This letter is to inform you of Water Valley ISD’s timeline in regards to its District of Innovation Process.

- November 13, 2017 Regular Scheduled School Board Meeting, the Water Valley ISD Board of Trustees voted on and passed the District of Innovation resolution and appoints District Site Base Committee to develop plan.
- December 12, 2017 District Site Base Committee Met and developed District of Innovation Plan.
- December 21, 2017 Regular Scheduled School Board Meeting, the Water Valley ISD Board of Trustees presented and conducted the Public Hearing.
- December 22, 2017 District of Innovation plan posted on school website.
- January 15, 2018 Superintendent Notified Commissioner of Education intent of becoming District of Innovation.
- January 17, 2018 District Site Base Committee held a second Public Hearing.
- January 18, 2018 Regular Scheduled School Board Meeting. The Water Valley ISD Board of Trustees voted and approved the District of Innovation Plan.

Fabian Gomez
Superintendent
Water Valley ISD
Introduction

With the passage of House Bill 1842 during the 84th legislative session, a district of innovation gives public schools flexible strategies to meet the unique climate and needs of a school district. Similar to the state’s open enrollment charter schools, HB 1842 delivers Water Valley ISD an opportunity to transform state requirements at the local level to satisfy the essentials of our student population, in order to prepare them for life-long success and learning.

Our district has an academic performance rating of at least Met Standard, which allows WVISD to adopt an innovation plan.

Water Valley ISD took the first step in exploring this opportunity when the WVISD Board of Trustees approved a resolution initiating the process in November. The District Advisory committee was appointed to develop an innovation plan. The committee created a district of innovation plan. The plan then will be posted on-line for at least 30 days. The District Advisory Committee will have a public meeting to approve it before it can go back to the Board.

Term

The term of the District of Innovation Plan is for five years, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICT OF INNOVATION COMMITTEE</th>
<th>WATER VALLEY ISD 2016-2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRINCIPAL</td>
<td>WAYLAND COOKSEY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL</td>
<td>DANE HOOVER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUPERINTENDENT</td>
<td>FABIAN GOMEZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COUNSELOR</td>
<td>PAM ASHLEY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEACHER</td>
<td>JENNIFER SIMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEACHER</td>
<td>SONJA YOUNG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEACHER</td>
<td>PERRI BROWN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEACHER</td>
<td>BRENDAL GREEBON</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARAPROFESSIONAL</td>
<td>TAMMIE URBANTKE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TECHNOLOGY</td>
<td>JAMES DITMORE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATHLETIC DIRECTOR</td>
<td>KEITH WOOLF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUSINESS REP/PARENT</td>
<td>AMY MCMILLEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARENT</td>
<td>MONICA DEMERE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARENT</td>
<td>LEANNA HERZOG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 21.000J(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.

This will not apply to Special Education or Bilingual teachers.

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.
Length of School Day TEC 25.081

Current Law State law currently requires that all school days must be 420 minutes long each day in order to count for ADA calculations and funding purpose, and to accumulate instructional minutes toward the 75,600 minutes required annually.

Rationale for Exemption
Exemption from the 420-minute day requirement would allow Water Valley ISD the flexibility needed to alter the school day schedule on selected days whenever it was locally determined as necessary or beneficial to the districts and its stakeholders.

The district will comply with the Student Attendance Accounting Handbook in regards to required operational and or instructional minutes/days so that funding will not be reduced.

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.