



Red Lick Independent School District

***District of Innovation
Plan***

March 2017 - December 2021

INTRODUCTION

HB 1842 was passed during the 84th Texas legislative Session in Spring 2015, and provides Texas public school districts the opportunity to be designated as a District of Innovation. To access these flexibilities, a school district must adopt an innovation plan, as set forth in Texas Education Code Chapter 12A.

Districts of Innovation may be exempted from a number of state statutes and will have:

- Greater local control as the decision makers over the educational and instructional model for students;
- Increased freedom and flexibility, with accountability, relative to state mandates that govern educational programming; and
- Empowerment to innovate and think differently

Districts are not exempt from statutes including curriculum and graduation requirements and academic and financial accountability.

PROCESS

On December 13, 2016 the Red Lick Independent School District's Board of Trustees initiated the process by passing a Resolution to Adopt a District of Innovation in order to support innovation and local initiatives to improve student learning.

The Board of Trustees conducted a public hearing the same evening of December 13, 2016 for public discussion on whether the District should develop a local innovation plan from the designation of the District as a District of Innovation. With there being no objection from the hearing, the Board of Trustees appointed the District Innovation Planning Committee to discuss and draft this Local Innovation Plan. This committee represents various stakeholders across the district, including teachers, parents, campus administration, district administration and local business owners. The committee met initially January 2, 2017, to discuss and develop the plan. The Plan was finalized January 2, 2017.

The plan was posted on the District website January 3, 2017 before being presented to the District Advisory Committee, February 20, 2017 and to the Board of Trustees for final approval February 21st.

TERM

The District of Innovation Plan will become effective in March 2017 and will remain in effect for five years through December 2021, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The District of Innovation Committee will monitor the effectiveness of the Plan and recommend to the Board of Trustees any suggested modifications to the Plan.



TIMELINE

Timeline	Activity/Task
December 13, 2016	Board of Trustees passed Resolution to Initiate District of Innovation Plan
December 13, 2016	Board of Trustees held public hearing and appointed DOIC to draft Plan
January 2, 2017	Notify Commissioner of intent to submit plan to be designated as District of Innovation
January 2, 2017	DOIC meeting to develop plan and prepare for posting on district website
January 3, 2017	Post District of Innovation on RLISD website
February 13, 2017	District Innovation Plan Committee votes on District Innovation Plan
February 13, 2017	District Innovation Plan submitted to the Commissioner of Education
February 21, 2017	Board of Trustees vote on District of Innovation Plan

PLANNING COMMITTEE

First Name	Last Name	Member Category
Bob	Aikin	Business Member 1
Jay	Strickland	Business Member 2
Johnny	Ross	Parent 1
Nicole	Raley	Parent 2
Kelsey	Coleman	Community Person 1
Vicky	Boozer	Community Person 2
Heather	Barnett	Community Person 3
Jaclyn	West	District Level Professional
Jackie	Cope	Elementary Teacher 1
Brandy	Farrar	Elementary Teacher 2



PLANNING COMMITTEE (continued)

First Name	Last Name	Member Category
Sheri	Green	Elementary Teacher 3
Doug	Parr	Secondary Teacher 1
Leigh Ann	Haley	Secondary Teacher 2
Shelley	Krobot	Secondary Teacher 3
Crystal	Roach	Non-Teacher / Counselor
Melissa	Whitecotton	Special Populations Teacher
Debbie	Cooper	Non-Teacher / Elementary Administrator
Jason	Dempsey	Non-Teacher / Secondary Administrator

EXEMPTIONS

§25.0811 Uniform School Start Date

A district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August unless the district operates a year- round system. A district may not receive a waiver for this requirement.

Proposed

This flexibility of start date allows the district to determine locally, on an annual basis, what best meets the needs of the students and local community. It also offers the below opportunities.

*A minimum of two of the schools accepting 9th - 12th graders from Red Lick ISD are becoming District of Innovation Schools. Being a District of Innovation school will allow the students to be on a common calendar with other districts in the area.

*An early start date permits students to have an additional week of instruction prior to state assessments.

*Creates flexibility for the District to pursue other calendar options for special populations (Cooperatives).

Local Guidelines

The district will determine, on an annual basis, when each school year will begin.

§25.112 Class Size and Notice of Class Size

Texas Education Code 25.112 limits the number of students in grades Kindergarten through 4th grade to 22. While the maximum number of students in K-4 classrooms may be addressed by a state waiver, the waivers must be applied for annually. Texas Education Code 25.113 requires districts to notify each parent in the class section that exceeds the 22:1 ratio, and inform them the waiver has been submitted.

Proposed

By seeking an exception from TEC 25.112, the District would have flexibility for all campuses and classrooms for the duration of the District of Innovation designation and would not be required to seek waivers annually. While the District intends to remain within the guidelines of the current education code as much as possible, the District seeks flexibility to provide the best learning environment for our K-4 students, including more flexibility when teaching, creative ways of delivering instruction, and ability to manage increases in class sizes. Research shows it is the teacher in the classroom that has the greatest impact on student learning and not the absolute class size. Small class sizes may have a positive effect in the classroom, but must be balanced with the timing of adding staff, the qualifications of staff available, the makeup and chemistry of the classroom and other classroom influences.



Local Guidelines

In the event a classroom exceeds the 22:1 ratio in grades K - 4, the class sizes will be reviewed by appropriate district and campus administration. The Board of Trustees will be informed of K-4 classes that exceed 22:1. TEA waivers for class sizes exceeding 22 will not be required. An exemption from TEC 25.113 is also requested.

§25.036 Inter-district Transfers

Under TEC 25.036, a transfer is interpreted to be for a period of one school year.

Proposed

Red Lick 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 records, work habits, and attendance records are evaluated. Transfer students are expected to follow the attendance requirements, rules and regulation 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. On rare occasions, student behavior warrants suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion. In addition, student attendance may fall below the TEA truancy standard. In these rare cases, Red Lick ISD seeks exemption from the one year transfer commitment.

Local Guidelines

While Red Lick ISD is very generous in accepting interdistrict transfers, nonresident students who have been accepted as an interdistrict transfer may have such transfer status revoked by the Superintendent at any time during the year if the student is assigned discipline consequences of suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion. In addition, students not meeting the State's 90% attendance standard may also be subject to immediate revocation of the transfer status.

§21.002 Employment Contracts

Currently, experienced teachers new to the district have a probationary period that 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.

Proposed

Under current guidelines, probationary periods for newly hired teachers and counselors who have been in public education for at least five of the previous eight years cannot exceed one year. This limited time period is insufficient in some cases to fully determine the staff member's effectiveness. Relief from Texas Education



Code 21.102 will permit the district the option to issue a probationary contract for a period of up to two years for experienced teachers and counselors newly hired in Red Lick ISD.

Local Guidelines

At the time of contract recommendation consideration, newly hired teachers and counselors with the district, who have been employed in public education for at least five of the eight previous years and have completed their first probationary year with the district, may receive a probationary contract for the second year in order to continue to evaluate staff members effectiveness.

§21.003 Certification

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. TEC21.057 requires districts to provide written notice to parents when an inappropriately certified or uncertified teacher is assigned to the same classroom for more than 30 consecutive instructional days during the same school year.

Proposed

In order to best serve Red Lick ISD students, decisions on certification will be handled locally. With the current teacher shortage, this exemption from teacher certification requirements will enable greater flexibility in staffing and will enrich applicant pools in specific areas of need. With the innovative ideas of increasing foreign language and coding at lower levels, the district's exemption from TEC 21.003 would allow the district to consider part time professionals to teach courses. Out of state certified teachers could be considered for positions upon a local review of experience, education and credentials. Often there are experienced certified teachers that could teach a course outside of their certification area due to their education, background and/or experience. Local decisions outside of state certification requirements would allow innovation and flexibility in scheduling to meet student needs.

Local Guidelines

- a) The campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request to allow a certified teacher to teach a subject and/or grade level out of their field. The principal must specify the reason for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses qualifying this individual to teach the the subject.
- b) The superintendent will approve or deny requests for local certification.



§11.253 Campus Planning and Site-Based Decision Making

Texas Education Code 11.253 requires the District to establish campus-level planning and decision-making committees as provided in by Sections 11.251(b)-(e).

Proposed

Red Lick ISD is a small town consisting of 1008 residents. The District has an enrollment of 499 students (K-8). Resources for persons serving as members of the District Planning Committee and the Campus Planning Committees are limited without asking the same people to serve on several. The campuses are located across the N FM 2148 and communication between the superintendent and principal of each campus occurs on a daily basis. The proposal to allow the Campus Planning Committee to become synonymous with the District Level Planning Committee to be known as the District of Innovation Committee with the same duties as required in law of the District Planning Committee. Red Lick ISD would be able develop a more cohesive plan that establishes continuity of programs and performance through grades K -8.

Local Guidelines

Red Lick ISD will use one committee, the District of Innovation Committee, to develop one plan for the District/Campus and integrate the District Plan of Innovation into the District/Campus Plan. Membership of the committee would consist of parent(s), community patron(s), business person(s) non-teaching professionals, and equal number of teachers from each campus.

