Alpine Independent School District

Alpine ISD will provide our children with learning experiences to be responsible, productive, and successful citizens of an ever changing world.

District of Innovation Overview
The District of Innovation concept, passed by the 84th Legislative Session in House Bill 1842, gives traditional independent school districts most of the flexibilities available to Texas’ open enrollment charter schools.

Potential benefits of becoming a District of Innovation include:
- **Local Control**: Districts decide which flexibilities best suit their local needs.
- **Customization**: Districts can create an innovation plan for a level of school (e.g., only high schools), grade level, or a single campus.
- **Autonomy**: Districts must submit a district of innovation plan to the commissioner of education, but approval is not required.
- **Flexibility**: Districts will have the flexibility to implement practices similar to charter schools.

Alpine ISD is driven by four Board Goals. These goals drive all decisions regarding instruction and operations in Alpine ISD.

1. Provide a safe learning environment which allows for academic excellence.
2. Provide sound fiscal and resource management.
3. Enhance family, school, and community relationships, partnerships and communication.
4. Maintain and improve all Alpine ISD facilities/infrastructure.

Alpine ISD has developed this five year District of Innovation Plan, beginning with the 2017-2018 school year and concluding at the end of the 2021-2022 school year, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The District of Innovation Committee will continually monitor the effectiveness of the plan and make recommendations to the board accordingly.
**Timeline**

February 22, 2017
- Board of Trustees Adopts Resolution to Consider Designation as a District of Innovation
- Board of Trustees Holds Public Hearing
- Board of Trustees Delegates Superintendent to Appoint District of Innovation Committee

- District of Innovation Committee Meetings
  - Develop Proposed Recommendations for District of Innovation Plan

April, 2017
- Campus Faculty Meetings
  - Gather Feedback about Proposed Recommendations
- District of Innovation Committee Meeting
  - Finalize “Draft” of District of Innovation Plan

April 19, 2017
- Present District of Innovation Plan to Board of Trustees
- Post District of Innovation Plan on District Website for 30 days
- Notify Commissioner of Education of the Board's Intention to Vote on Adoption of Proposed Plan

May 26, 2017
- District of Innovation Committee Public Meeting
- Final Plan Approval – Requires Majority Vote

June 1, 2017
- District Improvement Committee
- Review District of Innovation Plan

June 28, 2017
- Regular Scheduled Board Meeting
- Board of Trustees Approve the District of Innovation Plan
- Requires 2/3 Vote

June 29, 2017
- Update all Policy Changes with TASB

Approved: June 28, 2017 - Alpine ISD Board of Trustees
# Committee Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dr. Kip Sullivan - Community Member</th>
<th>Justin Gonzales - AMS Principal</th>
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<tr>
<td>Nancy Roll - Community Member</td>
<td>Adrienne Reyes - AMS Counselor</td>
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<td>Caroline Fox - AHS Teacher</td>
<td>Ashlee Castro - AMS Teacher</td>
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<td>Vaughn Grisham - AHS Teacher</td>
<td>Tracy Perdue - AMS Teacher</td>
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<td>Brian Adams - AHS Teacher</td>
<td>Johanna Wells - AMS Teacher</td>
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<td>Mark Bailey - Parent</td>
<td>Judith Pardo-Alferez - AES Principal</td>
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<td>Sandra Alvidrez - AHS Counselor</td>
<td>Casey Belcher - Parent</td>
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<td>Panchi Scown - AHS Principal</td>
<td>Elda Fuentez - AES Teacher</td>
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<td>Debbie Dodds - Director of Technology</td>
<td>Peggy Low - AES Teacher</td>
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<td>Darrell Dodds - Assistant Superintendent</td>
<td>Brenda Criddle - AES Teacher</td>
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<td>Becky Watley - Superintendent</td>
<td>Susanna Busey - Parent</td>
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<td>Pam White - Director of Federal Programs</td>
<td>Mesinda Llanez - Director of Special Education</td>
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District of Innovation Flexibilities

TEACHER CERTIFICATION
(Texas Education Code 21.003)
(DK LEGAL, DK LOCAL, DBA LEGAL, DBA LOCAL)
Alpine ISD Board Goals – 1, 2, 3

Current Law
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.
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
The district will establish its own local qualification requirements for positions designated by the district as critical need.

Benefits of this exemption for Alpine ISD include:
- The statutory certification requirements inhibit the District's ability to hire professionals with industry experience to teach in areas designated by the district as critical need, including but not limited to Career and Technical Education (CTE), STEM Courses and non-core electives.
- Local Qualifications will allow the district to:
  - Allow experienced teachers to pick up an elective in an area they are qualified
  - Hire experienced and qualified instructors
  - Offer dual credit opportunities
  - Offer CTE courses
  - Recruit teachers from the field, including individuals from certain trades and/or vocations with industry knowledge and real world experience

Alpine ISD Local Guidelines
- The District will first make all attempts to hire certified teachers for all positions prior to considering local qualification requirements.
- The District will establish local qualification requirements, such as years of experience, qualifications, and industry certifications to qualify for a local (district) teaching certificate.
- Campus principals, along with the department chair (if applicable), will submit candidates, including credentials and supporting documentation, to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will determine whether it is in the best interest of the district to recommend the individual for employment. The Superintendent will recommend, to the Alpine ISD Board of Trustees, the individual employment. Final employment decisions will be made by the Alpine ISD Board of Trustees. Any changes or additions to previously approved position(s) will require further board approval.
- At the present time, Alpine ISD would focus on elective courses including CTE courses. The board of trustees would issue the school district teaching permit for an individual teaching these courses based on qualifications presented by the superintendent. The individual qualifications would include demonstrated subject matter expertise, such as
Professional work experience  
Formal training and education  
Relevant industry license, certification, or registration  
Any combination of work experience, training and education or industry credential related to the subject matter he or she will be teaching.

All candidates would be carefully considered to ensure the individual has sufficient education and expertise to provide instruction necessary to meet the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for the course(s) to be taught.

Before issuing a school district teaching permit to an individual, the district would ensure that the individual completed the criminal background check in compliance with the State Board of Education (SBEC) rules. In addition, the individual would be required to obtain a set number of hours in classroom management training and work with a mentor teacher the first year of employment. The individual would be employed on an at-will basis with the district.

**UNIFORM SCHOOL START DATE**  
*(Texas Education Code 25.0811)  
(EB LEGAL, EB LOCAL)*  
*Alpine ISD Board Goals – 1, 3*

**Current Law**  
25.0811 - Students are prohibited from starting school before the 4th Monday of August. For years, this was strictly a local decision. 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.  
Sec. 25.0812 – A school district may not schedule the last day of school for students for a school year before May 15.

**Proposed**  
The district will have the flexibility to determine the school start date on. This allows the district to determine locally, on an annual basis, what best meets the needs of the students and the local community. This flexibility enables us to customize learning and increase college and career readiness. This will also allow for more flexible professional development opportunities for our staff. Alpine ISD will not start school earlier than the second Monday in August for students and the first Monday in August for teachers, not including new teacher training.

**Alpine ISD Local Guidelines**  
The district will have the flexibility to designate the first day of school each year. During the calendar planning process, the District Improvement Committee will receive staff and parent input. All attempts will be made to ensure the Fall Semester ends prior to the Winter Break. All calendar decisions will be made on an annual basis and the recommended district calendar will be presented to the Alpine ISD Board of Trustees for approval.

**TEACHER CONTRACT DAYS**  
*(Texas Education Code 21.401)  
(DC LEGAL)*  
*Alpine ISD Board Goals – 1, 2*

Approved: June 28, 2017 - Alpine ISD Board of Trustees
**Current Law**

A contract between a school district and an educator must be for a minimum of 10 months' service. An educator employed under a 10-month contract must provide a minimum of 187 days of service.

**Proposed**

The minimum required days of service, for an educator employed under a 10-month contract, will be determined on an annual basis. This exemption will allow the district to reduce teacher contract days, with a range of 182-187. This would provide flexibility to align teacher contract days to instructional days, which would improve morale and help with recruitment efforts. This exemption would better align the number of teacher contract days to the required 75,600 minutes of instruction for students.

**Alpine ISD Local Guidelines**

The number of contract days will be determined on an annual basis, per the approved district calendar. The decrease in the number of contract days will have no effect on teacher salaries. The reduced number of contract days will result in an increased daily rate.

**INTER-DISTRICT TRANSFERS**

(*Texas Education Code 25.036*)

(*FDA LOCAL*)

Alpine ISD Board Goal - 1

**Current Law**

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.

**Proposed**

The district is seeking to eliminate the provision of a one school year commitment in accepting transfer students. Transfer students will be admitted upon district approval, following district requirements and procedures. Transfer students not meeting the local guidelines, may be subject to immediate revocation of the transfer status.

**Alpine ISD Local Guidelines**

Transfers shall be granted for one school year at a time, based on the transfer requirements, available space, and instructional staff. A new, written application shall be required for each school year that a transfer is sought. Nonresident students, who voluntarily withdraw from Alpine ISD during the school year, will not be permitted to reapply for transfer status during that same school year.

Transfer students may have their transfer status immediately revoked if they do not meet the following academic and conduct requirements:

1. Maintain at least a 90 percent attendance rate.
2. Maintain at least a 70 average in all core subjects.
3. Demonstrate competency on state assessments, if applicable and/or pass appropriate state assessments.
4. Comply with the Student Code and Conduct and maintain good conduct. Any assignment, to an in-school suspension program, disciplinary alternative education program, suspension, and/or felony conviction is not considered good conduct. Transfer students shall be subject to the same disciplinary consequences as all other Alpine ISD students.

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Alpine ISD will attempt to provide the same resources to transfer students, as all other students receive, prior to their transfer status being revoked. The resources include, academic tutorials and assistance, behavioral interventions, parent/guardian meetings, and private conversations with the campus counselor. A transfer student, whose transfer status is revoked, is not permitted to reapply for transfer status during that same school year.

The principal and/or counselor, with teacher input, will review the parameters of the transfer student agreement each grading cycle to determine if there are any violation of the terms within the agreement.

**LENGTH OF SCHOOL DAY**
*(Texas Education Code 25.082(a))
(EC LEGAL)*

*Board Goal – 1, 2*

**Currently Law**
Currently, under Texas Education Code 25.082(a), a school day shall be at least seven hours each day, including intermissions and recesses.

**Proposed**
Exemption from the seven hour or 420-minute day requirement would allow Alpine ISD the flexibility needed to alter the school day schedule on selected days, whenever it is locally determined as necessary or beneficial to the district and its stakeholders. While there is a waiver process available to request an exemption from this requirement, the waiver is limited to a 6-day maximum number for the school year. This exemption would give the district a significant amount of local control over scheduling, above and beyond the 6 day maximum as needed. This would allow the district the flexibility to schedule non-instructional time into the schedule to allow teachers to analyze student data and engage in targeted, relevant professional development.

**Alpine ISD Guidelines**
Based on specific needs, each campus will have scheduling flexibility which may result in less than a 420-minute day. All scheduling decisions will be geared towards maximized instructional time, and will focus on student needs, development levels and skills. Campus schedules, with less than 420-minutes days, will be approved by the superintendent. All students will receive the required 75,600 minutes of instruction as required each school year.

Approved: June 28, 2017 - Alpine ISD Board of Trustees