



Judson Independent School District

**Board Approved
Local Innovation Plan Renewal
2023-2028**



VISION

Judson ISD is Producing Excellence!

MISSION

All Judson ISD students will receive a quality education enabling them to become successful in a global society.

INTRODUCTION

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 November 16, 2017, the Judson Independent School District's Board of Trustees ("Board") passed a Resolution to explore the development of the first District of Innovation Plan to increase local control over District operations and to support innovation and local initiatives. Renewing this Plan will ensure the District maintains flexibility in order to improve educational outcomes for the benefit of students and the community. The District Site Based Committee, comprised of diverse leaders representing a cross-section of the District's stakeholders, including teachers, principals, parents, community members, and administrators, met to initiate conversations regarding the renewal of the DoI Plan. The Committee met on January 25 and February 13, 2023, to discuss and draft the Local Innovation Plan Renewal. The Board approved the plan on Thursday, March 23, 2028.

TERM

The term of the Plan is for five years, beginning March 23, 2023 and ending March 23, 2028, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. If, within the term of this Plan, other areas of operations are to be considered for flexibility as part of HB 1842, the District and Board may consider and propose additional exemptions in the form of an amendment to the Plan. Any amendment adopted by the Board will not extend the term of this Plan. The District may not implement two separate plans at any one time.

DISTRICT OF INNOVATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

| | |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| Dr. Milton Fields | Superintendent |
| Cecilia Davis | Deputy Superintendent |
| Debra Katz | Secondary Teacher |
| Andrea Mata | Community Member |
| Krystal Kuykendall | Elementary Teacher |
| Jennifer Veillon | Elementary Teacher |
| Jessica Talley | Assistant Principal |
| Carol Harris | Elementary Teacher |
| Marilyn McKinney | Elementary Teacher |
| Sarah Nielsen | Elementary Teacher |
| Heidi Faseler | Elementary Teacher |
| Lisa Hawkins | Parent |
| Tomeka Felder | Elementary Teacher |
| Brittany Kolodgie | Parent |
| Nathan Obregon | Business |
| Charles Rivas | Community Member |
| Benjamin Carr | Parent |
| Amiee Watson | Academic Trainer Elementary |
| Naomi Woods | Business Member |
| Richard Weakland | Parent |
| Meghan Puckett | Elementary Teacher |
| Sandra Hernandez | Parent |
| Cynthia Shaw | Campus Secretary |
| Renee Edmondson | Community Member |
| Ashley Earnest | Elementary Teacher |
| Jajetta Barido | Transportation |
| Dr. Charlinda Nance | Business Nominee |
| Carmina Fusco | Parent |
| Sonny Merrell | Community Member |
| Kathy Coulehan | Elementary Teacher |
| Cindy Elizondo | Elementary Teacher |
| Teresa Pena | Non-classroom Professional |
| Toni Jeffers Jones | Assistant Principal |
| Devon Lahrman | Special Programs teacher |
| Jaime Sales | Coordinator for Elementary Science |
| Gina Tabbert | Secondary Teacher |
| | |

Timeline of Events

| District-Site Based Committee meets to consider and approve proposed District of Innovation Plan renewal | January 25, 2023 |
|--|--------------------|
| Plan is posted for public view and notification to the commissioner of education of the board's intention to vote on adoption of the proposed Plan | February 2, 2023 |
| District-Site Based Committee meets to consider the final version of the proposed Plan and approves the Plan by a majority vote of the committee members | February 13, 2023 |
| Approved DSBC DOI Plan Renewal from February 13, 2023, is posted online | February 15, 2023 |
| Board of Trustees adopts the proposed local District of Innovation Plan | March 23, 2023 |
| District notifies the commissioner of approval of the Plan | March 24, 2023 |
| District posts a copy of the local District of Innovation Plan on website | March 24, 2023 |
| Board of Trustees adopts amendment to TEC 37.006 | September 21, 2023 |

AREAS OF INNOVATION

With regard to each area of innovation, the District declares exemption from the listed statutory provisions, as well as any rules or regulations promulgated pursuant to those statutory provisions by any state agency or entity, including but not limited to, the Commissioner of Education, Texas Education Agency, State Board for Educator Certification, and State Board of Education.

1. **School Start Date**

Sec. 25.0811. FIRST DAY OF INSTRUCTION. *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.*

Exemption from: TEC §25.0811

Related Board Policies; EB (Legal)

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the Plan

The statute allows no flexibility in the design of annual calendars to fit the needs of all Judson ISD stakeholders and the wishes of the local Board of Trustees who represent community interests in this matter. Historically, districts had the option of applying to TEA for a waiver to start earlier, even as early as the 2nd Monday of August. Several years ago, the legislature took away all waivers and dictated that districts may not begin until the 4th Monday of August, with no exceptions.

Innovation Strategies

- a. Increased local control of the instructional calendar allow the District to be responsive to community needs.
- b. Relief from the statute will allow the JISD to develop a calendar that addresses student instruction and focused professional development in conjunction with the new instructional minutes requirement rather than days. (75,600 minutes per year).
- c. Alignment of the district calendar with local universities, local districts with shared service arrangements, etc., will be possible.
- d. Completion of first semester at Christmas Break is more beneficial for instructional pacing.
- e. Provides additional days of instruction and planning for local, state, and national assessments.
- f. Flexibility by considering the start date to begin no earlier than the second week of August.

2. Certifications

TEC Sec. 21.003. CERTIFICATION REQUIRED. *A person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern or teacher trainee, librarian, educational aide, administrator, educational diagnostician, or school counselor by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued as provided by the appropriate state agency.*

TEC Sec. 21.053. PRESENTATION AND RECORDING OF CERTIFICATES. *A person who desires to teach in a public school shall present the person's certificate for filing with the employing district before the person's contract with the board of trustees of the district is binding.*

Exemption from: TEC §21.003 and TEC §21.053

Related Board Policies: DK (LEGAL), DBA (Local) DK (Local), and DK Exhibit

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the Plan

The current process does not allow the District flexibility for administrators or local Board of Trustees to hire knowledgeable, experienced, and qualified individuals who would normally be able to fill hard to fill vacancies.

Innovation Strategies

- a. The District will maintain its current expectations for employee certification. The District will make every attempt to hire individuals with appropriate certification for the position in question; however, where that is not reasonably possible, the District will have the flexibility to hire individuals who are knowledgeable in the area and equipped to effectively perform the duties of the position in question.
- b. Whenever possible, instructional planning for the uncertified teacher's course will be created in partnership with certified teachers in the same field. Uncertified teachers will be provided teacher mentoring, and may be subject to increased observations and feedback, professional development or instructional resources, or other supports.
- c. Flexibility to establish hiring requirements affords the District the opportunity to be responsive to campus needs for teachers and librarians.
- d. Relief from the statute allows JISD to fill vacancies in specific settings, including advanced academic and CTE settings, librarians, and hard-to-fill core content areas.
- e. Exemption from the statute grants educators who wish to teach outside of their certification area the opportunity to succeed in other contents.
- f. Teacher certification waiver requests, state permit applications, or other paperwork will not be submitted to the Texas Education Agency. The District will ensure that all individuals assigned to teach have the knowledge and resources necessary to be successful.

3. **Admission, Transfer and Attendance**

TEC Sec. 25.036. TRANSFER OF STUDENT. (a) 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. (b) A transfer agreement under this section shall be filed and preserved as a receiving district record for audit purposes of the agency.

Exemption from: TEC 25.036

Related Board Policies: FDA: Admissions: Interdistrict Transfers and FDB: Admissions: Intradistrict Transfers and Classroom Assignments

Manner in which the statute inhibits the goals of the Plan

For students who use our school of choice and out of district process, Judson ISD seeks to ensure that students adhere to all expectations set forth in the student code of conduct. When a student does not meet the grades, discipline and attendance requirements, the current statute does not allow the administrators the flexibility to revoke a transfer when a student's behavior is detrimental to the Judson ISD learning environment.

Innovation Strategies

Judson ISD is seeking to eliminate the provision of a one-year commitment in accepting transfer applicants.

- a. Nonresident students who have been accepted as inter- or intradistrict transfer students **may** have such transfer status revoked by the superintendent or designee at any time during the year if:
 - i. the student is assigned discipline consequences of suspension (out of school)
 - ii. student is placed in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion
 - iii. student is not meeting the State's 90% attendance standard
 - iv. student has failed a course within a nine-week grading period
- b. In order to proceed with revocation of transfer, administration will provide evidence of:
 - i. behavioral, attendance, or grade non-compliance
 - ii. parent and student conference warning of revocation
 - iii. complete a Revocation of Transfer Form

3. Grievance Policies

According to the amended and newly created Texas Education Code Sections 26.011, 26A.001, 26A.002, and 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.

Exemption from: TEC §§ 26.011, 26A.001, 26A.002, 26A.003

Related Board Policies: DGBA(LEGAL) FNG(LEGAL) GF(LEGAL)

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the Plan

Judson ISD follows long established grievance procedures as outlined in district policy for hearing complaints and are committed to complying with new statutes in the Texas Education Code with exemptions to certain subsections. Granting these exemptions will allow the District to resolve grievances more efficiently, apply consistent, reasonable timelines, maintain confidentiality and legal compliance, and ensure grievances are heard by the most appropriate decision-making body.

Innovation Strategies

Judson 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 with exemptions to the following sub-sections.

1. The District seeks **exemption** from the Board of Trustees to delegate the authority to hear and decide a grievance to a committee of at least three members composed only of members of the board. District seeks to amend the requirement to keep the original filing date for timeline purposes if a grievance is filed to the wrong administrator. The District recommends adding one business day to the original filing date to ensure that the complaint can still be heard within a reasonable time but addresses if the routing error was a true mistake.
2. District seeks to **amend** the requirement to keep the original filing date for timeline purposes if a grievance is filed to the wrong administrator. ***The District recommends adding one business day to the original filing date to ensure that the complaint can still be heard within a reasonable time but addresses if the routing error was a true mistake.***
3. The District seeks to **amend** the requirement to extend the deadline for a parent to file a grievance to 60 days, and if the parent attempted an informal resolution, the deadline is extended to 90 days or 30 days from the date the district provided information to the parent about how to file a formal complaint. ***The District recommends extending the deadline for a parent to file a grievance to 30 days.***
4. The District seeks an **exemption** that requires a decision based on the merits of the complaint, notwithstanding procedural errors or type of relief requested; requires a preliminary hearing to create a record of the complaint. ***The District would still require the appropriate administrator to look into a complaint to determine if informal resolution is possible.***
5. The District seeks to **amend** the requirement to hold initial hearings within 10 calendar days of filing. ***The District recommends changing calendar days to business days.***
6. The District seeks **exemption** from the requirement to conduct a meeting in open session if the grievant requests it. The District will revert to prior policy which states: ***"The District shall determine whether the complaint will be presented in open or closed meeting in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act and other applicable law."***

**Figure: 19 TAC §102.1307(d)
Innovation District Checklist**

Figure: 19 TAC §102.1307(d)

Innovation District

A local innovation plan must be developed for a school district before the district may be designated as an Innovation District. A local plan must provide for a comprehensive educational program for the district, which may include:

- 1) Innovative Curriculum
- 2) Instructional Methods
- 3) Community Participation
- 4) Governance of Campuses
- 5) Parental Involvement
- 6) Modifications to the school year
- 7) Provisions regarding the district budget and sustainable program funding
- 8) Accountability and assessment measures that exceed the requirements of state and federal law; and
- 9) Any other innovations prescribed by the board of trustees.

A local innovation plan must identify requirements imposed by the Education Code that inhibit the goals of the plan from which the district should be exempted on adoption of the plan. The local innovation plan should specify the manner in which a particular statute inhibits one or more goals of the plan. Please use the form below to check the statutes specifically identified in your district's local innovation plan as inhibiting a goal of the plan. Checking a specific statute does not necessarily indicate eligibility for an exemption from all subsections of the statute. The form below provides a reporting mechanism to fulfill the reporting requirements of the statute. Entire sections of code may not be eligible for exemption and each district should consult its legal counsel in developing its innovation plan.

Exemptions claimed for an Innovation District apply only to the specific provision of the Texas Education Code (TEC) cited, which may or may not be governed by a separate legal requirement. The exemption does not relieve the district of any requirement imposed by other state or federal law or a duty imposed under federal regulation, grant compliance, agency rule applicable to a charter school or a local legal requirement. Each district should consult its legal counsel to ensure adoption of necessary local policies to ensure compliance with all applicable legal requirements.

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of exemptions.

District Name: Judson ISD CDN: 015916
Term of Plan: March 23 2023 to March 23 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.

- **Sec. 25.036 TRANSFER OF STUDENT**

- **TEC 26.001, 26A.001, 26A.002, 26A.003**