

New Deal Independent School District



**District of Innovation Plan
2018-2023**



New Deal Independent School District

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's 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, including exemptions from mandates such as:
 - School start date
 - 90% attendance rule
 - Class-size ratios
 - Site-based decision-making processes
 - Certain student discipline provisions
 - Use of planning and preparation periods
 - Teacher certification requirements

To qualify, an eligible school district must adopt a five-year innovation plan according to the Texas Education Code. This plan will be in effect for the 2018-2019 school year through the 2022-2023 school year. The plan may be amended at any time by the committee with the approval of the Board of Trustees.



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District of Innovation Timeline

Monday, April 23, 2018

- Board of Trustees adopted resolution to initiate District of Innovation Plan

Tuesday, April 24, 2018

- Initial meeting with administrative staff to discuss preliminary thoughts and discuss possible members of the District of Innovation Committee (DOI). DOI meeting #1.

May 14, 2018 School Board Meeting

- Public Hearing to explain and discuss the possibility of becoming a District of Innovation
- Regular meeting to approve a motion to pursue local “District of Innovation” plan. Board of Trustees approve the members of the District of innovation Committee.

May 23, 2018

- 2nd Meeting of the DOI Committee

June 4, 2018

- 3rd Meeting with DOI Committee – Final Plan for Presentation

June 5, 2018 – School Board Meeting

- Present District of Innovation Plan to the school board. Post the District of Innovation Plan on the district website for 30 days. Notify Commissioner of Education of the board’s intention to vote on adoption of proposed plan at the August board meeting.
- DOI Plan posted online

August 2018 - School Board Meeting

- Regular school board meeting to vote on DOI plan

RESOLUTION TO CONSIDER DESIGNATION AS DISTRICT OF INNOVATION

WHEREAS Education Code 12A.001 provides that a district is eligible for designation as a district of innovation if the district's most recent performance rating under Section 39.054 reflects at least acceptable performance, and that consideration of designation as a district of innovation may be initiated by a resolution adopted by the board of trustees of the district; and

WHEREAS the New Deal School District's most recent performance rating under Education Code 39.054 reflects at least acceptable performance.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of New Deal School District by adoption of this resolution initiates the process under Education Code Chapter 12A to become a District of Innovation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that after this resolution is signed by the Board, a public hearing shall be held within 30 days to consider whether the District should develop a local innovation plan for the designation of the District as a district of innovation and that within 30 days of the public hearing the Board of Trustees of New Deal School District shall appoint an innovation plan committee to develop a local innovation plan or decline to pursue designation as a district of innovation.

Adopted this 23 (date) day of April (month), 2018 (year), by the Board of Trustees.

Sandra Gowens
Presiding Officer

Christi Reed
Secretary



New Deal Independent School District

District of Innovation Committee Members

Superintendent, Jimmy Noland

HS Principal, Matt Reed

MS Principal, Jesus Arenas

Elementary Principal, Rebecca Cooper

Curriculum Coordinator, Shelley Carver

District Counselor, Trisha Williams

Technology Coordinator, Phillip Goodgion

Parent/School Board Member, Christi Reed

HS Teacher, Richard Vasquez

MS Teacher, Nonnie Peters

Elementary Teacher, Whitney Dunn



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District of Innovation Plan – Proposed Guidelines

1. First Day of Instruction (*EB legal, TEC 25.0811*)

A district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.

Proposal:

The flexibility of a locally approved start date allows the district to determine, on an annual basis, what best meets the needs of the students and community. This would also offer the following:

- Allow for more balanced grading periods.
- Allow for more instructional time prior to state assessments in December.
- Students participating in dual credit will have more balanced semesters, which will align more with our local colleges.

Guidelines:

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



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2. Teacher Certification (TEC 21.003, 21.051, 21.053, 21.057, DK Legal, DK Local)

State law states that a person may not be employed as a teacher by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued by the appropriate state agency. 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 request emergency certification from the Texas Education Agency and/or State Board of Educator Certification. Special education and bilingual teachers must be SBEC certified.

Proposal:

The current state teacher certification requirements inhibit the District's ability to hire teachers to teach hard-to-fill, high demand, as well as career and technical courses. In order to best serve New Deal ISD students, decisions on certification will be handled locally.

Based on local need, this exemption from teacher certification requirements will enable greater flexibility in staffing and will enrich applicant pools in specific areas of need. This would allow for the following:

- Provide more flexibility in scheduling
- Provide more options for students in class offerings
- Allow experienced teachers to teach a course in an area they have qualified knowledge.
- Allow industry certified and/or trade professionals to teach specialized certification courses

Guidelines:

- The campus principal may submit a request to the superintendent to allow a certified teacher to teach subject(s) out of their certified area. The request must state the reason and document the current certifications that the teacher holds that would qualify them to teach the subject.
- Individual with experience in a CTE field could be eligible to teach a vocational skill or course through a local teaching certificate. The campus principal would submit the request to the superintendent with all the documents that the person holds that would qualify them to teach the course.
- The Superintendent will approve or deny requests for local certification.



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3. Class Size in Grades K through 4 (TEC 25.112, EEB Legal)

Kindergarten-4th Grade classes are to be kept at a 22:1 student; teacher ratio.

Proposal:

While we certainly believe that small class size plays a positive role in the classroom, this must be balanced with the logistics of the timing of adding staff. Often it is not the number of the students but the makeup and chemistry of the classroom which influence the learning environment. A TEA waiver will not be necessary when a K-4th classroom exceeds the 22:1 ratio.

Guidelines:

- New Deal ISD will attempt to keep all K-4th core classes to a 22:1 ratio.
- If the class size exceeds this ratio, the superintendent will notify the Board of Trustees.
- If the class size exceeds a 24:1 ratio, the campus will notify the parents of the students in the classroom and inform them of the situation.



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4. Inter-District Transfers (TEC 25.036, FDA Local)

Requires districts transfers to be for a period of one school year.

Proposal:

The district is seeking to eliminate the provision of a one-year commitment in accepting transfer applicants.

Guidelines:

- New Deal ISD will follow FDA Local in approving all transfers.
- On rare occasions, student behavior warrants suspension (in or out of school), placement in DAEP, or expulsion. In addition, student attendance may fall below the state's 90% attendance standard. In these rare cases, after other corrective measures have been attempted, a student's transfer status may be revoked by the superintendent at any time during the school year.



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5. Teacher Contract Days (TEC 21.401, DCB Legal and Local)

Texas Education Code states an educator under a 10-month contract must provide 187 days of service.

Proposal:

New Deal ISD may reduce teacher contract days from 187 to a decreased length with no effect on teacher salaries. Reduce the teacher contract days to match the adopted school calendar:

- Provide teachers more flexibility during the summer months to seek out beneficial staff development
- Improve teacher morale
- Enhance Teacher recruitment
- Daily rate will remain consistent with the 187 day calendar

Guidelines:

To allow flexibility in the contractual days for certified personnel, New Deal ISD will:

- Evaluate the number of contract days needed for certified staff in that school year and shall set the number of calendar work days, with the objective of reducing the days from 187.
- The administrative staff will also annually determine the number of professional development days are required and when and where they will be fulfilled on the calendar.
- Maintain at minimum the current salary schedule for all certified employees.



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6. Length of School Day (TEC 25.081)

State law currently requires that all school days must be 420 minutes long each day in order to count for ADA calculations and funding purposes, and accumulate instructional minutes towards the 75,600 minutes required annually. It requires a school district to file a waiver to exempt the 420 minute rule. Each district can request 6 waivers per school year.

Proposal:

- Exemption from the 420 minute day requirement would allow New Deal ISD the flexibility needed to alter the school day schedule on selected days whenever it was locally determined as necessary or beneficially to the district and its stakeholders

Guidelines:

- New Deal ISD does not have any intention to shorten the school day on a regular basis, or without specific purposes. To the greatest extent possible, early release days would be planned ahead of time and noted on the district calendar, which is approved by the New Deal ISD Board of Trustees and published to all stakeholders in advance of the school year.