District of Innovation Plan 2017-2022

- Adopted 6-19-17 in effect until 6/19/21
- Amended 7/18/2019

A District of Innovation is a concept passed by the 84th Legislative Session in House Bill 1842 that allows school districts greater local control and flexibility regarding certain state-level regulations in an effort to utilize the designation to better serve students.

The proposed plan, once adopted, will remain in effect for the next five years (2017-2022). The plan may be amended at any time by the District of Innovation Committee with the approval of the school board.

District Innovation Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>School Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charles Mims</td>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>Julie Perrett</td>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brent Batch</td>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>Robert Dagley</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jaylynn Cauthen</td>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>Roy Holland</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eva Perrin</td>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>Lisa Petty</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teri Gilbert</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>Sally Chapman</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassie Lloyd</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>Jeanne Cobb</td>
<td>Community Member</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracie Rogers</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>Chelsea Lewis</td>
<td>Parent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy Patterson</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily Crisp</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandi Miller</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deb Davis</td>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Statutes include:

School Start Date
(EB LEGAL) (Ed. Code 25.0811)

FIRST DAY OF INSTRUCTION. (a) Except as provided by this section, a school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.

Rio Vista ISD would like to have the freedom to develop a calendar that better fits the needs of the community should the committee choose to. Having greater flexibility in this area would allow the District Committee to better balance the first and second semesters and provide more instructional days prior to state testing.

Approved: 2017

Amendments added on July 18, 2019

Minimum Service Required
(DCB Legal) (Ed. Code 21.401)

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

Proposed

Rio Vista ISD would like to have the freedom to consider the reduction in contract days to better align with the 75,600 minutes required of students.

Certification Required

CERTIFICATION REQUIRED. (a) A person may not be employed as a teacher by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued as provided by Subchapter B.

Proposed

Rio Vista ISD would like to make decisions regarding certifications locally and based on the needs of the campus and students. In the event, the district cannot locate a certified teacher for a position or a teacher is teaching a subject outside of their certification, RVISD would like to be afforded the flexibility to consider entering into at-will employment agreements with noncertified individuals. (For example, individuals who have field experience in a CTE field or a vocational skill that would provide more options for students and flexibility in scheduling. and/or who personnel who have a degree and
are still completing requirements for certification). The committee approved providing parental notification upon parent/legal guardian written request.

**Probationary Contract**  
(DCA Legal) (Ed. Code Subchapter C. 21.102.)

PROBATIONARY CONTRACT. (a) Except as provided by Section 21.202(b), a person who is employed as a teacher by a school district for the first time, or who has not been employed by the district for two consecutive school years subsequent to August 28, 1967, shall be employed under a probationary contract. A person who previously was employed as a teacher by a district and, after at least a two-year lapse in district employment returns to district employment, may be employed under a probationary contract.

(a-1) A person who voluntarily accepts an assignment in a new professional capacity that requires a different class of certificate under Subchapter B than the class of certificate held by the person in the professional capacity in which the person was previously employed may be employed under a probationary contract. This subsection does not apply to a person who is returned by a school district to a professional capacity in which the person was employed by the district before the district employed the person in the new professional capacity as described by this subsection. A person described by this subsection who is returned to a previous professional capacity is entitled to be employed in the original professional capacity under the same contractual status as the status held by the person during the previous employment by the district in that capacity.

(b) A probationary contract may not be for a term exceeding one school year. The probationary contract may be renewed for two additional one-year periods, for a maximum permissible probationary contract period of three school years, except that the probationary period 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 by the district.

(c) An employment contract may not extend the probationary contract period beyond the end of the third consecutive school year of the teacher’s employment by the school district unless, during the third year of a teacher’s probationary contract, the board of trustees determines that it is doubtful whether the teacher should be given a continuing contract or a term contract. If the board makes that determination, the district may make a probationary contract with the teacher for a term ending with the fourth consecutive school year of the teacher’s employment with the district, at which time the district shall:

(1) terminate the employment of the teacher; or

(2) employ the teacher under a continuing contract or a term contract as provided by Subchapter D or E, according to district policy.
**Proposed**

The exemption is requested to address experienced teachers that have taught at least 5 out of the 8 years in public education. In addition to a one-year probationary contract, the district may recommend a probationary contract for a period for up to two years for experienced teachers, counselors, librarians, nurses and other certified employees who are experienced but newly hired in RVISD. Having this extra time will give the district the time to invest in these more experienced teachers in order to provide targeted mentoring, professional development, and remedial assistance with performance issues, if present, that might be corrected if given the time. A one-year probationary period is not enough time for a newly hired individual to be completely evaluated by the campus principal by mid-term of their first year. The ability to extend the probationary period on the contract, if needed, would afford the campus principal the necessary time needed to determine the professional’s capacity and effectiveness beyond the first year to determine if the individual is a good fit for the district’s students.

**Student Transfers**

Texas Education Code - EDUC § 25.036. Transfer of Student

Any child, other than a high school graduate, who is younger than 21 years of age and eligible for enrollment on 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 or person having lawful control of the child jointly approve and timely agree in writing to the transfer.

**Proposed**

Rio Vista ISD would like the authority to evaluate transfer students throughout the year. Additionally if said students fails to maintain standards required of all transfer students to enrolled in Rio Vista ISD. The administrator will have the authority to terminate the transfer immediately.

**Appraisals and Incentives**

(DNA Legal & Local) (Ed. Code 21.352)

LOCAL ROLE. (c) Except as otherwise provided by this subsection, appraisal must be done at least once during each school year.

**Proposed**

Considering the comprehensive nature of the newly adopted Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS), Rio Vista ISD would like to have the freedom to develop a local plan and schedule regarding teacher evaluations.
District of Innovation Timeline

- February 27, 2017 School Board Meeting
  RVISD Board of Trustees voted to adopt a Resolution to explore the designation of a District of Innovation

- March 27, 2017 District Improvement Committee Meeting
  Districts of Innovation was an agenda item and discussed with the committee. The committee agreed that this is definitely an idea worth exploring.

- April 4, 2017 RVISD Districts of Innovation Steering Committee Meeting
  Steering committee met and discussed probable statutes and process involved in developing a calendar.

- April 27, 2017 Public Hearing
  RVISD Districts of Innovation plan discussed and available for public comment

- August 28, 2016 RVISD District of Innovation Plan posted on RVISD Website for 30 day period

- June 19, 2017 RVISD School Board Meeting
  Board of Trustees adopted the proposed District of Innovation plan

- June 20, 2017
  RVISD District of Innovation plan filed with the Commissioner of Education

- March 23, 2017 Districts of Innovation Committee Meeting

- July 16, 2019 The appointed Committee met and proposed amending the current plan.

- July 18, 2019 The Board of Trustees voted to amend the current plan.

- July 23, 2019 The commissioner was notified that the plan was amended.