



Terrell Independent School District

Expect More. Achieve More.

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TEA District #129906

Terrell Independent School District District of Innovation Local Innovation Plan Renewal (Proposed) 2026-2027 through 2030-2031

HB 1842, of the 84th Legislative Session,
allows Texas districts to qualify as a District of Innovation.
Districts of Innovation are able to gain local control of certain operations
that are currently under the control of the Texas Education Agency that may inhibit the goals of the district as
outlined in a locally adopted Innovation Plan.

INTRODUCTION

The 84th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2015, passed HB 1842, allowing eligible Texas school districts to be designated Districts of Innovation. In accordance with 19 TAC §102.1303, Terrell ISD is eligible to be designated a District of Innovation as the District's most recent accountability and performance rating under TEC §39.054 is a "B" therefore representing acceptable performance.

Districts of Innovation are able to gain local control and obtain exemption from certain operations of the Texas Education Code (TEC). Terrell ISD believes that this Comprehensive Local Innovation Plan will allow our local Board of Trustees and district staff to make decisions based on the unique needs of our students and community.

After following each step required to become a district of Innovation, the original Terrell ISD District of Innovation Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the Terrell ISD Board of Trustees on June 20, 2016 and the Commissioner was subsequently advised.

RENEWAL

Date	Action
November 19, 2025	DOI Committee Meeting #1
February 4, 2026	DOI Committee Meeting #2
April 1, 2026	DOI Committee Meeting #3
April 13, 2026	Revised DOI Plan posted on website
April 13, 2026	Notify the TEA Commissioner of intent to renew the DOI plan
April 29, 2026	District Educational Improvement Council (DEIC) holds public meeting to approve the DOI plan ($\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote required)
May 18, 2026	Board of Trustees vote to approve the renewal DOI plan ($\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote required)
May 19, 2026	Post the final approved plan on the District website and notify the TEA Commissioner of approval of the plan.
May 19, 2026	Provide a copy of [link to] the new DOI plan to the TEA for posting on the agency website.

TERM

In accordance with TEC §12A.006, this amended Comprehensive Local Innovation Plan shall remain in effect for a period of five years (2026-27 through 2030-31 school years) unless terminated by the commissioner pursuant to TEC §12.A.008. Following adoption by the Board of Trustees, the Terrell ISD Comprehensive Local Innovation Plan for District of Innovation designation will be reported to the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLAN COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Committee Member	Roles
Dr. Tracie Washington	Deputy Superintendent of Leading & Learning
Dr. Tiffanie Goudy	Executive Director of Strategic Initiatives
Charde Dockery	Executive Director of Schools
Alison Rison	Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Dr. Melissa Nichols	Executive Director of Human Resources
Dr. Adam Toy	Executive Director of Student Services & DEIC Member
Jammie Hayes	Executive Director of Special Services & DEIC Member
Dr. Charlotte Allen	Director of Federal Programs
Dr. Tracie Pritchett	Director of Special Programs & DEIC Member
Deborah Smith	Director of Career Technical Education
Amanda Guthrie	Director of Fine Arts
Kim David	Principal, W.H. Burnett Elementary School & DEIC Member
Earl Gilmore	Principal, Terrell High School & DEIC Member
Dr. Christopher Turner	Principal, Child and Adolescent Center & DEIC Member
Blanca Gutierrez	Teacher, DEIC Member
Gina Montoya	Parent, DEIC Member
Jesse VanGenderen	Teacher, DEIC Member
Megan Acevedo	Teacher, DEIC Member

Myra Manriquez	Paraprofessional, DEIC Member
Terell Tillis	Behavior Specialist, DEIC Member
Carolina Ortiz	Teacher, DEIC Member
Devona Ray	Teacher, DEIC Member
Dylan Lee	Teacher, DEIC Member
Kalyn Duke	Teacher, DEIC Member
Jacob Garcia	Assistant Principal, Furlough Middle School & DEIC Member
Ruth Vasquez	Student
Tnyah Hooper	Student

TERRELL ISD COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The Terrell ISD’s Comprehensive Local Innovation Plan includes a comprehensive educational program that is guided by and aligned with the Board’s Vision, Mission, and priorities for the District. The District needs the flexibility to exert local control both at the District and campus levels and the Plan will allow the District’s practices and operations to better align with the District’s priorities. Therefore, the Comprehensive Local Innovation Plan is as follows:

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Goal 1: The Terrell Independent School District will make governance decisions based on the unique needs of the district’s students and community.

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1.1 CLASS SIZE -- Submitting waivers for Kindergarten – Grade 4

(TEC 25.111) (TEC 25.112) (TEC 25.113)
(EEB LEGAL)

Manner in which statute inhibits goals of the plan

TEC §25.111 requires that districts employ a sufficient number of teachers certified to maintain an average ratio of not less than one teacher for each 20 students in average daily attendance except as provided by §25.112.

TEC §25.112 requires districts to maintain a class size of 22 students or less for Kindergarten – 4th Grade classes.

TEC §25.113 requires districts to notify parents of waivers or exemptions to class size limits.

Districts are required by state law to maintain a 22:1 student to teacher ratio for Kindergarten – 4th Grade classes. When any class exceeds this limit, the district must complete and file a waiver with the Texas Education Agency. These waivers have never been rejected by TEA. Therefore, it represents a bureaucratic step unnecessary for the education of our students. Additionally, a letter must be sent home to the parents of each student in the class informing them that a waiver has been filed. In many cases, the class has returned to a smaller student to teacher ratio before the waiver is even approved, negating the need for this correspondence.

Additionally, hiring staff mid-year is not best practice. The statute does not take into consideration the impact of students being transferred to new classrooms in the middle of the school year.

Innovation Strategies

It is the philosophy of Terrell ISD that lower class sizes have a positive impact on Kindergarten -4th grade students and the district does not seek to unilaterally create higher class sizes. We believe, however, that appropriate class sizes can be monitored and maintained at the local level without the necessity of waivers from the Texas Education Agency.

- a. Hiring decisions will be based on projected 22:1 ratios.
- b. Terrell ISD will, to the extent possible, begin each school year with enough teachers to establish a homeroom student to teacher ratio of 22:1 per Kindergarten-4 homeroom class.
- c. In the event that two or more core classrooms in any given grade level (grades Kindergarten -4) reaches 24:1 during the first grading period of the year, the District will actively seek an additional teacher.
- d. A teacher may be hired at any time during the school year if the Superintendent determines it to be in the best interest of the students to do so.
- e. A TEA waiver request and related notifications shall not be necessary when a Kindergarten-4th classroom exceeds the 22:1 ratio.

1.2 SCHOOL START DATE & LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

(TEC 25.0811)(TEC 25.0812)
(EB LEGAL)

Manner in which statute inhibits goals of the plan

TEC §25.0811 states that a school district may not begin student instruction before the 4th Monday of August. TEC §25.0812 states that a school district may not schedule the last day of school for students for a school year before May 15.

Students may not begin school before the 4th Monday of August and may not end before May 15. Districts may not receive a waiver from this restriction. For many years prior this was the rule; however, districts did have the option of applying for a waiver to start earlier. The vast majority of

districts applied for the state waiver and began the 3rd Monday, some even going as early as the 2nd Monday in August. Several years ago the legislature took away all waivers and dictated that districts may not begin until the 4th Monday in August, with no exceptions. Recent legislation prevents the last day of school prior to May 15. Terrell ISD, however, will provide a calendar that addresses student instruction and focused professional development in conjunction with the new instructional minutes rather than instructional days required. Local control of the instructional calendar affords the District the flexibility to end the school year prior to May 15, should the district deem it necessary and appropriate.

Innovation Plan:

To allow for a school calendar that fits the local needs of our community, emphasizes active learning, college & career readiness, and social and emotional needs of students, Terrell ISD will:

- a. Provide flexibility to begin instruction earlier and develop a school calendar that meets the needs of the district.
 - a) This will enable Terrell ISD to improve active learning by balancing the amount of instructional time in each semester.
 - b) This will allow teachers to better pace and deliver instruction before and after the winter break.
 - c) This will promote social and emotional learning and allow students transitioning from kindergarten to first grade, from elementary school to middle school and from middle school to high school to receive support to enable them to adjust to their new campus environments.
- b. Terrell ISD students will begin instruction no earlier than the 2nd Monday of August.
- c. The District may end the school year prior to May 15 should the district deem it necessary and appropriate.

1.3 PROBATIONARY CONTRACTS

(TEC 21.102(b))
(DCA LEGAL)

Manner in which statute inhibits goals of the plan

TEC §21.102(b) 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 period of time is not sufficient to evaluate the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom since teacher contract timelines demand that employment decisions must be made prior to the availability of end of year classroom and student data.

Innovation Plan:

For experienced teachers, counselors, librarians, or nurses new to Terrell ISD that have been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight previous years, the probationary period when becoming employed by Terrell ISD shall be for a period of two years with probationary contracts issued for each of the two years.

1.4 TEACHER CONFERENCE

(TEC 21.404)

(DL LEGAL)

Manner in which statute inhibits goals of the plan

TEC §21.404 guarantees each classroom teacher a planning period. Specifically, each classroom 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 period 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.

Based upon Commissioner of Education interpretation, all conference period assignments must take place when the students are in instructional attendance. For example, an instructional day of 7:45 a.m.-3:15 p.m. cannot have a teacher conference/planning time of 3:15 p.m.-4:00 p.m.

Terrell ISD also adopted a 4-day school calendar beginning the 2023-2024 school year. TEC §21.404 was developed based on a 5 day school calendar and conference period time was calculated as 10 days * 45 minutes per day = 450 minutes over a two week span.

Terrell ISD and its teachers place high value on teacher planning, teacher effectiveness and collaboration. In order to maintain compliance, Terrell ISD teachers must voluntarily choose to utilize their conference/planning time to engage in Professional Learning Community (PLC) activities. If any members of the PLC opts to not voluntarily participate, the collaboration of the entire group is jeopardized and causes the entire group of teachers to sacrifice after school time for PLC collaboration. This creates a hardship for teachers that otherwise prefer utilizing their conference period to work toward campus goals.

Innovation Plan:

It is the philosophy of Terrell ISD that teachers become more effective educators when they collaborate and share ideas together on a regular and consistent basis and that a teacher is the most important school-related factor impacting student achievement gains. High quality instruction in the classrooms is expected to lead to greater student achievement gains.

- a. When operating under a 4-day work calendar, planning periods will equate to 360 minutes within each two week period.
- b. To reduce the amount of extended day planning for teachers, Terrell ISD may utilize up to two planning periods per week for the purpose of group planning and collaboration (PLC).
 - a) This will help in the development of highly effective teachers, ensure continuity of

curriculum application in the classroom and allow for mentoring of new/struggling teachers. Time to collaborate within Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) is a priority to provide innovative curriculum, support instructional methods, and personalization for each student.

- b) Because teachers vary in effectiveness, collaboration and sharing of ideas among colleagues and teammates is essential to the success of the students.
- c. Teachers may be assigned a conference period that is at the beginning or end of their scheduled workday, regardless of the students' instructional day schedule.
- d. The district will continue the TEA allowable practice of being allowed to ask teachers to engage in group-planning during conference periods when a teacher has more than the statutory minimum conference time required. Administration may require participation in group planning for the excess time allowed, i.e. teacher receives 55 minutes of conference instead of 45, producing 10 minutes daily excess/ 80 minutes over the course of two weeks on a 4-day calendar.

1.7 PHYSICAL EDUCATION – Minimum Minutes Required

(TEC 25.114)

(EHAB LEGAL) (EHAA LEGAL)

Manner in which statute inhibits goals of the plan

TEC §25.114 requires the implementation of PE curriculum, to the extent practicable, utilizing student/teacher ratios that are small enough to ensure the safety of students. If the school district establishes a student/teacher ratio greater than 45 to 1 in a PE class, the district shall specifically identify the manner in which the safety of the students will be maintained.

Innovation Plan:

Terrell ISD believes the flexibility of non-structured/play exercise recess promotes physical activity by allowing play and exercise to be an enjoyable experience for students. Terrell ISD believes in providing support to enable students to develop the motor, self-management, and other skills, knowledge, attitudes, and confidence necessary to participate in physical activity throughout life.

- a. All recess minutes may be counted toward the fulfillment of physical education time calculations.
- b. Recess may be overseen by the student's classroom teacher or paraprofessional as deemed necessary by the campus principal.
- c. The District will determine the student: teacher ratio of physical education classes and will consider what is in the best interest of students when making such decisions.

1.9 INTER-DISTRICT TRANSFER STUDENTS (TEC 25.036)

(FDA LEGAL) (FDA LOCAL)

Manner in which statute inhibits goals of the plan

TEC §25.036 Currently, a district may choose to accept, as transfers, students who are not entitled to enroll in the district, and is interpreted to require a transfer to be for a period of one school year.

Terrell ISD maintains a transfer policy requiring nonresident students wishing to transfer into the district file a transfer application each school year. In approving transfer requests, the availability of space and instructional staff, availability of programs and services, the student's disciplinary history records, threat assessment, work habits, and attendance records are also evaluated. Transfer students are expected to follow the attendance requirements, rules, and regulations of the district.

Innovation Plan:

The district is seeking exemption from the one-year commitment in accepting transfer applicants by allowing the district to rescind a transfer at any time during the school year.

The superintendent is authorized to accept or reject any transfer requests, provided that such action is without regard to race, religion, color, sex, disability, national origin, or ancestral language. A resident student who becomes a nonresident during the course of a semester may, at the superintendent's discretion, be permitted to continue in attendance for the remainder of the semester. A non-resident student wishing to transfer into the District shall file an application for transfer each school year with the Superintendent or designee. In approving transfers, the Superintendent or designee shall consider available space, instructional staff, the student's disciplinary history, threat assessment, work habits, performance, attendance records, and special considerations. A transfer student shall be notified in the written transfer agreement that he/she must follow all rules and regulations of the District.

The district may rescind a transfer student **at any time during the school year** and is not required to fulfill a one-year commitment. Therefore, violation of the terms of the agreement may result in **revocation of the transfer agreement during the school year** and/or may result in a transfer request not being approved the following school year.

Additionally, the district may, at the discretion of the Board, charge tuition, within statutory limits. The Board may waive tuition for a student based on financial hardship upon written application by the student, parent or legal guardian. The District may initiate withdrawal of students whose tuition payments are delinquent. Appeals may be made in accordance with local policy.

1.11 DEPOSITORY CONTRACTS

(TEC 45.206)

(BDA LEGAL) (BDAE LOCAL)

Manner in which statute inhibits goals of the plan

A school district must have a depository bank into which the Texas Education Agency (TEA) can deposit funds for the district. The district creates a depository relationship with a bank by executing a depository contract with the bank. Currently The depository shall serve for a term of two years and until its successor is selected and has qualified. A district and its depository bank may agree to extend the contract for three additional two-year terms. The contract may be modified for each two-year extension if both parties mutually agree to the terms. The contract term and any extension must coincide with the district's fiscal year. Forcing a district to re-bid depository banks when business operations are smooth and without deficit is a misuse of resources that can be avoided.

Innovation Plan:

By gaining exemption from this requirement, Terrell ISD will be allowed to maintain satisfactory working relationships with its existing depository bank without the need to re-bid for the work at the exact timelines required by law. Provided the district determines contract pricing remains competitive, the District is pleased with the services of the depository bank and there is no operational or financial reason to change depository banks, Terrell ISD will exempt itself from requiring a re-bid of the contract.

This exemption will lessen the administrative burden related to preparing and reviewing a Request for Proposal (RFP) and will mitigate any impact to employees that would alter their direct deposit instructions. Additionally, it will afford the district flexibility with respect to established banking relationships.

1.12 COUNSELOR DUTIES

(TEC 33.005, TEC 33.006)(33.006(d))

(FFEA LEGAL) (FFEA LOCAL)

Manner in which statute inhibits goals of the plan

The 87th Legislation passed modifications relating to counselor duties require a school counselor, in part, to spend at least 80 percent of the school counselor's total work time on duties that are components of a counseling program. The code, in part reads, A school counselor shall work with the school faculty and staff, students, parents, and the community to plan, implement, and evaluate a comprehensive school counseling program that conforms to the most recent edition of the Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs developed by the Texas Counseling Association.

The school counselor shall design the program to include

- a guidance curriculum to help students develop their full educational potential, including the student's interests and career objectives;
- a responsive services component to intervene on behalf of any student whose immediate personal concerns or problems put the student's continued educational, career, personal, or social development at risk;
- an individual planning system to guide a student as the student plans, monitors, and manages

the student's own educational, career, personal, and social development; and • system support to support the efforts of teachers, staff, parents, and other members of the community in promoting the educational, career, personal, and social development of students.

The code additionally requires the Board to adopt a related policy and/or a policy delineating spending less than 80 percent on counseling components. The District must also provide documentation relating to assessment and compliance to the Commissioner of Education upon request.

To comply with this new rule and ensure the ability to provide requested documentation to the Commissioner, District counselors must track their daily time in 15 minute increments.

Innovation Plan:

Relief from this statute will allow the district, in consultation with the Director of Counseling, to utilize counselors in a manner that best meets student and district needs, without concern to §33.005 and §33.006 compliance.

Additionally, this relief will eliminate the administrative burden of requiring counselors to track their time daily. Further, this will relieve the administrative burden of responding to requests from the State regarding compliance and will relieve the financial burden to the District in providing systems for tracking, storing, sharing said tracking of time.

1.14 CAMPUS and DISTRICT PLANNING REQUIREMENTS

(TEC 11.251), (TEC 11.252), (TEC 11.253), (TEC 11.255),
(TEC 7.065(e)), (TEC 21.451(a)), (TEC 21.407(a)),
(BQ LEGAL) (BQ LOCAL)(BQA LEGAL) (BQA LOCAL)(BQB LEGAL) (BQB LOCAL)

Manner in which statute inhibits goals of the plan

District and Campus Planning Committees are required, with details about membership, duties, function and details about the contents of those plans. The state content requirements exceed 50 specific items/sub-items and are not tailored to Terrell ISD's distinct needs which vary from campus to campus. As a result, the District and Campus Improvement plans may not adequately address the needs of a particular campus or the District as a whole. These governing regulations often create barriers to efficiency and impede opportunities to focus on student education and well-being.

Innovation Plan:

The flexibility would remove the prescriptive lists of requirements for District and Campus Improvement Plans and streamline the district and campus planning committee functions and membership requirements.

Terrell ISD will remove state constraints and align our district and campus planning and goal setting process to reflect and respond to Board-adopted priorities and to supporting campus improvement efforts. The district and campuses will continue to operate committees and hold meetings, but the focus is on student outcomes and target areas determined by our local community and the Board of

Trustees. Campus Improvement Plans will reflect the comprehensive needs assessments completed by the campus staff and the system responses identified.

1.15 MINIMUM ATTENDANCE FOR CLASS CREDIT or FINAL GRADE

(TEC 25.092)

(DLB LEGAL) (DLB LOCAL)

Manner in which statute inhibits goals of the plan

TEC §25.092 - TEA requires, in part, that a student in any grade level kindergarten through grade 12 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 the class is offered. A student who is in attendance for at least 75 percent but less than 90 percent of the days a class is offered may be given credit or a final grade for the class if the student completes a plan approved by the school's principal that provides for the student to meet the instructional requirements of the class. A student under the jurisdiction of a court in a criminal or juvenile justice proceeding may not receive credit or a final grade under this subsection without the consent of the judge presiding over the student's case.

The Board of Trustees of each school district shall appoint one or more attendance committees to hear petitions for class credit or a final grade by students who are in attendance fewer than the number of days required under Subsection (a) and have not earned class credit or a final grade under Subsection (a-1). Classroom teachers shall comprise a majority of the membership of the committee. A committee may give class credit or a final grade to a student because of extenuating circumstances.

Each Board of Trustees shall establish guidelines to determine what constitutes extenuating circumstances and shall adopt policies establishing alternative ways for students to make up work or regain credit or a final grade lost because of absences. The alternative ways must include at least one option that does not require a student to pay a fee authorized under Section 11.158 (Authority to Charge Fees)(a)(15).

This inhibits the goals of Terrell ISD by not allowing the District to issue class credit or a final grade for a class if a student is not in attendance an arbitrary percentage of the time that a class is offered. In other words, the law currently requires the District to award class credit to students based on "seat time" rather than based on content mastery.

Innovation Plan:

Exemption TEC 25.092 from this requirement will provide educational advantages to students of the District by promoting active 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.

One of the overarching goals in the **District's Strategic Plan** within the focus area of providing engaging and challenging learning is to implement tools, resources, and training that support high quality learning for both students and teachers. **Virtual learning is one example where exemption from Section 25.092 will likely foster greater innovation to promote active learning and improve student outcomes.**

In addition, exemption from this requirement will allow the District not to penalize students who miss class due to legitimate school activities and will promote student engagement, as well as social and emotional development, by encouraging more students to participate in such activities.

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

1.16 Library Advisory Council *New

EFB (Legal), EFB (Local)

Manner in which statute inhibits goals of the plan:

Current law requires the school district to establish a School Library Advisory Council at any campus where either 10% of parents or 50 parents (whichever is fewer) submit a written request for such a council. The council must include at least five members, with a majority being parents of currently enrolled students who are not employed by the district. The council is tasked with reviewing library materials, providing input on the selection and removal of resources, making recommendations to ensure materials are age-appropriate and aligned with community values, reviewing all books and other material objected to by any District parent, and advising on such objections. The law also requires districts to notify parents of their right to request council formation and to maintain transparency through open meetings, public records, and timely reporting of council activities and decisions.

Innovation Plan:

Terrell ISD requests to be exempted from Texas Education Code §33.025, which mandates the creation of a School Library Advisory Council upon petition by 10% of parents or 50 parents. While the newly required councils are not required to be formed until such a petition is received, once the petition is received, the Board will be statutorily required to create these councils. Should that occur, the council(s) will not be optional for the District. Accordingly, Terrell ISD seeks to be exempt from Texas Education Code §33.025, which mandates the creation of a School Library Advisory Council upon petition by 10% of parents or 50 parents. Terrell ISD already has strong procedures in place for selecting, reviewing, and reconsidering library materials led by certified educators and aligned with state-mandated requirements and guidance from the Texas Education Agency. Creating such advisory councils risks undermining the professional judgment of educators and librarians, introduces the judgment of non-certified individuals, introduces potential for politicization of instructional resources, and could very easily lead to inconsistency across campuses. Furthermore, the statute presents an administrative burden, requiring staff time and resources that would be better directed toward student learning and support. Terrell ISD's existing processes already allow for meaningful parental review and involvement, including access to their child's library checkout records, the ability to restrict selections from the library for their child, formal challenge procedures, and transparency in material selection. In addition, concerned individuals may also speak with teachers, administration, and/or the school board through District complaint processes and/or during the open forum of any regularly scheduled board meeting. The District remains committed to ensuring age-appropriate and educationally sound

resources while maintaining an efficient and effective oversight structure that includes educator expertise and parent input, without the disruption and/or duplication caused by the statutory requirements in §33.025.

1.17 Acquisition of Library Materials *New

TEC §33.026

Manner in which statute inhibits goals of the plan:

Current law outlines specific procedures school districts must follow before acquiring library materials. The law requires that materials be reviewed and approved in advance by a certified school librarian and be verified for compliance with age-appropriateness, educational suitability, and community standards. Additionally, it mandates a multi-step vetting process, documentation of acquisition decisions, and the public posting of selected materials before they are made available to students.

Innovation Plan:

Terrell ISD requests to be exempt from this statutory provision because the District already has robust procedures, implemented by certified educators in place that govern the acquisition of library materials in a manner that ensures transparency, appropriateness, and educational value. These policies and procedures are fully compliant with the standards required by Texas law and guidance from the Texas Education Agency. The statutory process under §33.026 introduces redundant and restrictive requirements that may delay access to timely instructional and enrichment resources. It also places bureaucratic barriers in front of trained professionals who are certified to select age-appropriate, curriculum-aligned materials that are consistent with standards set by Texas law. Additionally, the public pre-approval requirement undermines the expertise of certified school educators and creates delays and roadblocks in getting library materials to students who benefit from them. Furthermore, the mandated documentation process creates an administrative burden that consumes time and resources better allocated to instructional support. While Terrell ISD fully supports transparency and parental engagement in the school library process, the rigid requirements of TEC §33.026 are unnecessary and duplicative of local safeguards already in place. Terrell ISD's **existing processes already allow for meaningful parental review, involvement, and input, including access to their child's library checkout records, the ability to restrict which materials their child checks out from the school library, formal challenge procedures, and transparency in material selection.** In addition, concerned individuals may also speak with teachers, administration, and/or the school board through District complaint processes and/or during the open forum of any regularly scheduled board meeting. This exemption allows Terrell ISD to preserve instructional flexibility, uphold librarian professionalism, and provide students with timely access to enriching and appropriate materials without compromising accountability or community trust.

1.18 Parent-Teacher Conferences

TEC 28.022(a)

Manner in which statute inhibits goals of the plan:

Under this new law, public schools are now required to provide parents with at least two in-person conference opportunities each school year. This provision establishes a direct and explicit requirement one not present in previous statutes ensuring families have meaningful, face-to-face opportunities to engage with educators and actively support their child's academic progress. Public schools are now required to provide parents with at least two in-person conference opportunities each school year. This provision establishes a direct and explicit requirement one not present in previous statutes ensuring families have meaningful, face-to-face opportunities to engage with educators and actively support their child's academic progress.

Innovation Plan:

At Terrell ISD, we prioritize and value strong partnerships with parents, recognizing the vital role families play in student success. While the current statutory requirement mandates two parent-teacher conferences each year, this approach can be restrictive and may not represent the best option for families, particularly given the recent history of low parent-teacher conference attendance locally. Under our current Board Policy and procedures, in addition to our annual parent-teacher conference, we host Meet the Teacher, Title 1 Parent Night, Open House, and other campus/program specific scheduled events, while also providing a variety of innovative ways to keep families informed of their child's academic progress. Beyond this, parents are always encouraged and welcome to request additional conferences as needed, and our staff will gladly accommodate as many meetings as necessary to support family schedules and ensure open, ongoing communication.

1.19 Handling Grievances & Complaints *New

TEC Chapter 26A

Manner in which statute inhibits goals of the plan:

According to Texas Education Codes 26.011, 26A.001, 26A.002, 26A.003, the Texas Education Code requires the Board of trustees of each school district to adopt a grievance procedure that complies with Chapter 26A under which the board shall address each grievance that the board receives concerning a violation of a right guaranteed by this chapter, of a board of trustees policy, or of a provision of this title.

Innovation Plan:

Terrell ISD has and will continue to adhere to an established grievance policy with procedures and timelines as outlined in its local Board's policies DGBA, FNG and GF. Such policies ensure thorough documentation of each step in the grievance process and provide adequate time for complaints to be filed, and for complaints to be heard. All records related to grievances, including submitted forms, communications, investigations, findings, resolutions, and any corrective actions are systematically maintained at the district level to ensure transparency, accountability, and compliance with legal and policy standards. The District is committed to monitoring the legality and appropriateness of every

decision and action taken. The District is further committed to hearing, reviewing, and attempting to resolve all complaints, as well as to taking corrective action, where appropriate. Terrell ISD's long-standing grievance policies will ensure that all such complaints are carefully reviewed and that district responses are in alignment with state and federal regulations, as well as all other local board policies. Terrell ISD follows long established and functional grievance procedures as outlined in district policy, specifically in relation to the timelines for filing an appeal prior to Texas Education Code §26.002 and for hearing such complaints. The district believes that a requirement for complaints to be submitted within 15 district business days from the date the grievance either knows, or with reasonable diligence, should have known, if the decision or action that is the subject of the grievance ensures prompt attention and a resolution of concerns. In cases where the grievant does not receive the requested relief at the prior grievance level, or if the response deadline has passed without a reply, the parent may proceed by requesting a conference with the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee to appeal the previous decision. This appeal must be submitted in writing, using the district-provided form, within ten (10) district business days of receiving the written response from Level One or Level Two. If no written response is provided, the appeal must be submitted within ten (10) days following the deadline for the response at the applicable level. The District's current grievance policies also provide for a Level Three grievance to the board of trustees, except for grievances related to extracurricular activities. Accuracy of information and access to individuals that are needed to provide necessary information surrounding an issue could be compromised after 60 to 90 days. It is imperative that grievances and complaints are filed in a timely manner to ensure the best prompt response. The District wishes to resolve all grievances as quickly as possible for all parties involved. The District therefore requests relief from the timelines, processes and procedures imposed by 26.011, 26A.001, 26A.002, 26A.003 and will maintain its current grievance forms, processes and procedures for all grievants including parents and students, employees and the public at large.

1.20 Instructional Material - Syllabi

TEC 26.006, 26.0062

Manner in which statute inhibits goals of the plan:

According to current law a teacher's syllabus or more broadly, their instructional plan and material is subject to greater parental scrutiny and district-level policy. Parents are entitled to review all materials used in a class, including textbooks, supplementary materials, and online content. Districts must also ensure that parents can access instructional materials on the District's website or homepage at the beginning of the semester..

Innovation Plan:

Terrell ISD is recommending an exemption from TEC 26.006 and 26.0062 in order to provide flexibility while continuing to uphold our strong commitment to transparency and parental engagement. We believe parents are essential partners in the education of their children, and we are committed to ensuring they have meaningful access to the instructional materials used in our classrooms. To that end, Terrell ISD will be posting on our district website the syllabi for all K–12 core and state-tested content areas, as well as Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses and Trinity Valley Community

College (TVCC) dual credit courses. This provides families with a clear and accessible overview of what their children will be learning throughout the school year.

At the same time, we recognize that the statutory requirement, as written, does not fully align with the diverse instructional needs of our district and can create unnecessary burdens without improving transparency for families. The district continues to build the infrastructure and support necessary to expand access to additional courses not yet available online. Importantly, if parents have concerns about instructional materials, Terrell ISD has a review process in place to address questions and provide clarification. In cases where appropriate, we also offer alternative assignments to ensure that families feel supported and respected. This approach allows us to meet the intent of the law—ensuring openness and collaboration with families—while doing so in a way that is sustainable, student-centered, and responsive to parent needs.

1.21 Calculations of GPA

TEC 28.0252

Manner in which statute inhibits goals of the plan:

During the 89th Legislative Session, the Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 1191 (2025), which requires the Commissioner of Education to develop a **standardized method for calculating high school grade point averages (GPAs)**. Under this law, all public schools in Texas must give **equal additional weight to Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), OnRamps dual enrollment, and other dual credit courses**. The intent of the bill is to create a **fair and consistent statewide system** for recognizing advanced coursework, ultimately promoting greater equity in **college admissions and scholarship opportunities** for students across districts. School districts are required to use the standard method developed by the Commissioner.

Innovation Plan:

While the anticipated amendments to Section 28.0252 of the Texas Education Code is commendable, it also presents **immediate challenges for districts**. Therefore, the District requests relief from the requirement to use the standard method developed by the Commissioner. **Terrell ISD will continue to follow its current GPA calculation methods under existing district policies and procedures**. Once state requirements are finalized, the District will carefully review the guidance, determine any necessary changes, and make further assessment on whether to implement the Commissioner’s standards or continue with its then existing district policies and procedures.

Just as importantly, Terrell ISD is committed to developing a **strong and timely communication plan** so that students and families are fully informed of any adjustments to GPA calculation. Our goal is to maintain **clarity, fairness, and transparency** throughout this transition to ensure students are not disadvantaged during the process.



Goal 2: The Terrell Independent School District will make teacher certification decisions based on district qualifications that meet the unique needs of the district's students and community.

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2.1 TEACHER CERTIFICATION: General Education

(TEC 21.003)

(DK LEGAL) (DK LOCAL) (DK EXHIBIT) (DBA LEGAL) (DBA LOCAL)

Manner in which statute inhibits goals of the plan

TEC §21.003(a) 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. This system is burdensome and does not take into account the unique financial and/or instructional needs of the district.

Innovation Plan:

Terrell ISD will continue its quest for highly effective educators.

- a. In order to best serve Terrell ISD students, all decisions on teacher certification and assignments will be handled locally.
- b. The campus principal may submit to the Superintendent or designee a request to allow a certified teacher to teach one certified area in a related field for which he/she is not certified.
 - a) The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses that would qualify this individual to teach the subject/field of study.
 - b) Emergency or financial situations creating the need for this assignment should also be noted.
- c. When possible, lesson plans for the uncertified teacher will be created in partnership with certified teachers in the same field
- d. Terrell ISD will allow District Teaching Permits (local certification) based on skills and experiences outside the traditional teacher certification pathway.
 - a) An individual with certain qualifications who is not certified as a teacher can be eligible to teach in hard to fill positions including, but not limited to, TEA approved shortage areas such as mathematics, science, Languages Other than English (LOTE), Career & Technical Education (CTE), dual credit instructors, STEM/STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Mathematics), etc.
 - b) A person seeking District Teaching Permit (local certification) should have the abilities and related knowledge/experience to fulfill the requirements of the position.
 - c) The principal may submit to the superintendent and/or the superintendent's designee, a request for District Teaching Permit (local certification) outlining all the individual's

credentials/qualifications.

- d) Qualifications that may be considered include but are not limited to:
 - i. Professional work experience
 - ii. Formal training and education
 - iii. Active professional relevant industry certification or registration
 - iv. Combination of work experience, training, and education
 - v. Demonstration of successful experience working with students.
- e) The superintendent or his/her designee will then approve the request if they believe the individual possesses the knowledge, skills and experience required of the position and feel the individual could be an asset to students.
- f) An employee working under a District Teaching Permit (local certification) will not receive a contract but will work on an at-will basis and have a separate pay scale from state certified teachers, excluding Career & Technical Education (CTE) as they will receive a contract and be paid according to the teacher pay scale.
- g) Determinations shall be made on a case-by-case basis.
- e. A teacher certification waiver, state permit applications, notifications, or other paperwork will not be submitted to the Texas Education Agency or other district stakeholders.
- f. An employee working under a District Teaching Permit (local certification) will adhere to the same professional standards, ethics, and requirements of all certified teachers.
- g. An employee working under a District Teaching Permit (local certification) will be appraised under the same teacher appraisal system as required of all certified teachers.

The flexibility in allowing Terrell ISD to make local decisions about teacher certification will provide a better opportunity to secure high quality staff for hard to fill, difficult to secure teaching fields. Flexibility in hiring professionals in certain trades and vocations to teach the crafts of those trades and vocations (such as welding, HVAC, auto mechanics, fine arts, etc.) in career and technical/STEAM courses. In each of these areas, the District may find applicants with strong real-world experience in those fields, who meet our rigorous standards of professional strengths and aptitude, but who do not come from the traditional education fields.

This flexibility is especially important during the recent teacher shortages that the state and nation has been experiencing. Terrell ISD prides itself on having an effective application process that includes multiple interviews and extensive background checks that must come back with stellar reviews. The candidates that we screen, who may not be certified in a particular area, would still be high-quality teachers. Additionally, this could provide the District flexibility to hire credentialed community college instructors or university professors in specific content areas and afford more students the opportunity to take dual credit courses.

HB 2 passed in the 2025 legislative session requires this provision to be eliminated for Foundational Courses by September 2030. Confirmation of Terrell ISD plan approval by the Commissioner on March 5, 2026.