustees approval.

This plan has been developed and approved by the district's District of Innovation Committee and the FDISD Board of Trustees. The plan is effective for the period of August 1, 2023 through July 31, 2028 (5 years), and may be amended, terminated, or reapproved earlier by the FDISD Board of Trustees in accordance with the law.

The following **timeline** was followed:

- Wednesday, June 28, 2023, FDISD Board of Trustees conducts public hearing regarding pursuit of DOI status
- Wednesday, June 28, 2023, FDISD Board of Trustees approves resolution to consider pursuing District of Innovation status and names DOI committee members
- Thursday, June 29, 2023, the FDISD DOI Plan is posted for consideration and evaluation (30 day posting)
- Tuesday, August 1, 2023, the DOI committee approves DOI plan and recommends to the FDISD Board of Trustees
- Tuesday, August 1, 2023, the FDISD Board of Trustees approves the DOI plan and forwards the plan, and the link to plan on the district's website, to the TEA Commissioner of Education
- Approved plan is effective through July 31, 2028

The **DOI Advisory Committee** was comprised of:

Graydon Hicks III, Superintendent
George Allen, Principal
Shera Welch, Principal
Velvet Hartnett, Business Manager
Bud Coffey, Facilities and Maintenance Manager
Rebecca Puckett, Student Services Coordinator
Adele Coffey, Teacher
Jacqui Wilson, Parent Representative



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FLEXIBILITIES

Teacher Certification Exemption

TEC Section 21.003

Current Law: A person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern or teacher trainee, librarian, education aide, administrator, education diagnostician, or school counselor by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit. 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. In certain circumstances, a district can use a local one-year permit.

Proposed Change: FDISD will determine its own local qualification requirements for positions determined to be of high, or critical, need. Establishment of local qualifications allows the district to assign experienced teachers to elective course they may be otherwise qualified in, offer additional dual credit opportunities, offer additional CTE credit opportunities, recruit teachers from certain trades/vocations with industry knowledge and real world experience, allow experienced and certified teachers to teach courses outside of their certification area, and consider out-of-state certified teachers for open positions of high/critical need.

Duty-Free Lunch

TEC Section 21.405

Current Law: 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.

Proposed Change: FDISD will attempt to follow the current law as closely as possible, but may chose to schedule teaching staff with duties during lunch with the students. Teaching staff would eat lunch with student while continuing to supervise them. In this case, the district would schedule a truly “duty-free” lunch for teaching staff at the end of the regularly scheduled class day, or some other time of the day that best suits the needs of the district.



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First and Last Day of Instruction

TEC Sections 25.0811 and 25.0812

Current Law: FIRST DAY OF INSTRUCTION. (a) 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.

LAST DAY OF SCHOOL. (a) Except as provided by Subsection (b), a school district may not schedule the last day of school for students for a school year before May 15.

Proposed Change: FDISD would attempt to follow the current law prior to making any changes deemed to be in the best interest of the district and community. FDISD may choose to begin the school year earlier to accommodate extended breaks during the school year for staff development, student and staff health, or other community oriented needs such as tourism seasons. FDISD would also consider scheduling the last day of school in the same manner, while maintaining compliance to the current law on minimum required minutes per year. In the same way, the last day of school may be extended into the summer months as necessary. This increased flexibility of school calendar scheduling provides the district with possible incentives when recruiting needed teaching staff.

Student/Teacher Ratios and Class Size

TEC Section 25.111 and 25.112

Current Law: STUDENT/TEACHER RATIOS. Except as provided by Section [25.112](#), each school district must employ a sufficient number of teachers certified under Subchapter [B](#), Chapter [21](#), to maintain an average ratio of not less than one teacher for each 20 students in average daily attendance.

CLASS SIZE. (a) Except as otherwise authorized by this section, a school district may not enroll more than 22 students in a prekindergarten, kindergarten, first, second, third, or fourth grade class.

Proposed Change: FDISD would make every effort to ensure compliance with current law, however it may become necessary to increase the student/teacher ratio and class size due to an unexpected increase in enrollment at those particular elementary grade levels, or due to unexpected lack of teaching staff.

FDISD would make every effort to place an educational aide, as a minimum, into a classroom such a situation. It be necessary, for planning purposes each year, to schedule 25 students to one teacher (or teaching aide) in order to ensure an equitable schedule exists for staff and students. This added flexibility will also allow the district to more consistently and accurately develop financial budgets that meet the district's and community's needs.