



WELLMAN-UNION INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Aaron Waldrip, Superintendent -- Michael Norman, Secondary Principal -- Bridget Brown, Elementary Principal

PROPOSED LOCAL INNOVATION PLAN

The 84th Texas Legislature passed House Bill 1842, which allows public school districts to declare exemptions from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code by becoming a designated District of Innovation.

Wellman-Union ISD Site-Based and Local Innovation Committee

Aaron Waldrip, Superintendent
Michael Norman, Secondary Principal
Bridget Brown, Elementary Principal
Megan Becker, Counselor
Colton Campbell, CTE
Jennifer Hogue, Secondary Teacher

Jacob Landrum, Secondary Teacher
Robin Tells, Elementary Teacher
Rosie Garza, Community Member
Carma Spuhler, Community Member
Shane Faught, Business Representative
Shawn Horn, Secondary Teacher

Wellman-Union ISD Board of Trustees

Michael Franke, President
David Dill, Vice President
Eddie Rodriguez, Secretary
Barrett Brown

Bob Brown
James Harlan
Gabe Neill

Term and Implementation

The term for the Local Innovation Plan is expected to be for five years unless terminated or amended by the Board of Trustees in accordance with Texas law. In the event Wellman-Union ISD feels other exemptions would benefit the district, the committee will follow all procedures for amending the plan and presenting it for approval of the Board of Trustees. Adjustments to Board Policy and other district policies will be researched, reviewed, and adopted by the Board of Trustees as needed.

Timeline

Tuesday, February 14, 2017 –

1. Board of Trustees approve resolution to hold a public hearing to discuss the possibility of using HB 1842 to become a District of Innovation
2. Public Hearing to explain and discuss the possibility of becoming a District of Innovation
3. Approve a motion to pursue local District of Innovation plan
4. Approve the members of the District of Innovation Committee

Wednesday, March 1, 2017 – District of Innovation Committee Planning Meeting

Monday, March 6, 2017 – Present District of Innovation Plan to the School Board

Tuesday, March 7, 2017 –

1. Post the District of Innovation Plan to the district website
2. Notify Texas Commissioner of Education of the board's intention to vote on adoption of the proposed plan

Monday, April 10, 2017 – Board of Trustees approve the District of Innovation plan

Tuesday, April 11, 2017 – Begin updating policy changes with TASB

Monday, July 12, 2021 – Board of Trustees vote to allow district to make amendments to the plan



Resolution to Adopt a 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 Wellman-Union Independent 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 Wellman-Union Independent 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 to consider whether the District should develop a local innovation plan for the designation of the District as a district of innovation and that after the public hearing the Board of Trustees of Wellman-Union Independent School District shall appoint a committee to develop a local innovation plan or decline to pursue designation as a district of innovation.

Adopted this 14th day of February 2017, by the Board of Trustees.

Presiding Officer

Secretary



Texas Education Code Proposed Exemptions

In conjunction with the Local Innovation Committee, district leadership staff reviewed the subchapters of the Texas Education Code to determine which permissible exemptions currently inhibit the district from maximizing the educational opportunities of the Wellman-Union ISD students.

1. First Day of Instruction (TEC 25.0811) (EB LEGAL)

- A school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the 4th Monday in August.

Benefit of Exemption for WUISD:

- District Advisory Committee will have the flexibility to start school up to a week earlier (3rd Monday in August or a mid-week after the 3rd Monday in August)
- Starting one week earlier will allow better balance of semesters/grading periods and create more instructional time prior to assessments
- The flexibility to start mid-week could ease the transition for students and teachers.

Local Guidelines:

- The District Improvement Committee will receive parent and staff input, then subject to school board approval, determine the school start date.

2. Teacher Certification (TEC 21.003)

- States that a person may not be employed as a teacher by a district unless that person holds an appropriate certification or permit issued by the appropriate state agency.

Benefit of Exemption for WUISD:

- The statutory certification requirements inhibit the District's ability to hire professionals with industry experience to teach Career and Technical Education (CTE) and non-core electives.
- Local qualifications will allow the district to:
 - Allow experienced teachers to teach an elective in an area they are qualified
 - Expand CTE and dual-credit opportunities
 - Recruit teachers from certain trades and/or vocations with industry knowledge and real world experience
 - Provide flexibility in scheduling and class options for students

Local Guidelines:

- Principals will submit candidates and credentials to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will determine whether it is in the best interest of the district to certify the individual and present to the Board for final approval.
- The Superintendent will have the authority to permit a certified teacher to teach a course outside his or her certified field.
- The district may assign a person who meets local requirements to teach a career and technical education (CTE) course or non-core elective courses.
- State certification will not be required for teachers of career and technical education (CTE) courses or non-core elective courses.
- In accordance with the State Board of Education, candidates will be required to pass a criminal background check prior to receiving district certification.
- District certificates will be good for one year.
- District certificate employees will be employed on an at-will basis.



3. Length of School Day (TEC 25.081)

- Requires that all school days must be 420 minutes long each day in order to count for ADA calculations and funding purposes, and to accumulate instructional minutes towards the 75,600 minutes required annually.

Benefit of Exemption for WUISD:

- Flexibility to alter the school day schedule on selected days whenever it is locally determined as necessary or beneficial to the district without losing funding or credit for instructional time. (No intention to shorten the school day on a regular basis, but would be used for special circumstances.)

Local Guidelines:

- The approved school calendar with limited (or zero) early release days will be followed unless there is a locally justifiable reason for a change.
- If it is decided that an additional early release day is needed, the district will publicize to all stakeholders once the decision is made.
- The district will continue to meet the required 75,600 instructional minutes each school year.

4. Teacher Contract Days (TEC 21)

- Defines a teacher contract as a 10-month contract equivalent to 187 days.

Benefit of Exemption for WUISD:

- Reduce teacher contract days from 187 to fewer days with no effect on teacher salaries.
- Allow better alignment with teacher days to the 75,600 minutes required of students.
- Increase the daily rate the district pays teachers.
- Enhance teacher recruitment
- Improve teacher morale

Local Guidelines:

- The Superintendent will present a recommendation of the number of teacher contract days to the WUISD School Board for final approval.

5. Transfer of Student (TEC 25.036)

- States that any child, other than a high school graduate, who is younger than 21 years of age and eligible for enrollment of September 1 of any school year may transfer annually from the child's school district of residence to another district in this state if both the receiving district and the applicant parent or guardian jointly approve and timely agree in writing to the transfer.

Benefit of Exemption for WUISD:

- Allows the district the flexibility to revoke transfer students who, on rare occasions violate the transfer policy.
- Allows the district the flexibility to revoke transfer students, whose parents do not support the district.
- Allows the district to better utilize school resources for the benefit of the district.
- Potentially provide space for students on a waiting list to enroll in the district.

Local Guidelines:

- The district will require nonresident students to file a transfer application each school year.



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- 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. The parent's willingness to cooperate with Wellman-Union ISD teachers, coaches, and administration in a positive manner will also be a determining factor.
 - Transfer students are required to follow the attendance requirements, rules, and regulations of the district.
 - Transfer students may be revoked by the superintendent at any time during the school year if the student is assigned disciplinary consequences such as suspension (in school or out of school), placement in 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. Furthermore, the student's transfer may be revoked by the superintendent if the parents or legal guardians fail to support the District in a positive manner.