



**Wortham ISD
District of Innovation Plan
2017-2018 through 2021-2022**

Wortham ISD is utilizing HB 1842, of the 84th Legislative Session, in order to have more local control in certain areas. HB 1842 allows a traditional public school to be named as a District of Innovation and have some of the same local flexibility that public charter schools have always been allowed. We feel this is a great opportunity for our local district to tailor plans based on the needs of our students and community.

This plan will be in effect for the 2017-2018 school year through the 2021-2022 school year. The District of Innovation Committee may amend this plan at any time with approval of the Wortham ISD Board of Trustees.

Wortham ISD Innovation Committee:

David R. Allen	Superintendent
David Hayes	Principal, Wortham HS/MS
Dee Ann Allen	Principal/Counselor WELEM
Cheri Spencer	RTI, Special Programs Cor.
Krystal Duke	Counselor/Parent WHS
Marc Nichelson	Director of Technology/Bands
Amy Jo Miller	Teacher, WHS
Laura Sides	Teacher/Parent WMS
Christine Towles	Teacher/Parent WELEM
Lindsay Hayes	Teacher, WELEM
Andrea Jenkins	Parent
Marsha Calame	Community Member

Innovations:

1. Teacher Certification

(DK LEGAL, DK LOCAL, DK EXHIBIT) TEC 21.003

Current Law

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

In order to best serve WISD students, decisions on certification will be handled locally.

a. The principal, after following procedures, may submit to the superintendent a request to allow a certified teacher to teach subject(s) out of their certified field. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses in which would qualify this individual to teach this subject.

b. An individual with experience in a CTE field could be eligible to teach a vocational skill or course through a local teaching certificate. The principal will submit the request to the superintendent with all the individual's credentials. The superintendent will then approve the request if they feel the individual could be an asset to students. The superintendent will then report this action to the Board of Trustees prior to the individual beginning any employment. Local teaching certificates will be for one year. The employee will be at-will.

c. This proposal will provide more flexibility in our scheduling and more options for our students in class offerings.

2. Teacher Contract Days

(DCB Legal, DCB Local) (Ed. Code 21.401)

Current Law

Current education law located in Chapter 21 defines a teacher contract as a ten month contract equivalent to 187 days.

Proposed

This proposal reduces teacher contract days from 187 to 182 with no effect on teacher salaries. Due to low property values, it is difficult for Wortham ISD to compete with area schools in the area of teacher salary. This reduction in contract days at the current salary schedule would make our salaries more competitive.

1. This proposal will increase the daily rate the district pays teachers.
2. This proposal should enhance teacher recruitment, therefore putting the district on a more level playing field with neighboring districts.
3. This proposal will significantly improve teacher morale.
4. This proposal will provide teachers more opportunities during the summer months to seek out beneficial staff development that relates to their field.
5. This proposal will be part of the calendar planning process to maintain the reduced number of teacher contract days.

3. School Start Date

(EB Legal) (EB Local) (TEC 25.0811)

Current Law

Texas Education code Section 25.0811 states that a school district may not begin instruction before the fourth Monday in August.

Plan

To meet local and community needs, this plan will allow a more balanced number of instructional days per semester and more instructional days prior to the state assessments given in early May. The plan would give WISD the flexibility to determine its start date on an annual basis.

- a. Students will start school no earlier than the 2nd Monday of August