



RICHARDSON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Where all students learn, grow, and succeed.

District of Innovation Plan

Date	Approval
December 1, 2016	DOI Committee
January 6, 2017	District Planning Committee
January 9, 2017	RISD Board of Trustees

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Vision

RISD – Where all students learn, grow, and succeed.

Mission

To serve and prepare all students for their global future

Values

Integrity * Inspiration * Inclusiveness * Innovation

RISD Focus

Students are the primary focus of RISD.
And
Staff is the primary focus of administration.

2020 Vision Goals

Students are highly engaged in their educational life.

*

Profound curriculum is the foundation for learning.

*

RISD has high performing, student focused teachers.

*

RISD ensures excellence in operations.

INTRODUCTION

The 84th Texas Legislature passed HB 1842 which included provisions to allow Texas school districts to become Districts of Innovation (DOI). Under a DOI Plan, a traditional school district may access many of the flexibilities available to Texas open-enrollment charter schools.

On June 20, 2016, the Board of Trustees of the Richardson Independent School District adopted a Resolution to direct the Administration to explore pursuit of designation as a District of Innovation. Following further study, on September 12, 2016, the Board of Trustees held a public hearing and voted to pursue designation as a District of Innovation. The Board also appointed a DOI Plan Committee.

The DOI Plan Committee included representatives from all aspects of RISD operations, parent representatives, and community representatives. The Committee began its work on October 20, 2016, and divided into three work groups: Student Matters, Human Capital Matters, and Operational Matters.

Over the course of its meetings, the DOI Plan Committee studied the Board's vision, mission, and goals and the District Improvement Plan and also considered challenges and barriers in existing law that could be alleviated through strategies included in a DOI Plan. The subcommittees identified the following topics to include in the Plan:

- * First Day of Instruction
- * Instructional Time for students enrolled in Pre-Kindergarten programs, college-based Dual Credit Courses, and other innovative instructional programming
- * Teacher Certification for Career and Technology Education instructors
- * Teacher Appraisal and Observation
- * Attendance for Credit

The goal of the DOI Plan is to enhance local control and give the District greater flexibility to implement strategies and innovations that support the Board's mission, vision, and goals, based on community and internal stakeholder input.

DOI PLANNING COMMITTEE

Facilitators: Mia Martin (General Counsel) and Tabitha Branum (Assistant Superintendent, Secondary)

Committee Members	
Name	Role in RISD
Karah Altman	Executive Director of Communications
Jeff Bradford	Athletics/Fine Arts Representative
Charles Bruner	High School Principal
Kristin Byno	Secondary Executive Director
Lynn Davenport	Area Parent Representative
Cherie Depuy	CTE Advisor
Emily Good	Elementary School Principal
Chris Goodson	Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources
Regina Harris	Area Parent Representative
Sandra Hayes	Assistant Superintendent of Operations
Ashley Jones	Elementary School Teacher
Marni Kaner	Council of PTA President/Designee
Kimberly Kindred	Junior High School Principal
Kristin Kuhne	Board of Trustees Representative
Renee Lafitte	Area Parent Representative
Cindy Lawrence	Executive Director of Special Student Services
Alan Lowman	Junior High School Teacher
Cotton Mendenhall	Elementary Counselor
Paula Moore	Secondary Counselor
Emily Nichols	Area Parent Representative
Ashley Nick	Elementary School Teacher
Amit Patel	Business/Community Partner
Brenda Payne	Assistant Superintendent of Elementary
Darwin Spiller	Elementary Executive Director
Marissa Tavallaee	High School Teacher
Anne Williams	Executive Director of Finance
Anne Marie Yarborough	Secondary Curriculum & Instruction Representative
Melanie Yungclas	Elementary Curriculum & Instruction Representative

DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLAN

The local District of Innovation Plan (DOI Plan) set out below is aligned with the Board's vision, mission, and goals, as well as the District Improvement Plan (DIP). Unless otherwise indicated below, the DOI Plan is intended to apply District-wide.

For each recommended element of the plan, DOI Committee members considered relevant statutory or regulatory authority. They also identified barriers and/or obstacles that interfered with achievement of goals, whether included in the Board's 2020 Vision, or the annual DIP. Based on this analysis, committee members carefully crafted strategies to overcome the barriers and obstacles to achievement. The DOI Plan below was the result of the Committee's thoughtful and deliberate process.

Local Innovation Plan

I. First Day of Instruction

- A. Statutory Exemption: Texas Education Code § 25.0811: A school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August. (Board Policy Ref: EB (Legal) School Year)
- B. DIP References: Goal 1, Goal 3, and Goal 4.
- C. Challenges/Obstacles: The increasingly later start date for instruction has presented numerous challenges and obstacles to District academic operations. Fall and spring semesters are significantly unequal in length; opportunities for collaborative teacher planning and preparation time are reduced, the last day of instruction gets pushed farther into June which negatively affects summer programming and some students and staff who wish to attend universities and colleges in the summer miss the first days of college classes. In the past, to attempt to balance the semesters due to a late start date, RISD ended the first semester after the winter break for two consecutive years. This strategy created hardships for students who were required to work on significant projects during the holidays. The break from instruction near the end of the semester also made it more difficult for students to prepare for semester examinations. The unequal semesters also negatively affects one semester classes such as health, AP Psychology, Professional Communications, Economics, etc. because the same curriculum still must be taught in fewer instructional days. The shortened instructional period makes it more difficult for students to master the concepts and increases out of school assignments. Each year, consistent with its local policy, RISD seeks input from stakeholders about the academic calendar. Stakeholder input following the change in the end of the fall semester overwhelmingly communicated the desire to end the fall

semester before the holiday break even if it resulted in unbalanced semesters. The longstanding and consistent input that the District has received from internal and external stakeholders since that time is that they desire to (i) complete the fall semester before the winter break, (ii) have the last day of instruction fall in the last week of May, (iii) retain a Fair Day holiday in October, and (iv) have the week of Thanksgiving as a fall break. In addition, teachers and campus administrators value strategically placed professional development days in each semester to assist campuses in analyzing student performance and planning. The late school start date interferes with developing an academic calendar that meets stakeholder desires as well as implementing best practices of balancing the fall and spring semesters, negatively affects student learning, causes low staff morale in the spring due to a later ending date, and reduces teacher preparation time.

- D. Proposed Innovation/Benefits: RISD will no longer be required to delay the start of school to the fourth Friday in August as currently required by TEC § 25.0811. Upon implementation of the DOI Plan, the District will determine an appropriate start date annually that does not occur before the second Monday in August. RISD will continue to consider stakeholder input as required by Board policy EB (Local) in its determination of the first day of instruction. A more reasonable school start date will provide RISD flexibility to incorporate stakeholder input into its calendar process, increase stakeholder satisfaction, allow for a more balanced academic calendar, provide more opportunities for collaborative teacher planning and preparation time and professional development throughout the year at times best suited to instructional needs, and generally improve the overall efficient operations of the District. The maintenance of good professional development is directly related to student success.
- E. *Note:* 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. RISD will continue to comply with the UIL calendar for commencement of summer practices.

II. Length of Instructional Day

- A. Statutory Exemption(s): Texas Education Code § 25.081: For each school year, each school district must operate so that the district provides at least 75,600 minutes of instruction, including intermissions and recesses. (A full school day is considered to be 420 minutes and a half school day is considered 210 minutes.) (Board Policy Ref: EC (Legal) School Day)
- B. DIP References: Goal 1, Objective 1; Goal 2, Objective 1; Goal 3, Objective 1
- C. Challenges/Obstacles:

- a. Pre-Kindergarten Students – RISD offers half-day pre-kindergarten and pre-school program for children with disabilities classes. (PPCD) The half-day requirement for each school day under § 25.081 is 210 minutes of instruction. The Pre-K and PPCD classes are offered in two sessions each day – morning and afternoon (8 – 11 a.m., 12 -3 p.m.; 180 minutes of instruction). Lengthening the instructional day would require overlapping of the morning and afternoon sessions, which would actually result in a loss of instructional time, and would require hiring additional staff. Funding is not available to hire additional staff and space is not available to offer separate classrooms for the morning and afternoon classes.
- b. Non-Traditional Programming – RISD offers a half-day program for children whose needs can better be met in a non-traditional learning environment. The half-day requirement for each school day under § 25.081 is 210 minutes of instruction. The non-traditional program sessions are offered in two sessions each day – morning and afternoon (8:30-11:30a.m., 12:30-3:30p.m.; 180 minutes of instruction). Lengthening the instructional day would require overlapping of the morning and afternoon sessions, which would actually result in a loss of instructional time and would require hiring additional staff. Funding is not available to hire additional staff and space is not available to offer separate classrooms for the morning and afternoon classes.

D. Proposed Innovation/Benefits:

- a. Pre-Kindergarten Students – RISD will maintain the current program schedule for all pre-kindergarten programs. This schedule allows for ample, quality instruction of the young children who attend the programs and also facilitates the orderly transition between the morning and afternoon sessions and provides families with consistent arrival and dismissal times. Maintaining the current schedule also allows the instructional staff an opportunity for lunch and planning period and allows RISD to maximize efficiency in providing transportation for the young children, as well.
- b. Non-traditional Programming – RISD will maintain the current program schedule for all non-traditional programs. This schedule allows for ample, quality instruction for the students choosing to enroll in these programs while also providing students and staff with the necessary planning time and transition time.

E. *Note:* These proposed innovations may result in loss of state funding for student attendance. RISD will evaluate the potential loss of funding if this innovation is implemented to determine whether it should be implemented with the other DOI innovations.

III. Teacher Certification

- A. Statutory Exemption(s): Texas Education Code § 21.003(a): A person may not be employed as a teacher . . . by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit as provided by Subchapter B; § 21.0031(a): An employee's probationary, continuing, or term contract under this chapter is void if the employee: (1) does not hold valid certificate or permit issued by SBEC; (2) fails to fulfill the requirements necessary to renew or extend the employee's . . . certificate or any other certificate or permit issued under Subchapter B; or (3) fails to comply with any requirement under Chapter 22 if the failure results in suspension or revocation of the employee's certificate; § 21.057: A school district that assigns an inappropriately certified or uncertified teacher to the same classroom for more than 30 consecutive instructional days during the same school year shall provide written notice of the assignment to a parent or guardian of each student in that classroom. (Board Policy Ref: DBA Employment Requirements and Restrictions: Credentials and Records)
- B. DIP References: Goal 1, Objectives 1 and 2; Goal 2, Objectives 2 and 3; Goal 3, Objectives 1 and 3; Goal 5, Objective 2. The proposed innovation also supports the Board's mission to serve and prepare students for their global future.
- C. Challenges/Obstacles: The traditional certification requirements under the Texas Education Code are not aligned with realities of the current educational environment and the need to hire industry experts to teach many of the course offerings through the career and technology education programs offered in most districts. As a result, RISD has been unable to offer some requested courses due to the lack of certified candidates. The limitation on course offerings reduces student engagement and satisfaction and deprives students of high school preparation for some career pathways. RISD desires to create a limited exemption from traditional certification requirements to enhance its ability to recruit and hire qualified individuals with specialized knowledge in career and technology education courses for which teachers holding traditional certifications are not readily available.
- D. Proposed Innovation/Benefits: RISD will continue to seek traditionally certified candidates for all teaching positions. However, for those career and technology education courses for which a traditionally certified, qualified candidate is not identified, the District will recruit persons with industry experience in the field of need to teach the classes. The District will develop minimum required qualifications for persons hired for such positions and also will identify required professional development in the areas of student management, instructional strategies, curriculum, and parent engagement. RISD considers the persons hired for these positions

to be appropriately qualified and thus will not provide special notification to parents of students in their classes that the instructor does not hold a traditional teaching certificate. This innovation will allow RISD to consider a broader applicant pool and to broaden its learning networks for traditionally hard to fill career and technology education classes while maintaining a high quality of instruction designed to provide students with real-world, practical knowledge and experience.

IV. Teacher Appraisal

- A. **Statutory Exemption:** Regulations issued under Texas Education Code §21.351, 19 TAC § 150.1003 (g): By written mutual consent of the teacher and the certified appraiser, the required minimum of 45 minutes of observation may be conducted in shorter time segments. The time segments must aggregate to at least 45 minutes. (Board Policy Ref: DNA Performance Appraisal: Evaluation of Teachers)
- B. **DIP Reference:** Goal 3, Objective 1
- C. **Challenges/Obstacles:** The Board of Trustees adopted the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS), with minor modifications, as the appraisal system for all RISD classroom teachers. One of the required elements of T-TESS is at least one 45-minute observation period. The Commissioner's Rules issued for T-Tess require mutual written agreement between the educator and appraiser to conduct the 45-minute observation period in two or more shorter sessions that aggregate to 45 minutes. Some RISD campuses, primarily junior high schools, have developed master schedules that result in classes that are less than 45 minutes in length. The schedules were developed to best meet the instructional needs of students. Other instructional areas, such as fine arts, athletics, and special education also may not provide 45 minutes of continuous instruction. If a teacher refused to agree to multiple shortened observation periods, a split observation could result in a technical, procedural error in the observation process, even though the overall minutes of the observation period were conducted.
- D. **Proposed Innovation/Benefits:** RISD will continue to follow the Commissioner's Rules for teacher appraisal that provide for a single 45-minute observation for most educators. However, for teachers whose instructional assignment does not allow for a meaningful observation period of 45 minutes, the appraiser may use his/her discretion to conduct the required observation in two or more shortened periods without written agreement from the educator. The appraiser will notify the educator if the 45-minute observation period is conducted in two or more shorter periods. This innovation applies to the 45-minute observation and does not alter the expectation that each appraiser also conduct frequent walk-through observations.

V. Minimum Attendance for Class Credit

- A. Statutory Exemption: Texas Education Code §25.092 (a): Except as provided by this section, a student in any grade level from 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. (Board Policy Ref: FEC Attendance for Credit)
- B. DIP Reference: Goal 1, Objective 1, Goal 2, Objectives, 2 and 3, Goal 4.
- C. Challenges/Obstacles: As RISD continues to expand the innovative and engaging instructional arrangements offered to students, such as college-based dual credit courses, virtual courses, and internships, the concept of how students participate in these instructional arrangements also must be expanded beyond the arbitrary assessment of “seat time.” Conditioning issuance of a course grade merely on the percentage of time the student attends class ignores the underlying goals of the innovative programming, such as student directed self-study and exploration to achieve mastery of content. To continue to expand course offerings to provide more authentic learning opportunities for students, campuses need the flexibility to establish relevant requirements for successful completion of these courses. Relief from the “seat time” requirements in § 25.092 does not interfere with a teacher’s right to determine the student’s final grade under TEC § 28.214 and does not restrict a teacher’s right to assign student grades in accordance with TEC § 28.0216.
- D. Proposed Innovation/Benefits: RISD will establish minimum requirements for attendance, course completion, and mastery in its college-based dual credit courses and other innovative learning opportunities offered to students. RISD believes strongly that a student’s mastery of learning outcomes should be the determining factor in earning credit and a grade rather than measures such as “seat time” that do not consider the real objectives of the educational experience. Exemption from the requirement of TEC § 25.092 will allow the District to provide increased active learning opportunities to its students by providing flexibility in time, location, and instructional methods. We believe this opportunity will empower students and parents by providing them with voice and choice in determining how their educational needs can best be met. Honoring student choice in instruction also enhances student success.
- E. *Note:* This innovation does not apply to standard credit bearing courses offered in the traditional classroom setting, but would be appropriate to apply to nonstandard, non-traditional courses offered outside of the

campus classroom, such as an off-site internship or a dual credit course taken on a college campus.

Term

This Local Innovation Plan will become effective upon approval by a 2/3 majority vote of the Board of Trustees. It is designed to be implemented at the start of the 2017-2018 school year and continue for five years, through the end of the 2021-2022 school year, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The DOI committee will review the plan annually to ensure that the recommendations continue to support the needs of the District. If the Committee recommends changes, the Plan would be amended in the manner required by law that includes public posting, and approval of the DOI Committee, the District Planning Committee, and the Board of Trustees.

RISD District Improvement Plan

Goals and Objectives

2016-2017

Goal 1: Students are highly engaged in their educational life.

Performance Objective 1: Deliver a rigorous and relevant curriculum using instructional strategies designed to engage learners in meaningful learning experiences

Performance Objective 2: Integrate digital content and tools into instruction in meaningful ways to encourage student use of available resources to enhance learning

Performance Objective 3: Increase links between home and school by providing systemic opportunities for parent engagement

Goal 2: Profound curriculum is the foundation for learning.

Performance Objective 1: Align and maintain written, taught, and assessed curriculum at all grade levels and in all subject areas

Performance Objective 2: Integrate 21st Century learning and Texas College & Career Readiness (TCCR) skills and strategies into curriculum PK-12

Performance Objective 3: Enhance Career & Technical (CTE) opportunities for students

Performance Objective 4: Develop a K-12 Literacy focus.

Goal 3: RISD has high performing, student focused teachers.

Performance Objective 1: Hire certified, qualified and dedicated staff from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds

Performance Objective 2: Seek employee input and feedback

Performance Objective 3: Provide necessary professional development to successfully implement the 2020 Vision

Goal 4: RISD ensures excellence in operations.

Performance Objective 1: Operate in a fiscally responsible, effective, and efficient manner in all financial matters to ensure adequate resources to support continuous improvement in student achievement

Performance Objective 2: Create a long-term facilities plan to address elementary and secondary enrollment growth

Performance Objective 3: Provide a safe, comfortable, and well-maintained environment at all campuses

Performance Objective 4: Enhance communication processes to provide stakeholders with timely, effective and reliable communication via a dynamic communication system

Performance Objective 5: Survey parents every other year to obtain input and feedback. Utilize feedback to improve parent perceptions

Goal 5: Student Performance

Performance Objective 1: Improve student performance and ensure 100% of campuses are rated "Met Standard"

Performance Objective 2: Increase District Graduation Rate from 88.3% to 92%

Performance Objective 3: Maintain ACT percentage at 25%

Performance Objective 4: Maintain student performance on SAT and remain above state and nation as we transition into the new SAT

Performance Objective 5: Increase AP Participation to 94% and AP passing rate to 60%

Performance Objective 6: Increase Dual Credit Enrollment

Performance Objective 7: Increase Monitoring and ensure consistency across all campuses and disciplines