

Fort Stockton ISD
District of Innovation (DOI) Plan
for
2023- 2028
(Revised 4/28/2023)





FORT STOCKTON
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Office of:

Ronald Lee Cline, Assistant Superintendent

Special Services - Special Education, Dyslexia, 504, DAEP
Special Programs/Projects
Campuses - Apache Elementary & Butz Campus
PEIMS

April 28, 2023

Mr. Mike Morath
Commissioner of Education
Texas Education Agency
Attn: Accreditation
1701 N. Congress Avenue
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Commissioner Morath:

Please accept this letter as our “notice of intent” to amend and renew our District of Innovation Plan. The Fort Stockton ISD Board of Trustees is expected to vote to approve this document at their next meeting on May 22, 2023. Our public meeting on the subject was April 27, 2023, and the proposed changes have been posted on our district website since April 17, 2023. The following is a link to that site: <https://www.fsisd.net/Page/634> . We appreciate your assistance. We will send you a link to the final version of our plan after the Board hopefully approves it in May.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ron L. Cline

Assistant Superintendent
for the Superintendent and
FSISD Board of Trustees

District Mission

The mission of the Fort Stockton Independent School District is to remain totally committed to the development of students as lifelong learners and productive, self-sustaining contributors to society.

Fort Stockton ISD Board Goals

Fort Stockton ISD is driven by Five Board Goals developed in conjunction with our parents, community, and stakeholders. These goals drive all decisions regarding teaching and learning in FSISD.

-Academics-

The Fort Stockton ISD will engage students in active learning by providing curriculum and instruction to make the classroom environment a safe, positive place where students are supported to achieve.

-Career-

The Fort Stockton ISD will prepare and encourage students to be ready for college or the workplace.

-Communication-

The Fort Stockton ISD will provide effective and efficient communication among board members, administration, teachers, parents, students, and the community.

-Financial Management-

The Fort Stockton ISD will monitor and manage finances in order to sustain educational program priorities over the long term.

-Participation-

The Fort Stockton ISD will promote a positive climate for extra-curricular activities resulting in more participation.

Fort Stockton ISD District of Innovation

Timeline 2022 & 2023

Timeline	Activity/Task	Date Completed/ Due Date
January 2022	Board Meeting- FSISD Board of Trustees discuss rules and process for renewal of District of Innovation Plan	January 19, 2022
January 2022	District Innovation Committee (DIC) meets to discuss innovative ideas for the school district, reviews data, determines focus area, and drafts Local Innovation Plan (LIP)	January 27, 2022
February 2022	District posts District Local Innovation Plan (LIP) on district website	February 1, 2022
February 2022	FSISD Board of Trustees votes to notify Commissioner of its intention to vote on adopting final Local Innovation Plan (LIP) Renewal	February 16, 2022
March 2022	District Innovation Committee (DIC) hosts public meeting to consider final version of FSISD Local Innovation Plan (LIP) and approves it by a majority vote of the District Innovation Committee (DIC)	March 3, 2022
March 2022	District presents the proposed Local Innovation Plan (LIP) to FSISD Board of Trustees for approval with 2/3 vote	March 28, 2022
March 2022	District sends approved Local Innovation Plan (LIP) to Commissioner of Education	March 29, 2022
February 2023	FSISD Cabinet met to discuss potential changes in the DOI Plan.	February 27, 2023
March 2023	Board Meeting- FSISD Board of Trustees discuss rules and process for additions to the District of Innovation Plan.	March 27, 2023
March 2023	District Innovation Committee (DIC) meets to discuss additions and changes in the current DOI plan, as well as innovative ideas for the school district, reviews data, determines focus area, and drafts of additions/changes in Local Innovation Plan (LIP)	March 30, 2023 & April 5, 2023
April 2023	District posts District Local Innovation Plan (LIP) and proposed changes on district website	April 17, 2023

April 2023	FSISD Board of Trustees votes to notify Commissioner of its intention to vote on adopting final Local Innovation Plan (LIP) with updates/changes	April 26, 2023
April 2023	District Innovation Committee (DIC) hosts public meeting to consider final version of FSISD Local Innovation Plan (LIP) with changes and approves it by a majority vote of the District Innovation Committee (DIC)	April 27, 2023
May 2023	District presents the proposed Local Innovation Plan (LIP) to FSISD Board of Trustees for approval with 2/3 vote	May 22, 2023
May 2023	District sends approved Local Innovation Plan (LIP) to Commissioner of Education and posts final version (with changes, if any) on the district's web page	May 24, 2023

District Improvement Committee (DIC) 2022

Name	Position	Name	Position
Roy Alvarado	Principal - High School / Assistant Superintendent	Gil-Ray Madrid	Assistant Superintendent
Aimee Bislar	Parent Representative	Raquel Mishnick	Special Ed. Teacher - Intermediate
Melissa Calderon	Teacher - Apache	Alva Morales	Teacher - Middle School
Karen Caswell	Teacher - Intermediate	Melba Montoya	Community Representative
Linda Chavez	Principal - Alamo	Karina Pacheco	Principal - Apache
Ron Cline	Assistant Superintendent	Emilia Pallnez	Special Ed. Teacher - High School
Sabrina Cordova	Associate Principal - Middle School	Arlene Pando	Teacher - Apache
Vandela Corra	Teacher - Alamo	Mike Peters	Athletic Director / Head Football Coach
Catherine Estrada	ELAR Teacher / Campus Curriculum Director - Alamo	Celina Portillo	Teacher - Middle School
Lilia Forst	Teacher - Middle School	Bert Rainwater	Business Representative
Jay Garvin	Business Representative	Isaai Rojas	Parent Representative
Ruben Gonzales	Bilingual/ELAR Teacher - Alamo	Sal Salazar	Community Representative
Dr. Zana Hanson	Director of Special Education and Special Services	Danielle Saler	Special Ed. Teacher - Apache
Lizet Holguin	Teacher - Intermediate	Amanda Urias	Principal - Intermediate / Assistant Superintendent
Adrienne Horton	Assistant Superintendent	Tatiana Vidal	Teacher / Campus Curriculum Director - High School
Robert Inlow	Teacher - High School	Dr. Gabriel Zamora	Superintendent
Bridgette Kelley	Math / Special Ed. Teacher - Alamo		

District Improvement Committee 2023

Name	Position	Name	Position
Roy Alvarado	Assistant Superintendent	Jeanna Martinez	Teacher - Middle School
Melissa Calderson	Teacher - Apache	Raquel Mishnick	Special Ed. Teacher - Intermediate
Timothy Carter	Teacher / Campus Curriculum Director - Middle School	Melba Montoya	Community Representative
Julian Castillo	Principal - Intermediate	Karina Pacheco	Principal - Apache
Karen Caswell	Teacher - Intermediate	Bert Rainwater	Business Representative
Ron Cline	Assistant Superintendent	Maria Rodriguez	Teacher - Middle School
Jamie Dale	Special Ed. Teacher - High School	Isaai Rojas	Parent Representative
Lilia Forst	Teacher - Middle School	Sal Salazar	Community Representative
Jay Garvin	Business Representative	Danielle Saler	Special Ed. Teacher - Apache
Ruben Gonzales	Bilingual/ELAR Teacher - Alamo	Omar Sanchez	Principal - Butz
Cathy Havins	Interim Principal - Alamo	Christina Shaffer	Teacher - Alamo
Abbigail Hernandez	Teacher - Alamo	Sammy Soliz	Principal - Middle School
Jeremy Hickman	Athletic Director / Head Football Coach	Arlene Stratton	Teacher - Apache
Lizet Holguin	Teacher - Intermediate	Amanda Urias	Assistant Superintendent
Adrienne Horton	Assistant Superintendent	Ethny Valenzuela	Parent Representative
Robert Inlow	Teacher - High School	Tatiana Vidal	Teacher / Campus Curriculum Director - High School
Jacquelyn Jackson	Teacher - Middle School	Kenneth Wallace	Principal - High School
Gil-Ray Madrid	Assistant Superintendent	Dr. Gabriel Zamora	Superintendent

District Name: Fort Stockton ISD CDN: 186902

Term of Plan: May 22 2023 to May 22 2028
(month) (day) (year) (month) (day) (year)

Plan applies to: Entire District
 Campus (list) _____
 Other (please describe) _____

Chapter 11 – School Districts

Subchapter D. Powers and Duties of Board of Trustees of Independent School Districts

- §11.1511 (b)(5), (14) Specific Powers and Duties of Board
- §11.162 School Uniforms

Subchapter F. District-Level and Site Based Decision-Making

- §11.251 Planning and Decision-Making Process
- §11.252 District-Level Planning and Decision-Making
- §11.253 Campus Planning and Site-Based Decision-Making
- §11.255 Dropout Prevention Review

Chapter 21 – Educators

Subchapter A – General Provisions

- §21.002 Teacher Employment Contracts
- §21.003 Certification Required
- §21.0031 Failure to Obtain Certification; Contract Void

Subchapter B – Certification of Educators

- §21.051 Rules Regarding Field-Based Experience and Options for Field Experience and Internships.
- §21.053 Presentation and Recording of Certificates
- §21.057 Parental Notification

Subchapter C – Probationary Contracts

- §21.102 Probationary Contract

Subchapter H – Appraisals and Incentives

- §21.352 Local Role
- §21.353 Appraisal on Basis of Classroom Teaching Performance
- §21.354 Appraisal of Certain Administrators
- §21.3541 Appraisal and Professional Development System for Principals

Subchapter I – Duties and Benefits

- §21.401 Minimum Service Required
- §21.402 Minimum Salary Schedule for Certain Professional Staff
- §21.4021 Furloughs
- §21.4022 Required Process for Development of Furlough Program or Other Salary Reduction Proposal

- §21.403 Placement on Minimum Salary Schedule
- §21.4031 Professional Staff Service Records
- §21.4032 Reductions in Salaries of Classroom Teachers and Administrators
- §21.404 Planning and Preparation Time
- §21.405 Duty-Free Lunch
- §21.406 Denial of Compensation Based On Absence for Religious Observance Prohibited
- §21.407 Requiring or Coercing Teachers to Join Groups, Clubs, Committees, or Organizations: Political Affairs
- §21.408 Right To Join or Not To Join Professional Association
- §21.409 Leave Of Absence for Temporary Disability
- §21.415 Employment Contracts

Subchapter J – Staff Development

- §21.451 Staff Development Requirements
- §21.452 Developmental Leaves of Absence
- §21.458 Mentors

Chapter 22 – School District Employees and Volunteers

Subchapter A – Rights, Duties, and Benefits

- §22.001 Salary Deductions for Professional Dues
- §22.002 Assignment, Transfer, or Pledge of Compensation
- §22.003 Minimum Personal Leave Program
- §22.006 Discrimination Based on Jury Service Prohibited
- §22.007 Incentives for Early Retirement
- §22.011 Requiring or Coercing Employees to Make Charitable Contributions

Chapter 25 – Admission, Transfer, and Attendance

Subchapter C – Operation of Schools and School Attendance

- §25.0811 First Day of Instruction
- §25.0812 Last Day of School
- §25.083 School Day Interruptions
- §25.092 Minimum Attendance for Class Credit or Final Grade

Subchapter D – Student/Teacher Ratios; Class Size

- §25.111 Student/Teacher Ratios
- §25.112 Class Size
- §25.113 Notice of Class Size
- §25.114 Student/Teacher Ratios in Physical Education Classes; Class Size

Chapter 37 – Discipline; Law and Order

Subchapter A – Alternative Setting for Behavior Management

- §37.0012 Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator
- §37.002 Removal by Teacher

Chapter 44 –Fiscal Management

Subchapter B – Purchases; Contracts

- §44.031 Purchasing Contracts
- §44.0331 Management Fees Under Certain Cooperative Purchasing Contracts
- §44.0352 Competitive Sealed Proposals
- §44.042 Preference to Texas and United States Products
- §44.043 Right To Work
- §44.047 Purchase or Lease of Automated External Defibrillator

Subchapter Z – Miscellaneous Provisions

- §44.901 Energy Savings Performance Contracts
- §44.902 Long-Range Energy Plan to Reduce Consumption of Electric Energy
- §44.908 Expenditure of Local Funds

Chapter 45 – School District Funds

Subchapter G – School District Depositories

- §45.205 Term of Contract
- §45.206 Bid Or Request for Proposal Notices; Bid and Proposal Forms
- §45.207 Award of Contract
- §45.208 Depository Contract; Bond
- §45.209 Investment of District Funds

Other

An adopted exemption from Texas Education Code for which there is no corresponding checkbox above must be added to this section.

- 21.401 - Minimum Service Required
- 33.006 - Counselor Work Time
- 37.008 - DAEP Teacher Certification Requirement
- 37.105 - Removal of Individual from District Property/Facilities/Events

Fort Stockton ISD Renewal as a District of Innovation

House Bill 1842 (HB 1842), passed during the 84th Legislative Session, allows Texas public schools with sufficient academic ratings to obtain exemptions from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code (TEC). The allowable exemptions are for those sections of code that do not apply to charter or private schools in an attempt to reduce the extra administrative or operational burdens placed on public schools.

To obtain exemptions, the District must create a Local Innovation Plan (LIP) detailing the code requirements that inhibit the goals of the District and the benefits to the District expected from the exemption. Fort Stockton ISD seeks exemption from the following permissible provisions of the TEC as allowed in the statute:

First Day of Instruction/Last Day of Instruction (TEC § 25.0811, TEC § 25.0812)

TEC § 25.0811 states that a school district may not begin student instruction before the 4th Monday of August.

Innovation Strategy: Flexible Calendar - Fort Stockton ISD will begin instruction no earlier than August 1 in an effort to create greater flexibility in the school calendar. The flexibility to begin instruction earlier in August that results from exemption from § 25.0811 will enable the district to develop a calendar that best meets the needs of the students in Fort Stockton ISD.

TEC § 25.0812 states that a school may not schedule the last day of school before May 15.

Innovation Strategy: To meet local and community needs, exemption from § 25.0812 will allow a more balanced number of instructional days per semester and more instructional days prior to state assessments given in early May. With minute requirements at 75,600 and the state assessments given in early May, it might be possible to finish the school year prior to May 15.

Appraisal for Teachers & Administrators (TEC § 21.352, TEC § 21.354, TEC § 21.3541)

TEC §§ 21.352, 21.354, 21.3541 establishes the basic standards for teacher and administrator appraisal.

Innovation Strategy: Fort Stockton ISD believes it is essential to maintain flexibility in using a variety of measurements, including goal setting, observations, student growth progress toward learning objectives, and other formative assessments in determining the performance of its educators. By claiming exemption from §§ 21.352, 21.354, and 21.3541, the district can locally determine the most appropriate appraisal instrument to evaluate its educators. Regardless of whether any adjustments or changes are made to the state-mandated appraisal system and laws, Fort Stockton ISD believes this issue should be a local decision as opposed to a state mandate.

Teacher Certification (TEC § 21.003, TEC § 21.057)

Currently, school district teachers are only authorized to teach courses in their certified teaching areas. Exceptions to this are contingent upon TEA approving a request for probationary certification. TEC § 21.003 states a person may not be employed as an educator by a school district unless the individual holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued by the appropriate state agency. In the event a school district cannot locate a certified teacher for a position, or a teacher is teaching a subject outside her or his certification, the district must request emergency certification from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and/or the State Board of Educator Certification. This system is burdensome and does not take into account the unique financial and/or instructional needs of the district, especially for innovative classes where certification may not exist or educators with those credentials may not be readily available. In addition, TEC § 21.057 requires that a district notify parents if an inappropriately certified or uncertified teacher is assigned to the same classroom for more than 30 consecutive instructional days during the same school year.

Innovation Strategies: As a small rural district, Fort Stockton ISD teachers are often required to teach in different subject areas. In order to facilitate the transition of an ever-expanding course load and mitigate state-wide teacher shortages, Fort Stockton ISD reserves the right to locally approve teachers to teach one core subject outside of their current certified area for a period of one school year based on superintendent approval. After the first year, this arrangement may be extended on an annual basis *for an additional year* if approved by the board of trustees. A teacher certification waiver, state permit applications, or other paperwork will not be submitted to the TEA. In these situations the district will not be penalized for failure to notify parents of any certification issues.

- The campus principals may submit to the superintendent (or the superintendent's designee, such as Human Resources) a request to allow a certified teacher to teach a subject(s) out of his or her certified field. The principals must provide reasoning for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses which qualify this individual to teach this subject.
- An individual with experience in a Career, Technology, and Education (CTE) field could be eligible to teach a CTE course through a local teaching certificate. The principal will submit the request to the superintendent with all of the individual's credentials. The superintendent will then approve the request if he or she believes that the individual could be an asset to the students and the district. Local teaching certificates will require an employment agreement rather than a contract.
- An individual with a college degree or certification in a trade could be eligible to teach a course related to his or her expertise or experience through a local teaching certificate. The principal will submit the request to the superintendent with all of the individual's credentials. The superintendent will then approve the request if he or she believes that the individual could be an asset to the students and district. Local teaching certificates will require an employment agreement rather than a contract. In addition, this exemption would allow the district the flexibility to hire professionals with service trade or industry-based experience or certifications or languages (such as welding, fine arts, health science, criminal justice, law, journalism, Spanish, etc.) if certified teachers are not available.

Fort Stockton ISD is also looking to allow consideration of part-time professionals to teach courses – specifically industry or service trade related professionals the ability to teach related courses. The superintendent will determine whether it is in the best interest of the district to certify the individual. The superintendent will notify the school board.

Fort Stockton ISD is also looking to allow experienced teachers to be able to, when needed, to teach one course outside of their existing teaching field(s). These would be primarily in the area of elective courses. When this takes place in CTE courses, our DOI plan would still allow for the district to receive CTE funding for these courses.

Fort Stockton ISD is aware that the above exemption does not apply to Special Education, Bilingual, ESL, or Pre-K teachers and that they have to continue to be fully SBEC certified.

Minimum Attendance for Final Credit (90% Rule) (TEC § 25.092)

Currently, TEC § 25.092 requires students attend class 90 % of the school days in order to earn credit.

Innovation Strategy: The 90 % rule is an arbitrary percentage, which means school districts award credit based on seat time rather than based on content mastery. Abstaining from the requirement means the district will not have to penalize students who miss class due to extra/co-curricular activities, academic activities, COVID, or other extenuating circumstances. This exemption will allow the District to promote student engagement, as well as social and emotional development, by encouraging more students to participate in such activities. It will also allow Fort Stockton ISD administrators to award credit to students because they can show they understand the concepts, rather than because they have attended a certain number of school days.

The proposal would allow counselors and administrators to refocus efforts on students who are truly at risk, while simultaneously providing rigor and relevance in the curriculum. Exemption from this requirement will provide educational advantages to students of the District by promoting learning through innovation in the methods, locations, and times instruction may be delivered to students, thereby accommodating students with legitimate scheduling conflicts, reducing dropouts, and increasing the number of qualifying graduates. The district will also explore other innovative ways to demonstrate mastery, given this exemption.

Relief from TEC § 25.092 does not in any way impact or alter existing compulsory attendance requirements or University Interscholastic League ("UIL") rules. Moreover, opting out of TEC § 25.092 in no way limits or modifies a teacher's right to determine the finality of a grade in accordance with TEC § 28.0214, nor does it restrict or alter a teacher's right to assign grades in accordance with TEC § 28.0216.

Planning and Preparation Time (TEC § 21.404)

TEC § 21.404 states that each teacher is entitled to at least 450 minutes within each two-week period for instructional preparation, including parent-teacher conferences, evaluating students' work, and planning. A planning and preparation period under this section may not be less than 45 minutes within the instructional day. During a planning and preparation period, a classroom teacher may not be required to participate in any other activity.

The Commissioner of Education has determined that the instructional schedule at the school to which the teacher is assigned determines the "instructional day." This has been interpreted by some to mean the time when students are receiving instruction at the school where the teacher is located. What remains unclear is when some, but not all, of the

students are receiving instruction. For example, when Band instruction begins at 7:00 a.m., but most other students do not start receiving instruction until 8:00 a.m., is the time between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. part of the “instructional day” or not? What percentage of the student body has to be receiving instruction in order for that same time period be used for the required 45 minute planning and preparation period? We believe that the “instructional day” is best determined locally.

Innovation Strategy: Due to the nature of our school district, teachers often undertake additional duties or utilize their planning/preparation time to conduct parent conferences, ARD meetings, etc. Teachers performing additional duties may, at times, be required to conduct activities during their planning/preparation time. It is not the intent of Fort Stockton ISD to abolish planning/preparation time, instead the district reserves the right to grant the minimum 450 minutes per two week period as the district determines.

Innovation Strategy: Presently, in the Fort Stockton ISD, instruction takes place daily at five separate schools and that number may increase for the 2023-2024 school year and beyond. Each campus has its own schedule as to when instruction begins and ends. Not all campuses end instruction at the same time either and student dismissal and transportation issues also make it impractical to have varied “instructional days” at different campuses in the same district.

The campuses also share several employees between them, resulting in some instructional personnel needing to plan for instruction, parent conferences, etc. on more than one campus. This makes it impractical for the “instructional day” to differ from one campus to another within the same district.

The Fort Stockton ISD would like to have local control over our schedule and when our teachers will participate in their planning/preparation periods.

The Fort Stockton High School campus presently requires all of its employees to be at work by 7:45 a.m. Employees are not allowed to leave until 4:30 p.m. However, with athletics, band, and the numerous other student activities which take place at any Texas High School, it is difficult to have times when teachers (including those who coach) to plan together. Student academic success is, however, served best when teachers plan together. Restricting conference times to only those times when students are receiving instruction reduces the “instructional day” and restricts our ability as a district to best serve our students and teachers.

The Fort Stockton ISD is therefore requesting relief from TEC § 21.404 by being able to exercise local control and set our own district-wide definition of the “instructional day” as approved annually by the Fort Stockton ISD Board of Trustees.

Class Size in Pre-Kindergarten through 4th Grade (EEB LEGAL) (TEC §§ 25.112, 25.113, & 25.114)

Currently, TEC § 25.112 requires enrollment in Pre-Kindergarten through 4th Grade classes to be limited to 22 students. In the case of PE classes the ratio can be as much as 45:1.

If maintaining this limit creates an undue hardship, the District may request a waiver from the TEA. TEC § 25.113 requires written notice to be sent home to parents each time a waiver is granted. Many times, soon after the waiver is submitted, situations change, students are enrolled and/or withdrawn and the class in question is again below the 22:1 ratio.

Innovation Strategy: While we believe that a small class size plays a positive role for students, this must be balanced with the logistics of the timing of adding staff, and mindfulness must be given to the best teacher to student ratio that can be achieved given the total number of students. Many times it is not the number of the students, but the makeup and chemistry of the classroom that most influence the learning environment. Research shows that the teacher in the classroom has the greatest impact on student learning, as opposed to absolute class size. Under our district of innovation plan, in the event the class size exceeds the 22:1 student limit for pre-kindergarten through 4th grade classes, a TEA waiver will not be necessary. This plan emphasizes the importance of flexible environments and student learning based upon student needs. It grants flexibility in class size at all times for regrouping for success, small groups, large groups, etc. It also works to minimize paperwork requirements in order to free up time to place additional focus on student success. An exemption from the class size ratio requirements of TEC §25.112, will allow the ability to group students based upon academic, social, and emotional needs without adding ongoing filings of waivers when such changes prove necessary.

When exceeding a 22:1 student-teacher ratio in a PK-4th grade classroom, district policy will be to constantly evaluate the possible need for additional staff.

Fort Stockton ISD is also asking for a waiver to cover the size of our PE classes. Being a small school with limited facilities and personnel, we often have PE classes that combine multiple classes/grade levels. For example, our Pre-K students and our Kindergarten students often go to PE together. Multiple classes of our first graders, second graders, etc. go to PE together as well. Depending on the combination, and the coaches/teachers assigned to be with these students, we could exceed the 45:1 ratio. In our larger PE classes we often provide other school personnel to help monitor the students along with a certified teacher/coach. We are seeking a district of innovation waiver for situations where our PE classes may exceed the 45:1 ratio.

Probationary Contracts (DCA Legal) (TEC § 21.102(b))

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.

A newly hired teacher who has not been in public education can be placed on a probationary contract for as much as four years in certain situations before being placed on a term contract.

Innovation Strategy: This limited probationary time period is insufficient in some cases to fully determine the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom. Relief from TEC § 21.102 will permit the district the option to issue a probationary contract for a period of up to five years for either experienced and/or inexperienced teachers, counselors, nurses, etc., or other TEC Chapter 21 personnel newly hired in Fort Stockton ISD.

School Day Interruptions & Limits on Time for Remedial Tutorials (TEC §§ 25.083b, 25.092)

Students across Fort Stockton ISD have individual needs throughout their educational career. A portion of our responsibility is to tailor instruction to students in a manner that meets their needs to the maximum extent possible. TEC § 25.083(b) is related to guidelines for school day interruptions and limits the amount of time students can be removed from a class for remedial tutorials to ten percent (10%). Section 25.092 stipulates that a student in any grade level may not be given credit or a final grade for a class unless the student is in attendance for at least 90 percent of the days that the class is offered.

In addition, the law requires that the board of trustees of each school district adopt and strictly enforce a policy limiting interruptions of classes during the school day for nonacademic activities such as announcements, drills, etc. At a

minimum, the policy must limit announcements other than emergency announcements to once during the school day.

Innovation Strategies: The foundational purpose of education in Fort Stockton ISD is to provide challenging, meaningful instruction in each classroom. However, a contradiction in policy and practice arises from the policies referenced above. The State of Texas requires all students to pass STAAR Reading and Math assessments during their 5th and 8th grade years (Student Success Initiative) and 5 End of Course (EOC) assessments to be eligible for graduation.

Students that either fail to meet the passing standard or show a trend (based on data) towards not passing one or more of the high stakes tests are required to receive intense remediation. Therefore, in specific situations, students need the assistance of instructional specialists during the school day. Exemption from the policies referenced above will provide students the opportunity to register for classes of their choice, while at the same time receiving the necessary supplemental instruction needed for academic success. The exemption will provide Fort Stockton ISD the opportunity to ensure that our students are prepared for transition to subsequent grade levels, and, ultimately, to obtain eligibility for high school graduation.

*These actions in no way alter policies related to compulsory attendance requirements.

Class interruptions need to be kept to a minimum and instructional time is to be kept sacred; however, there are times when flexibility is both needed and justified. Fort Stockton ISD is requesting that the campus principals be allowed to utilize their own professional judgment in regulating the instructional interruptions that occur on their respective campuses each day. As the instructional leader of their campuses, the principals are in the best place to regulate and oversee this endeavor/priority.

District-Level Planning & Decision Making (TEC § 11.251, 11.252 & 11.253)

Currently, TEC § 11.252 establishes the composition of district and campus site-based decision making committees.

Innovation Strategy: Fort Stockton ISD would like flexibility in TEC § 11.252 as the committee's composition limits the degree of parent involvement in the district decision-making process. We would like flexibility in the composition of the committee for district decision-making to give opportunity for greater parental involvement. The district would also like to explore the possibility of adding student involvement into the process.

Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs/Suspensions (TEC § 37.006 & 37.008) FOCA (LEGAL); FOB (LEGAL)

TEC § 37.008 requires each school district to provide a disciplinary alternative education program that provides for the students who are assigned to that program to be separated from students who are not assigned to the program.

TEC § 37.006 states that an elementary student may not be placed in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) with any other student who is not an elementary student. However, students younger than 10 may only be placed in a DAEP if they commit an expellable offense under TEC § 37.007.

TEC § 37.008 requires DAEPs to employ only teachers who meet all certification requirements.

Innovative Strategies: While Fort Stockton ISD will make every attempt to comply with the existing education code, exemption from this requirement would allow the district to better utilize staff and facilities by allowing junior high (grades 6-8) and high school (grades 9-12) DAEP students to attend the same classroom as junior high and high school In School Suspension (ISS) students when necessary.

Exemption from this requirement (TEC § 37.006) would allow the district to make common sense decisions about which students are age appropriate to be in the same room together and allow the district to better utilize existing staff and facilities in the event of an elementary DAEP placement. This exemption would allow us to continue to use both rooms for ISS and DAEP. It also allows us flexibility regarding school/student safety procedures. For example, it allows us to separate two students from one another for a period of time (one in DAEP and the other at a campus based ISS room) in order to avoid fights and/or other conflicts. The safety of our students and faculty/staff is always our primary concern.

Exemption from this requirement (TEC § 37.008) would allow the district to better utilize staff. Although we do currently have all certified staff for DAEP assigned to our DAEP campus, we utilize teacher aides for a portion of the day with ISS. In the event that we need to combine DAEP and ISS students, that room would be staffed by non-certified staff for most of the day, but certified teachers would still provide work and work directly with the students at various times throughout the day.

Teacher Mentors (TEC § 21.458)

Currently, under TEC § 21.458, a district may only utilize teachers who have three or more years teaching experience as mentor teachers.

Innovation Strategies: TEC § 21.458 limits the number of teachers who can serve as mentors and restricts teachers with exceptional skills or experience in the subject matter from sharing their knowledge with novice teachers. Fort Stockton ISD would like to remove the restriction as to how many years a person must teach before being able to serve as a mentor teacher.

Drug-Free School/Student Drug Testing (TEC § 37.006, 37.007)

Texas Education Law (TEC § 37.006) states that a student may be placed at a DAEP or expelled (TEC § 37.007) if he/she “sells, gives, or delivers to another person or possesses or uses or is under the influence of marihuana or a controlled substance...” However, it is vague on the consequences for a student who tests positive for such drug use that is not “under the influence of,” in “possession of,” or currently “using” said drug on school grounds, at school activities, or within 300 feet of said school grounds/property.

It may be argued that students may test positive for drug use even though they were not using, in possession, or under the influence on or near school property. Students who do test positive for illegal drugs did, at some point in time, use said drugs, or, at the very least, were in close contact with said drugs. Regardless, however, the school has a vested interest in promoting the health and well-being of each and every student and has a duty to the parents of these students to both notify them of concerns and work with them to help their student/child. Schools, parents, students, and the community are all negatively affected by students using illegal drugs regardless of whether it is at or away from school.

Programs like D-Fy-It and others have proven that when schools and communities take an active role in discouraging drug use among teenagers, they can improve the lives of those students and their communities. Effective programs to keep students off drugs include an education component, a counseling component, a reward system for positive behavior, consequences for negative behaviors, positive alternative activities, and the ability to empower the student him/herself to avoid situations where drugs are available and used.

When students know they will be randomly tested for drugs and that their continued ability to participate in extracurricular activities is contingent upon testing negative, they are more likely to avoid drugs and situations where

others are consuming/providing drugs. It gives them an "out" when someone asks if they want to do drugs. They can say "I can't ... my school drug tests us and I'm not going to let down my team/teammates."

Parents want to give their child meaningful reasons to stay off drugs. They want to have their children attend school in a drug-free environment.

Texas and Federal laws do not allow a public school district to test ALL of its students for drug use. However, the courts have held that school sponsored extracurricular programs at a public school are voluntary and, thus, a public school district can randomly drug test all of its students who participate in those extracurricular activities. At Fort Stockton ISD, we have developed a plan to randomly drug test our students in grades 7-12 who participate in school sponsored extracurricular activities including football, volleyball, band, basketball, cross country, golf, tennis, track, student council, NHS, DECA, FCCLA, FFA, cheerleading, etc. At Fort Stockton High School and Fort Stockton Middle School, most students participate in at least one school sponsored extracurricular activity.

Innovation Strategy: Fort Stockton ISD wants to be able to establish its own policies and procedures with regards to a student who tests positive for an illegal drug during a drug screening under TEC § 37.006, because "the continued presence of the student in the regular classroom threatens the safety of other students ... or will be detrimental to the educational process." Students who may be using illegal drugs are clearly "detrimental to the educational process." We would like students who test positive for illicit drugs to be placed in DAEP, just as though they had been found "under the influence" or in possession of those same illegal drugs. This would be for students who receive repeated positive illegal drug test results.

Fort Stockton ISD wants to establish a student drug testing program where all students who participate in extracurricular activities in grades 7-12 will be tested for drug use. Students who test positive will be provided an opportunity to retest within five days to screen out any "false positives." Students who test positive for illegal drugs may be placed in DAEP. Students who test positive will also be suspended from all extracurricular programs and referred for drug/substance abuse counseling at their own expense. The student's parent(s) will be informed of all testing and test results for their child/children only. Every student who participates in extracurricular activities will be tested at least once a year with additional random testing taking place throughout the year.

School District Depositories Contract (TEC §§ 45.205, 45.206, & 45.208)

TEC Code: Subchapter G. School District Depositories § 45.205 TERM OF CONTRACT. a) Except as provided by Subsection (b), the depository bank, when selected, shall serve for a term of two years and until its successor is selected and has qualified.

(b) A school district and the district's depository bank may agree to extend a depository contract for two additional two-year terms. An extension under this subsection is not subject to the requirements of Section 45.206.

(c) The contract term and any extension must coincide with the school district's fiscal year.

Innovation Strategy: Fort Stockton ISD seeks an exemption of the laws regarding the terms of Depository contracts. Rationale for the Exemption:

- This exemption is to allow the district's existing bank contract to be extended beyond the total 6-year allowable contract term if the district determines contract pricing remains competitive and there is no operational or financial reason to send the district's banking services out for bid. This exemption lessens the administrative burden related to

preparing and reviewing a Request for Proposal (RFP). This will further mitigate any impact to employees that would have to change direct deposit instructions each time a new depository occurs and allows the district flexibility with respect to banking relationships.

Local Guidelines:

- The district will only send depository services out to bid if the district determines contract pricing becomes uncompetitive or there is some operational or financial reason to send the district's banking services out for bid. With this exemption in place, none of the additional requirements related to the bid or request for proposal detailed in §§ 45.206 through 45.209 would be applicable. Refer to Fort Stockton ISD Board Policy BDAE.

**Energy Efficient Light Bulbs in Instructional Facilities
(TEC §§ 44.901 & 44.903)**

TEC Code: Subchapter A- School District Fiscal Management § 44.903. ENERGY-EFFICIENT LIGHT BULBS IN INSTRUCTIONAL FACILITIES. (a) In this section, "instructional facility" has the meaning assigned by § 46.001.

(b) A school district shall purchase for use in each type of light fixture in an instructional facility the commercially available model of light bulb that:

- (1) uses the fewest watts for the necessary luminous flux or light output;
- (2) is compatible with the light fixture; and
- (3) is the most cost-effective, considering the factors described by Subdivisions (1) and (2).

Innovation Strategy: Rationale for the Exemption:

Removal of this mandate prevents unnecessary financial obligation to retrofit older bulbs and fixtures for facilities not undergoing renovation.

Voters in the Fort Stockton ISD recently approved a bond which, in part, is meant to update existing facilities and structures. As the buildings and electrical systems are updated, we are putting in modern energy efficient lighting systems. The energy savings are one of the beneficial reasons for the modernization, but safety is our first priority. The costs to update the systems all at once is prohibitive for our rural district.

**Revisions/Additions
(As of April 27, 2023)**

The following revisions/additions were made to our District of Innovation proposal and are being proposed for approval by the Fort Stockton ISD School Board on Monday, May 22, 2023.

**Removal of Individuals from District Property/Facilities/Events/Games, etc.
(TEC § 37.105)**

TEC § 37.105 requires a district to maintain a record of each verbal warning issued, including the name of the person to whom the warning was issued and the date of issuance. At the time a person is refused entry to or ejected from a school district property, the district must provide the person written information explaining how to appeal. Each school district must adopt a policy that uses the district's existing grievance process to permit a person ejected or denied entry to

address the Board of Trustees in person within 90 days of the commencement of the appeal unless the appeal is granted sooner.

TEC § 37.105 includes a process for ejecting or denying entry to a visitor who presents a substantial risk of harm or behaves in a manner inappropriate for the school setting.

The current guidelines restrict the ability of Fort Stockton ISD employees to maintain safe and secure facilities at all times.

The current guideline is also impractical when a visitor is irate or represents a substantial risk of danger, is a safety concern, and/or the immediate removal of the individual is necessary.

Innovation Strategy: Fort Stockton ISD will allow designated staff members the authority to remove parents, students, visitors, etc., whose behavior is deemed inappropriate without warning or written notice. A verbal explanation will be given to the individual during the removal process. To better ensure the safety and security of students and staff in Fort Stockton ISD, the district will not be required to maintain a record of each verbal warning of potential removal from district property/facilities, nor will Fort Stockton ISD be required to provide written information explaining the appeal process to those who have been refused entry to district property/facilities or removed from district property/facilities/games/concerts/ events. Any appeal regarding denial of entry should be processed in accordance with the district's existing grievance policies. Those policies can be accessed through the district's website, www.fsisd.net.

Teacher Benefits and the Length of a Teacher's Contract Days (DEC (Legal), DEA (Legal), TEC § 21.401)

TEC § 21.401 currently requires a teacher to work a 187-day contract. Teachers often work longer contracts depending on their assignments.

TEC § 25.081 changed the required days of instruction for students from 180 days to 75,600 minutes. The code did not address 10-month employee contract days.

Fort Stockton ISD recognizes that teachers are motivated by more than just monetary compensation because no one devotes their life to being a teacher because of the money. Fort Stockton ISD recognizes that teachers are also motivated by praise for a job well done; having a voice; effective training/staff development; encouragement; positive effective communication; recognition; appreciation; support; and time for themselves and their families, among many other factors.

Fort Stockton ISD has many highly qualified, effective, and committed teachers who perform as professionals and should be rewarded for their efforts. These teachers often work at home, after-hours, on weekends, etc., and are dedicated to our students, each other, and the profession that asks for more than just "nine to five."

Fort Stockton ISD recognizes that teachers as professional employees are not subject to overtime, (like hourly employees are), however, most teachers do work more than the normal 40 hour work week.

Innovative Strategy: Fort Stockton ISD would like the option and discretion to reward these teachers with as many as 0-6 "Flex Days" a year as recommended by their campus principal, and approved by the Assistant Superintendent over that campus and the Superintendent. Depending upon the exact details agreed to by the teacher and their school

administration, the approved teachers may have to report to work for a portion of these days, but may then be released early at the discretion of the campus principal. The teacher and campus administration may also work out alternative arrangements. A "Flex Day" would be considered one of the contract days that teachers work. "Flex Day(s)" would be set by the campus administration. Teachers would be required to document the time that they spend outside the normal school day on school matters, training, attending school events, etc.. and when a "flex day" is scheduled, could turn this documentation in to get to participate in the "flex day" on that campus. Eight hours of extra documented service would qualify the teacher for the "flex day". Such "flex days" would be limited to the number of days set by the campus leadership team and district administration.

"Flex Days" would not change the terms or length of the teacher's contract; however, it would serve as a means to recognize and reward the commitment and service of our best teachers. Not all teachers would qualify and the number of "Flex Days" available may vary from teacher to teacher. Also, the number of "Flex Days" may change from one campus to another, and from one year to the next without altering the terms of the teacher's contract or daily rate of compensation. This proposal will reward performance, improve teacher morale, enhance teacher recruitment, and improve teacher retention. This action should not cost the school district any more funds than it currently pays its teachers.

Any use of "flex days" would be based on the needs of the campus and the district each year. "Flex days" cannot take place on days that the students are required to be present or on campus/district designated staff development days.

Our rural school district seeks to better compete with the teacher compensation packages of the larger and more affluent school districts. The timing and use of these "flex days" would be at the discretion of the district.

DAEP Teacher Certification Requirement (TEC § 37.008)

TEC § 37.008 requires school districts to only employ teachers who meet all certification requirements established under Subsection B, Chapter 21.

Fort Stockton ISD has previously addressed TEC § 37.008 requirements under our previous District of Innovation (DOI) Plans, however we wish to add an additional Innovation Strategy.

Innovation Strategy: Fort Stockton ISD has a limited number of students assigned to DAEP and often classes will be provided using computer based instruction and/or a blended model. It is not always necessary to have certified teachers on site. Fort Stockton ISD is a rural district and sometimes does not have certified teachers available when DAEP is needed. The Campus administrator at Butz and the Campus administrator at the students home campus will ensure that the staff of the DAEP has the support necessary to properly supervise the students assigned to the program and will lend assistance of teachers with specific certification as needed.

Instructional services will still be provided to students in Special Education and 504 in order to serve their needs according to relevant federal and state laws.

**Counselor Work Time
(TEC § 33.006 (d-h), DP (Legal), DP (Local))**

TEC § 33.006 subsections (d) - (h) place restrictions on the duties that can be fulfilled by school counselors, require policy adoption and annual review by the school board, and limit contracting options with counselors in the district. Fort Stockton ISD wishes to maintain flexibility in its school counseling and guidance program by waiving compliance with the requirement of TEC § 33.006 (d) that the counselor spend 80 percent of total work time on duties identified by statute, as well as removing burdens imposed by subsections (e) - (h) related to policy adoption, annual review, and counselor employment contracts.

The requirements of TEC § 33.006(d) - (h) impede the district's ability to meet the ever-changing needs of its students and school operations by restricting the ability of Fort Stockton ISD counselors to fulfill other important roles throughout the district, including but not limited to, special education and 504 monitoring, scheduling, student assessment, etc. While it is still the intent and goal of Fort Stockton ISD that its certified counselors focus on the school counseling program, temporal restrictions and time logging/tracking requirements, which would be necessary to confirm strict adherence to an 80/20 duty allocation, are an ineffective use of employee time and impedes the district's ability to use its counseling staff in a variety of roles to best serve the needs of Fort Stockton ISD students and the community.

Innovation Strategy: The district will exercise local discretion in determining the additional duties fulfilled by certified counselors in the district, by taking into account each individual counselor's professional education, certifications, experience, and knowledge, as well as the needs of the students and staff on each campus.

The district will exercise local discretion in determining how counselors allocate their work time to perform all duties, including those duties that are not identified in TEC § 33.006, enabling the district to meet student needs and address local challenges as they arise.

Summary

This District of Innovation Plan will reduce restrictions and help Fort Stockton ISD to better support our students, employees, and families in more innovative ways. Nudging our district toward the locally-customized environment our students deserve will enable us to better prepare them according to their individualized needs and their unique talents and traits. Through HB 1842, Fort Stockton ISD will be able to utilize innovative approaches to making the best decisions for our children because we will be able to make them locally.

In many cases, the implementation of exemptions from the TEC will require the revision of Fort Stockton ISD policies. Fort Stockton ISD will utilize a local policy development process that includes stakeholder input. This District of Innovation Plan will be implemented upon Board approval and will be in effect for 5 years (March 28, 2022 - March 28, 2027). Where necessary, the superintendent of schools or designee will promulgate regulations, policies, and procedures to govern the areas for which local flexibility has been sought.

We are grateful to the legislators who campaigned for Districts of Innovation through HB 1842 and to Commissioner Morath and his team for furthering our ability to create innovative strategies. We are committed to the children of our community and pledge to implement this plan with their best interests at heart.

Fort Stockton ISD reserves the right to modify the District of Innovation plan as needed as the district continues to grow and evolve through time, population, and/or culture. Future District of Innovation plan exemption modifications will be

determined by the district's local committee and approved by the Fort Stockton ISD Board of Trustees.

Fort Stockton ISD's District of Innovation plan is designed to support the district philosophy through providing expanded opportunities to focus on distinct areas of identified student and faculty needs. Specific plans of implementation will be developed as appropriate by campuses and departments in collaboration with the district's existing strategic planning process. The plan will be continuously monitored and reviewed at the local level.

TERM

The term of the district's original DOI plan was from March 27, 2017, and terminated on March 27, 2022. The plan was revised and renewed and went into effect on March 28, 2022. It was scheduled to terminate five years later on March 28, 2027. That plan was revised and approved by the Fort Stockton ISD School Board on May 22, 2023. **This revised five year plan will be valid through May 22, 2028, unless amended, rescinded, or renewed by the District Improvement Committee (DIC) and the Board of Trustees.** The District Innovation Committee (DIC) will review the plan annually to confirm consistent alignment with the needs of the District. Any recommended plan changes will be posted to the District website for 30 days and require the approval of the District Improvement Committee (DIC) and the Board of Trustees.

Thursday, March 30, 2023

5 pm - 6:30 pm



	First Name Please Print	Last Name Please Print	CAMPUS	Signature
1	Kay	Griffith		[Signature]
2	Daniela	Salen	Apache	[Signature]
3	Ruben	Gonzales	Alamo	[Signature]
4	Melissa	Caldem	Apache	[Signature]
5	Jami	Dale	FSHS	[Signature]
6	Jennifer	Gonzales		[Signature]
7	Amanda	Urias	Intermediate	[Signature]
8	Tatiana	Vidal	HS	[Signature]
9	Sylvia	Bernal	Apache	[Signature]
10	Omar	Sanchez	Butz	[Signature]
11	Kenneth	Wallace	HS	[Signature]
12	Raquel	Mishnick	Intermediate	[Signature]
13	Cathy	Harris	Alamo	[Signature]
14	Ron	CLINE	ASST. Supt.	[Signature]
15	Gabriel	Zamorin	Superintendent	[Signature]
16	Karen	Caswell	Intermediate	[Signature]
17	Gilbert	Mahud	FSISD.	[Signature]
18	Timothy	Cantor	middle	[Signature]
19	Jeremy	Hickman	A.D.	[Signature]
20	Tulian Castillo	Castillo	Principal	[Signature]

Thursday, March 30, 2023

5 pm - 6:30 pm



	First Name Please Print	Last Name Please Print	CAMPUS	Signature
1	Sabrina	Cordove	FSMS	<i>[Signature]</i>
2	Robert	Inlow	HS	<i>Robert J. Inlow</i>
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District Improvement Committee Meeting
Wednesday, April 5, 2023
5 pm - 6:30 pm



	First Name Please Print	Last Name Please Print	CAMPUS	Signature
1	Ign	Clyne	ASST. SUPT.	[Signature]
2	Kay	Angguita		[Signature]
3	Jennifer	Gonzales		[Signature]
4	Christina	Shaffar	alamo	[Signature]
5	Danielle	Saler	Apache	[Signature]
6	Adrienne	Horton	Alamo	[Signature]
7	Timothy	Carter	MS	[Signature]
8	Tatiana	Vidal	HS	[Signature]
9	Roy Alvarado	Alvarado	HS/IT	[Signature]
10	Maria Rodriguez		MS	[Signature]
11	Amanda	Urias	Inter/ ^{BI/RS} ET/ETC	[Signature]
12	Jacquelyn	Jackson	MS	[Signature]
13	Melissa	Caldean	Apache	[Signature]
14	Ona	Sanchez	Betz	[Signature]
15	Jessica	Martinez	MS	[Signature]
16	Kenneth	Wallace	HS	[Signature]
17	Sammy	Soliz	HS	[Signature]
18	Julian	Castillo	Int.	[Signature]
19	Cathy	HAVINS	Alamo	[Signature]
20	Robert	Inlow	HS	[Signature]

London

Director

General

John G. ...

District Improvement Committee Meeting
Wednesday, April 5, 2023
5 pm - 6:30 pm



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Public Meeting

FSISD District Improvement Committee

5pm – 6pm

Thursday, April 27, 2023

FSISD Technology Lab

Public Meeting regarding proposed changes to FSISD District of Innovation Plan

**The Committee will also discuss the upcoming Faculty Survey by Texas Tech University regarding FSISD's
Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) proposal**



District Improvement Committee Meeting
Thursday, April 27, 2023
5 pm - 5:45 pm

	First Name Please Print	Last Name Please Print	CAMPUS	Signature
1	Tom	CLINE	ASST. SUPT.	[Signature]
2	Amanda	URIAS	Asst. Supt.	[Signature]
3	Karina	Pacheco	Principal Acad.	[Signature]
4	Robert	Inlow	HS	[Signature]
5	Roy	Alvarado	HS	[Signature]
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