

Water Valley ISD



Local Innovation Plan

August 2023 – July 2028

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

House Bill 1842, created in the 84th Legislative Session, provides opportunities for traditional independent school districts to exempt themselves from some parts of the Texas Education Code (TEC), giving them the same flexibility currently available to Texas' open enrollment charter schools. In order to utilize this opportunity, independent school districts must first become a District of Innovation by following a prescribed course of action outlined in statute.

TERMS OF THE LOCAL INNOVATION PLAN

While adhering to our cornerstone belief that all students can be safe, secure, and successful, our District sought to take full advantage of the flexibility TEA afforded a District of Innovation. The original term of the Innovation Plan was for five years, beginning August 2018 and ending July 2023. *This renewal plan will be effective August 2023 and ending July 2028.*

DISTRICT OF INNOVATION STEERING COMMITTEE

The District Advisory Committee originally and developed a Local Innovation Plan in 2018. Feedback from individuals other than DAC members were offered. Our DAC's reviews of Local Innovation Plan drafts ultimately focuses "exemption" areas from which the District's stakeholders might especially benefit.

The District seeks exemption from the Texas Education Code in the following areas, believing the resulting flexibility and local control will benefit all our stakeholders:

DISTRICT OF INNOVATION COMMITTEE WATER VALLEY ISD August 1, 2023- July 31, 2028

PRINCIPAL	DEEANNA BLANTON
PRINCIPAL	DANE HOOVER
SUPERINTENDENT	FABIAN GOMEZ
COUNSELOR	LACY MARTIN
TEACHER	VERONICA GOMEZ
TEACHER	KRISTINA LANGE
TEACHER	ED WILSON
TEACHER	CASEY COLEMAN
PARAPROFESSIONAL	TISHA LONG
TECHNOLOGY	KATELYN BANISTER
ATHLETIC DIRECTOR	CHARLES BOLES
BUSINESS REP/PARENT	TANIS MCCOY
PARENT	CASEY COLEMAN
PARENT	LYNLEY GLASS

Term of Plan: August 1, 2023 to July 31, 2028

Plan applies to: Entire District

Campus (list) _____

Other (please describe) _____

Chapter 11 – School Districts

Subchapter D. Powers and Duties of Board of Trustees of Independent School Districts

§11.1511 (b)(5), (14) Specific Powers and Duties of Board

§11.162 School Uniforms

Subchapter F. District-Level and Site Based Decision-Making

§11.251 Planning and Decision-Making Process

§11.252 District-Level Planning and Decision-Making

§11.253 Campus Planning and Site-Based Decision-Making

§11.255 Dropout Prevention Review

Chapter 21 – Educators

Subchapter A – General Provisions

§21.002 Teacher Employment Contracts

§21.003 Certification Required

§21.0031 Failure to Obtain Certification; Contract Void

Subchapter B – Certification of Educators

§21.051 Rules Regarding Field-Based Experience and Options for Field Experience and Internships.

§21.053 Presentation and Recording of Certificates

§21.057 Parental Notification

Subchapter C – Probationary Contracts

Subchapter D – Continuing Contracts

Subchapter E – Term Contracts

Subchapter H – Appraisals and Incentives

§21.352 Local Role

§21.353 Appraisal on Basis of Classroom Teaching Performance

§21.354 Appraisal of Certain Administrators

§21.3541 Appraisal and Professional Development System for Principals

Subchapter I – Duties and Benefits

§21.401 Minimum Service Required

§21.402 Minimum Salary Schedule for Certain Professional Staff

§21.4021 Furloughs

§21.4022 Required Process for Development of Furlough Program or Other Salary Reduction Proposal

- §21.403 Placement on Minimum Salary Schedule
 - §21.4031 Professional Staff Service Records
 - §21.4032 Reductions in Salaries of Classroom Teachers and Administrators
 - §21.404 Planning and Preparation Time
 - §21.405 Duty-Free Lunch
 - §21.406 Denial of Compensation Based On Absence for Religious Observance Prohibited
 - §21.407 Requiring or Coercing Teachers to Join Groups, Clubs, Committees, or Organizations: Political Affairs
 - §21.408 Right To Join or Not To Join Professional Association
 - §21.409 Leave Of Absence for Temporary Disability
 - §21.415 Employment Contracts
- Subchapter J – Staff Development**
- §21.451 Staff Development Requirements
 - §21.452 Developmental Leaves of Absence
 - §21.458 Mentors

Chapter 22 – School District Employees and Volunteers

Subchapter A – Rights, Duties, and Benefits

- §22.001 Salary Deductions for Professional Dues
- §22.002 Assignment, Transfer, or Pledge of Compensation
- §22.003 Minimum Personal Leave Program
- §22.006 Discrimination Based on Jury Service Prohibited
- §22.007 Incentives for Early Retirement
- §22.011 Requiring or Coercing Employees to Make Charitable Contributions

Chapter 25 – Admission, Transfer, and Attendance

Subchapter C – Operation of Schools and School Attendance

- §25.0811 First Day of Instruction
- §25.0812 Last Day of School
- §25.083 School Day Interruptions
- §25.092 Minimum Attendance for Class Credit or Final Grade

Subchapter D – Student/Teacher Ratios; Class Size

- §25.111 Student/Teacher Ratios
- §25.112 Class Size
- §25.113 Notice of Class Size
- §25.114 Student/Teacher Ratios in Physical Education Classes; Class Size

Chapter 37 – Discipline; Law and Order

Subchapter A – Alternative Setting for Behavior Management

- §37.0012 Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator

- §37.002 Removal by Teacher

Chapter 44 –Fiscal Management

Subchapter B – Purchases;

Contracts

- §44.031 Purchasing Contracts
- §44.0331 Management Fees Under Certain Cooperative Purchasing Contracts
- §44.0352 Competitive Sealed Proposals
- §44.042 Preference to Texas and United States Products
- §44.043 Right To Work
- §44.047 Purchase or Lease of Automated External Defibrillator

Subchapter Z – Miscellaneous Provisions

- §44.901 Energy Savings Performance Contracts
- §44.902 Long-Range Energy Plan to Reduce Consumption of Electric Energy
- §44.903 Energy-Efficient Light Bulbs in Instructional Facilities
- §44.908 Expenditure of Local Funds

Chapter 45 – School District Funds

Subchapter G – School District Depositories

- §45.205 Term of Contract
- §45.206 Bid Or Request for Proposal Notices; Bid and Proposal Forms
- §45.207 Award of Contract
- §45.208 Depository Contract; Bond
- §45.209 Investment of District Funds

Other

§25.036(a) TRANSFER OF STUDENT

School Start Date TEC 25.0811a

State law currently prohibits school districts from starting class before the fourth Monday in August, unless districts are year-round districts.

Rationale for Exemption

1. Water Valley ISD proposes to begin instruction no earlier than the 3rd Monday of August. This change will create better flexibility in the creation of the district calendar as well as allowing more opportunities in scheduling meaningful and balanced staff development days.
2. The start date will allow the district to provide more instructional days before state assessment.
3. The primary goals of this change will be to better align calendars and balance the instructional days during the first and second semester of instruction.
4. This strategy will provide for more concentrated professional development in key areas during instruction instead of planning before needs are realized.

Teacher Certification TEC 21.003a

TEC 21.003(a) states a person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern or teacher trainee, librarian, educational aide, administrator, educational diagnostician, or school counselor by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued as provided by Subchapter B.

Rationale for Exemption

Proposed Innovation Strategy The campus principal may submit a request to the superintendent for local certification that will allow the certified teacher to teach in a related field for which he/she is not certified. The principal must specify in writing for the request and document what credential the certified teacher possesses that would qualify this individual to teach the course.

Rationale for Exemption

The current certification rules limit the districts options to hire professionals with work related experience. A rural community can benefit from many qualified professional within its community. There are variety of STEM and CATE related courses that professionals can provide valuable work information and experience. In order to maximize the opportunities for students to take such courses, the district will consider the qualifications necessary to create a local requirement for these courses instead of the requirements in TEC 21.0003(a). The exemption will allow the district to:

1. Provide more variety for CATE and STEM classes
2. Provide valuable work related experience to be communicated to students

The superintendent will report the qualifications to the Board of Trustees at the first board meeting following these assignments.

Contract Service Days TEC 21.401

Current Law State law currently requires educators employed on a 10-month contract to provide a minimum of 187 days of service.

Rationale for Exemption

With the passage of Ed. Code 25.081 which changed the required days of instruction to minutes, the law did not address contract days for 10-month contract employees. The determination of how many days are required to fulfill an employee's contract should be a local decision.

Probationary Contracts TEC 21.102

Current Law For experienced teachers new to the district, the probationary period may not exceed one year if the person has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the previous eight years.

Rationale for Exemption

This time period is not sufficient to evaluate the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom since teacher contract timelines demand that employment decisions must be made prior to state assessment results. Water Valley ISD will have the authority to offer a probationary contract for up to two years from the last date of district employment for experienced teachers new to the district that has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the previous eight years.

Retire/Rehire Minimum Salary TEC 21.402

Current Law currently requires that school districts, when hiring a retired educator must pay them their salary based upon the TEA minimum salary pay scale; in addition, the districts are required to pay a TRS surcharge.

Rational for Exemption

Water Valley ISD would like the opportunity to hire an eligible retired educator and pay them below the TEA minimum pay scale while also paying the required TRS surcharge. Doing so will allow the district to hire veteran educator (s) that know TEKS content and are well versed in all areas in the educational process of our students. In addition, the district will be able to have an experienced educator at a significantly less cost than had the district paid them based upon the TEA minimum salary pay scale plus TRS surcharge. In times of budget constraints, this is of great benefit for the district.

TRANSFER OF STUDENT (TEC § 25.036)

Inter-District Transfers Currently, under Texas Education Code §25.036, a district may choose to accept, as transfers, students who are not entitled to enroll in the District, but TEC §25.036, has been interpreted to require a transfer to be for a period of one school year. TEC §25.036

Benefit of Exemption

Water Valley ISD maintains a transfer policy under FDA(LOCAL) requiring nonresident students wishing to transfer to file a transfer application each school year. 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. TEC §25.036 has been interpreted to establish the acceptance of a transfer as a one year commitment by the district. The district is seeking to eliminate the provision of a one-year commitment in accepting transfer applicants. In rare circumstances, student behavior warrants suspension (in or out of school) or expulsion. In

addition, student attendance may fall below the TEA truancy standard. In these rare cases, Water Valley ISD would benefit from an exemption from the one-year transfer commitment.

Innovation Strategy

Non-resident students who have been accepted as inter-district transfer students at Water Valley ISD may have such transfer status revoked by the superintendent at any time during the year if the student is assigned discipline consequences such as but not limited to suspension (in or out of school), placement in DAEP, or expulsion. In addition, if the availability of space, instructional staff, and availability of programs and services becomes an issue, students transfer status may be revoked.

Also, students not meeting the State's 90% attendance standard may also be subject to immediate revocation of the transfer status. The district is seeking exemption from the one-year commitment in accepting transfer applicants and to allow the district to rescind a transfer at any time during the school year.

Contract Service Days TEC § 21.401(b) MINIMUM SERVICE REQUIRED. (b)

An educator employed under a 10-month contract must provide a minimum of 187 days of service.

Rationale for Exemption

State law currently requires educators employed on a 10-month contract to provide a minimum of 187 days of service. With the passage of § 25.081 which changed the required days of instruction to minutes, the law did not address contract days for 10-month contract employees. The determination of how many days are required to fulfill an employee's contract should be a local decision based on accomplishment of the standard of instructional time. Determination by the district to reduce the number of teacher contract days from 187 days of service will have no effect on teacher salaries.

Innovation Strategy

Water Valley ISD will be able to reduce the number of contract service days for employees without reducing the salaries associated with the position.

Depository Contracts TEC §45.205 and TEC §45.206

TEC Code: Subchapter G. School District Depositories Sec. §45.205 TERM OF CONTRACT. a) Except as provided by Subsection (b), the depository bank when selected shall serve for a term of two years and until its successor is selected and has qualified.

(b) A school district and the district's depository bank may agree to extend a depository contract for two additional two-year terms. An extension under this subsection is not subject to the requirements of Section 45.206.

(c) The contract term and any extension must coincide with the school district's fiscal year. Innovation Strategy: WVISD seeks an exemption of the laws regarding the terms of Depository contracts.

Rationale for the Exemption

This exemption is to allow the district's existing bank contract to be extended beyond the total 6-year allowable contract term if the district determines contract pricing remains competitive and there is no operational or financial reason to send the district's banking services out for bid.

Innovation Strategy

This exemption lessens the administrative burden related to preparing and reviewing a Request for Proposal (RFP). This will further mitigate any impact to employees that would have to change direct deposit instructions each time a new depository occurs and allows the district flexibility with respect to banking relationships.