

Schleicher County

Independent School District



District of Innovation Plan

August 1, 2022 – August 1, 2027 **Amended 8/15/2022*

SCISD DISTRICT GOALS

Meeting the Diverse Needs of Students

SCISD will provide an educational program that meets the individual needs of all the students.

Teacher Shortage

SCISD will recruit and maintain highly qualified teachers and staff.

Discipline Management System

SCISD will have an observable system of discipline management that is consistent and effective across the entire school district.

Management of District Funds

SCISD will maintain an accurate, accountable financial system.

VISION STATEMENT

- SCISD Graduates: Educated, Empowered, and Equipped for an ever-changing world.

MISSION STATEMENT

- To attain this vision, the mission of SCISD is to provide all students with a meaningful and challenging education in a safe, supportive environment. As a team of educators, parents, and community, we are dedicated to building a strong academic and personal foundation to ensure that each student has the opportunity to realize their full potential.

The District shall strive to:

- Stimulate students to become creative and responsible individuals who can fulfill the present and future needs of our society.
- Use the curriculum to motivate student participation in the definition and development of their goals.
- Motivate students to develop positive attitudes toward our democratic heritage and to be tolerant of the views and ideas of others.
- Fulfill the community's responsibility by providing opportunities for all students to acquire those skills, values, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for the attainment of their goals and to function effectively in free enterprise system.
- Provide extracurricular activities that will aid students in reaching their potentials and provide experiences valuable for future use of leisure time.

Schleicher County ISD
District of Innovation Plan

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 Districts of Innovation. To access these flexibilities, a school district must adopt an innovation plan, as set forth in the 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.

Term

The District of Innovation Plan will become effective in August 2022 and will remain in effect for five years, through August 2027, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. Any amendment to the Innovation Plan must follow the same process as the plan development. The District of Innovation Committee would consider any proposed amendment/s. Any amendment/s would require majority approval of the District of Innovation Committee, a majority approval of the District Site-Based Committee, and posting on the district website for 30 days. A 2/3 vote by the Board of Trustees would be required for final approval of any amendment/s.

Schleicher County ISD Timeline

Timeline	Activity/Task
January 4 th , 2017	<i>SCISD District Leadership Team met to discuss District of Innovation opportunity</i>
January 9 th , 2017	<i>District of Innovation Information Item-Board Meeting</i>
February 13 th , 2017	<i>Board of Trustees:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>held public hearing regarding District of Innovation (DOI)</i> • <i>adopted resolution to initiate District of Innovation and appointed Committee to draft a DOI Plan</i>
February 14 th , 2017	<i>1st Meeting of DOI Committee to discuss District of Innovation Plan</i>
February 16 th , 2017	<i>2nd Meeting of DOI Committee to discuss District of Innovation Plan</i>
February 20 th , 2017	<i>District Site-Based Committee Meeting</i> <i>Plan posted on SCISD website for 30 days</i> <i>Plan sent to Commissioner for notification of intent</i>
RENEWAL: March 29, 2022	<i>District Committee Review and Approve Updated Plan (Public Notification – 72 Hours)</i> <i>Plan posted on website for 30 days for Public Comment</i> <i>Notification of Intent to Renew filed with Commissioner</i>
March 23 rd , 2017	<i>Recommend final DOI Plan to School Board for approval</i>
RENEWAL: May 9, 2022	<i>Recommend final updated/renewed Plan to School Board for Approval and final opportunity for public comment</i>
March 24 th , 2017	<i>Notify Commissioner of School Board Approval</i>
RENEWAL: May 10, 2022	<i>Notify Commissioner of School Board Approval</i>
AMENDMENT: August 15, 2022	<i>Recommend amendment to existing Plan to School Board for Approval</i>
August 17, 2022	<i>Notify Commissioner of School Board Approval</i>

District of Innovation Planning Committee

Member Name	District/Community Role	
Robert Gibson	<i>Superintendent</i>	2017
Robert Gibson, Sr	<i>Superintendent</i>	2022
Perry Graves	<i>Principal, Eldorado High School</i>	2017, 2022
Ezra Walling	<i>Principal, Eldorado Middle School</i>	2017, 2022
Michael Rudewick	<i>Principal, Eldorado Elementary School</i>	2017, 2022
Sharon Spinks	<i>District Advanced Academics Coordinator</i>	2017, 2022
Lyndi O'Neil	<i>SCISD Counselor</i>	2017, 2022
Katrina Gonzales	<i>Eldorado High School Testing Coordinator</i>	2017
Tammy Dombroski	<i>Teacher, Eldorado High School</i>	2017
Gail Stevens	<i>Teacher, Eldorado Middle School</i>	2017, 2022
Lindsey Caudle	<i>Teacher, Eldorado Elementary School</i>	2017, 2022
Joe McGee	<i>Community Member/Parent</i>	2017, 2022
Pam White	<i>Community Member</i>	2017
	<i>Community Member</i>	2022

Proposed Exemptions

The following are the provisions of the Texas Education code that inhibit the goals of the district and from which the district seeks to exempt itself through adoption of the District of Innovation Plan.

TEACHER CERTIFICATION

(DK LEGAL, LOCAL) (Texas Education Code 21.003)

Current:

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 Schleicher County 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. The district's exemption from TEC 21.003 would allow the district to consider part-time professionals to teach courses, allow industry expert professionals to transition into the teaching profession in Career and Technology, and also assist in staffing high need STEM and dual-credit course offerings. 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 in our district 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. This proposal will provide more flexibility in our scheduling and more options for our students in class offerings. Special Education, Bilingual, and ESL teachers will continue to be SBEC certified.

Local Guidelines:

- a) The campus principal shall submit a request to the superintendent 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 subject. The principal shall develop a plan for the teacher to receive additional professional development in the assigned content. This shall be reflected in the TTESS appraisal process.
- b) An individual with experience in a Career and Technology field may be eligible to teach a vocational skill or course. An individual may have background, experience, skills or work related/ industry experience to work full-time or part-time in a designated area. The principal shall submit a request to the superintendent for local certification. The principal must specify the reason for the request and document what credentials the individual possesses qualifying this individual to teach the subject.
- c) An individual may hold a teaching certification in another state for core areas or Career and Technology. The principal shall submit a request to the superintendent for local certification. The principal must specify the reason for the request and document what credentials the individual possesses qualifying this individual to teach the subject.
- d) A teacher hired, under local certification, to teach a core class, is expected to hold a bachelor's degree.
- e) Non-certified teachers hired to fill teaching positions will receive mentorship and additional training in pedagogy, instructional methods, and classroom management.
- f) The superintendent will approve or deny requests for local certification.

TEACHER CONTRACTS *(Texas Education Code 21.401)*

Teacher Employment Contracts (DCB Legal)

Current:

Education Code Chapter 21 Teacher Contracts defines a teacher contract as a ten-month contract equivalent to 187 days.

Proposed:

Schleicher County ISD would like to have the freedom to consider the reduction in contract days to better align with the 75,600 minutes required of students, with no effect on teacher salaries or daily rate. This will allow the district flexibility to more effectively schedule professional development and collaboration.

Probationary Contracts

(DCA Legal) (Ed. Code 21.102(b))

Current:

Under current guidelines, probationary periods for newly-hired teachers who have been in public education for at least five of the previous eight years cannot exceed one year.

Proposed:

This limited time period is insufficient in some cases to fully determine the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom. Relief from Texas Education Code 21.102 will permit the district the option to issue a probationary contract for an extended period, with written notice. The written notice shall include an outline for expectations of areas of growth.

TEACHER OBSERVATIONS (T-TESS)

(TEC §21.352)

Reasoning

T-TESS has been used as the observation tool in Schleicher County ISD since 2017 with fidelity. Our staff (instructional and administrative) has been fully practiced in the processes and benefits of this new instructional evaluation system. While SCISD finds it to be tremendously helpful in the learning process, it is also tremendously time consuming. This can become overwhelming and require less time to be spent with each staff member during the process.

Proposed Amendment

Schleicher County ISD will continue to use T-TESS and may include modifications to better meet local needs including the removal of standardized test scores/student growth measures or student learning objectives from the evaluation process.

SCHOOL START DATE (TEC 25.0811)

Current

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.

Proposed

SCISD would like the flexibility to balance instructional days between semesters, by allowing for an earlier start date. This flexibility of a start date allows the district to determine locally, on an annual basis, what best meets the needs of the students and local community.

INTER-DISCTRICT TRANSFERS

Current Law:

TEC 25.036 Districts transfers are for an entire school year. **(FDA Local)**

Proposed:

SCISD would follow FDA Local policy requiring nonresident students to file a transfer application each school year.

- a. In approving transfer requests, the availability of space and instructional staff, availability of programs and services, the student's disciplinary history records, work habits, and attendance records will be evaluated.
- b. Transfer students are required to follow the attendance requirements, rules and regulations of the district and within the Student Code of Conduct.
- c. Transfer status may be revoked by the superintendent or designee at any time during the school year if the student is assigned disciplinary consequences such as suspension (in school or out of school), placement at the DAEP, or expulsion. In addition, students not meeting the State's 90% attendance standard may also be subject to immediate revocation of the student's transfer status.

Reasoning:

- a. Allows SCISD the flexibility to revoke transfer students, during the school year, who on rare occasions, violate the transfer policy.
- b. Allows SCISD to better utilize school resources for the benefit of the district and taxpayers.