

Ganado ISD
District of Innovation Plan (HB 1842)
2017-2022

Background

House Bill (HB) 1842, passed during the 84th Legislative Session, permits Texas public school districts to become Districts of Innovation and to obtain exemption from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code. On January 23, 2017 the Ganado District Improvement Planning Committee met and decided they would like to create a plan to present to the school board that would allow the district to tailor plans based on the needs of the students, staff, and community.

Ganado ISD Mission Statement

Ganado ISD will provide educational excellence for all students to promote and cultivate college, career, and workforce readiness, while providing students with choices for a meaningful and successful life.

Every Student Counts... Every Moment Matters

Innovation Plan Based on District Needs

In planning for the 2016-2017 school year with the new minutes provision, the Ganado District Improvement Planning Committee placed professional development and parent conference dates throughout the school year. These days are referred to as “yellow days” and have added capacity in staff development and in parental involvement. In addition, increased technology to enhance the district curriculum of Ganado ISD has created additional need for staff development and training. To continue on such a positive track, the committee realizes that becoming an official district of innovation is necessary. Staff training will continue to be a priority as the district is building new facilities and addressing the needs through additional resources, accountability, and PBMAS. Furthermore, parental and community involvement continues to be a priority for the district.

District Improvement Planning Committee Members

Amy Prove, Secondary Parent
Andy Bridges, High School Principal
Angi Gorman, Elementary Aide
BJ DeBord, Junior High Teacher
Brandon Karl, Secondary Teacher
Elizabeth Teague, Secondary Teacher
Jackie Fowler, Parent/Business
Jane Riddle, Elementary Teacher
Joe Barrow, Secondary Teacher
Joey Rosalez, Junior High Principal
John Hardwick, Facilitator
Kayla Peters, Secondary Teacher
Keith Wright, Athletic Director
Malina Andel, Elementary Teacher
Manda Lesak, Secondary Teacher
Maria Hernandez, Parent
Melinda Engelmohr, Secondary Teacher
Nache Holub, Elementary Teacher
Rebecca Hughes, Elementary Teacher
Robin McCann, Secondary Counselor
Rosa Hernandez, Parent
Sharon Foltyn, Facilitator
Susan Carter, Community Member
Tiffany Keszler, Elementary Teacher
Virgil Knowlton, Elementary Principal

Areas of Innovation

1. School Start Date

(TEC 25.0811) states that a district may not begin instruction before the fourth Monday in August.

This law restricts flexibility in the design of annual calendars to fit the needs of the school district and community. The flexibility to begin instruction earlier in August will enable the district to develop a calendar that best meets the needs of the students in Ganado ISD. An earlier start date allows a better balance between semesters, more instructional days prior to mandatory testing, and opportunities for staff development prior to the beginning and during the school year.

The district will determine an appropriate start date annually that does not occur before the second Monday in August. Ganado ISD will continue to consider stakeholder input through the District Improvement Planning Committee in its determination of the first day of instruction.

Changing the first day of instruction does not alter the University Interscholastic League (UIL) restrictions for the first day of practice for athletic and fine arts programs. Ganado ISD will continue to comply with the UIL calendar for commencement of summer practices.

2. Teacher Certification (DBA Local and Legal)

(TEC 21.003, 21.053, and 21.057) states that a person may not be employed 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 Education Certification.

The current certification requirement limits the district's option to hire professionals with work related experience or degrees to teach a variety of courses as needed from the district. As a small, rural district there are occasions where the hiring pool is limited. In order to maximize opportunities for students to take courses, the district will handle decisions on certifications locally and thus will not provide special notification to parents of students in their classes that the instructor does not hold a traditional teaching certificate. Special Education and Bilingual teachers will continue to be required to hold a standard teaching certificate.

Additionally, the campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request to allow a certified teacher to teach one subject out of their certified field. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses which qualify this individual to teach this subject.

This innovation will allow Ganado ISD to broaden its learning networks for classes such as career and technology while maintaining a high quality of instruction designed to provide students with real-world, practical knowledge and experience.

The superintendent will approve or deny requests for local certification.

3. Probationary Contracts

(TEC 21.102) states that a probationary contract may not exceed one year for a person who has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment with the district.

This limited 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 Ganado ISD the option to issue a probationary contract for a period of up to two years from the last date of district employment. This will allow the district more time to evaluate a staff member's effectiveness.

Implementation

Specific implementation will be developed by the appropriate campuses and departments and must be approved by the Superintendent. Implementation plans will be presented to the District Improvement Planning Committee for feedback and recommendations.

Timeline

1. An administrative report regarding the concept of District of Innovation was given to the school board at the January meeting.
2. District Improvement Planning Committee met on January 23 to discuss the option of becoming a District of Innovation and to plan the next steps once in consensus to pursue developing a plan.
3. Draft of Board Resolution for February 16 School Board meeting.
4. Public hearing by school board in February along with board appointing committee to develop plan with (a) comprehensive educational program with innovations and (b) list of Education Code provisions to be exempt.
5. Board Resolution sent to Commissioner in March.
6. District Plan of Innovation posted on website for 30 days.
7. Received feedback to edit plan if necessary in March.
8. Plan taken to Board for possible approval at the March regular board meeting.
9. Plan approved at March 23 Board meeting.
10. Plan submitted to TEA.

Plan approved by School Board on March 23, 2017