Aledo ISD
District of Innovation Plan

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District of Innovation Overview:

The District of Innovation (DOI) concept, passed into state law by the 84th Texas Legislature, provides Texas public schools the opportunity to access operational flexibilities in an effort to improve the way that students are served, as determined by local needs.

The Aledo Independent School District believes that this level of local control adds flexibility and empowers our district to think and act in innovative ways to meet our District's priorities. Through DOI opportunities, Aledo ISD can leverage the freedom and flexibility afforded as a District of Innovation to ensure all students are provided with exceptional experiences. The current DOI plan works in alignment with our district instructional focus to ensure a culture of excellence that supports teaching and learning.

In February 2019, the Board of Trustees approved the current Aledo ISD Innovation Plan. Local innovation plans must be renewed every five years to maintain a District of Innovation Status. In Fall, 2023, Aledo ISD began the process to review and renew the District of Innovation Plan. Based on input from the Board, administration, and various stakeholders, the District-wide Effectiveness Improvement Committee (DWEIC) proposed this plan.

Aledo ISD's Innovation Plan aligns to the District's priority of ensuring all students demonstrate yearly progress at expected levels. The Innovation Plan is also aligned to our district instructional priorities which include:

1. What We Teach: Teaching to depth of the standards
2. How We Teach: District-wide instructional priorities to increase rigor, relevance, and engagement in the classroom.
3. Authentic Literacy: Ensuring that all students are proficient readers and writers 4. Culture of Excellence: Committing to continuous improvement district-wide

The term of the Plan is for five years, beginning February 19, 2024, and ending February 2029, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. DWEIC will continually monitor the effectiveness of the Plan and will review it annually. That committee will recommend to the Board of Trustees any suggested modifications, including addendums, to the plan.

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DOI Renewal Timeline

November 8, 2023

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DWEIC/DOI Meeting

- ➢ Committee introduced to DOI renewal process.
- ➢ Committee reviewed current Aledo ISD district DOI plan.
- ➢ Committee discussed regarding educational changes since plan implementation in 2019.

December 11, 2023

DWEIC/DOI Meeting

- ➢ Committee members were presented the proposed changes and additions to current DOI plan.
- ➢ Committee reviewed each proposed change and discussed various points surrounding each.
- ➢ Committee members were provided information regarding next steps to solicit feedback from groups/teams/campuses.

January 10, 2024

DWEIC/DOI Meeting and Public Meeting

- ➢ Committee membersreviewed feedback received and discussed current recommendations.
- ➢ New proposed exemption was discussed for feedback as presented to the committee.
- ➢ Committee members were provided information regarding next steps to solicit feedback from groups/teams/campuses.

January 12, 2024

DWEIC Voting

- ➢ Committee members voted on current recommendations.

January 16, 2024

Board of Trustees Meeting

- ➢ The draft plan will be presented to and discussed with the Board of Trustees. The draft plan will be posted on the district website to begin the 30-day public comment/feedback timeframe (January 18, 2024, through February 17, 2024). Feedback will be collected via online google form.
- ➢ Ongoing review all the feedback received.
- ➢ Notify Commissioner of Education of Board of Trustees' intent to renew the DOI plan.

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February 19, 2024

Board of Trustees Meeting

- ➢ School Board meeting to request Approval of Aledo ISD DOI Renewal Plan.

February 20, 2024

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- ➢ If approved, the renewed plan will be submitted to the Texas Education Agency.
- ➢ The district will notify the Commission of Education of the approved plan.
- ➢ The approved plan will be posted on the district website.

Committee Member Name	Campus	Position/Role
Jamie Rinehart	AHS	Teacher
Emily Robison	AHS	Teacher
Brandy Roye	AHS	Teacher
Gayla Fernandez	ALC	Teacher
Mandy Musselwhite	AMS	Principal
Robin Newkirk	AMS	Teacher
Renee Pokrifcsak	AMS	Teacher
Kayla Cope	Annetta	Teacher
Kelly Price	Annetta	Teacher
Carly Kinchen	Coder	Teacher
Laura West	Coder	Teacher
Carma Chisam	Business Representative	Business
Christina Donnelly	Business Representative	Business
Heather Cohea	Parent Representative	Parent
Kelly Stevens	Parent Representative	Parent
DeAnne Younkin	Community Member	Community
Valerie Kerr	Aledo Education Foundation	Community
Randall Bruton	D9GC	Teacher
Elisha Woodson	D9GC	Teacher
Tina Shoptaw	McCall	Teacher

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Elizabeth Garcia	McCall	Teacher
Amanda Douglas	McAnally	Teacher
Patience Johnson	McAnally	Teacher
Kimberly Martin	Stuard	Teacher
Stefanie Story	Stuard	Teacher
Jake Bean	Vandagriff	Principal
Katie Gemmel	Vandagriff	Teacher
Tonya Hardin	Vandagriff	Teacher
Audrey Mann	Walsh	Teacher
Grace St John-Staver	Walsh	Teacher
Susan Bohn	Administration	Superintendent
Kim Raymond	Administration	Deputy Superintendent
Ingia Saxton	Administration	Assistant Superintendent
Amber Crissey	Administration	Assistant Superintendent

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2026 District of Innovation Plan Amendment

As part of Aledo ISD's ongoing commitment to continuous improvement and responsible local decision-making, the District periodically reviews its District of Innovation (DOI) Plan to ensure continued alignment with state law, district priorities, and the evolving needs of students, staff, and families.

Under 19 Texas Administrative Code §102.1313, a District of Innovation Plan may be amended during its five-year term without initiating a new adoption process. Amendments require approval by a majority vote of the district-level advisory committee and a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Trustees. Any approved amendments become part of the existing plan and do not change its original expiration date of February 2029.

In Fall 2026, Aledo ISD initiated a review of specific provisions within its current DOI Plan to address changes in state law and evaluate opportunities to maintain appropriate local flexibility. The

proposed amendments focus on two primary areas:

- Campus Behavior Coordinators: Removing the existing exemption from Texas Education Code §37.0012 to align the District's DOI Plan with current state law.
- Enrollment of Military-Connected Students: Reviewing and refining provisions related to enrollment to support military-connected families while preserving the District's ability to responsibly manage enrollment, staffing, class sizes, facilities, and financial resources in service of all students.

The District-Wide Effectiveness Improvement Committee (DWEIC) serves as the district-level advisory committee responsible for reviewing the proposed amendments, considering stakeholder feedback, and making recommendations regarding the DOI Plan.

Through this process, Aledo ISD seeks to maintain a District of Innovation Plan that reflects current legal requirements, supports the District's culture of excellence, and provides the local flexibility necessary to make thoughtful decisions in the best interests of students and the school community.

2026 DOI Amendment Timeline

Date	Action
September 29, 2026	Present proposed DOI amendments to DWEIC for initial review and discussion.
October 21, 2026	Review proposed amendments and updates based on feedback received. Provide DWEIC members an opportunity for additional discussion and input.
November 11, 2026	Review the final draft of proposed amendments and conduct a DWEIC vote on approval of the amended plan.
November 16, 2026	Present proposed DOI amendments and related FDA(LOCAL) policy revisions to the Board of Trustees for review and discussion.
December 14, 2026	Present the proposed DOI amendments and related FDA(LOCAL) revisions to the Board of Trustees for consideration and possible approval. Approval of the DOI amendments requires a two-thirds majority vote of the Board.

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Following Board Approval	Update and publish the amended DOI Plan on the District's website, notify the Texas Education Agency of the approved amendments and applicable statutory exemptions, and implement corresponding Board policy and administrative procedures.

The approved amendments will remain in effect as part of the current District of Innovation Plan through February 2029, unless otherwise amended, renewed, or terminated in accordance with applicable law.

Districtwide Effectiveness Improvement Committee (DWEIC) 2026-2027

Committee Member Name	Campus
Elmi Martinez	AHS
Paula Boldt	ALC
Elisha Woodson	AHS
Michael Martinak	AHS
Robin Newkirk	AMS
Renee Pokrifcsak	AMS
Blair Nix	MMS
Amanda Surringer	MMS
Jessica LaRoque	Vandagriff
Paige Benavides	Vandagriff
Jeff Crissey	Coder
Laura West	Coder
Stefanie Story	Stuard
Rebekah Getz	Stuard
Stacy Cliver	McCall
Amy Sadler	McCall

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Audrey Mann	Walsh
Elise Hooper	Walsh
Kelly Price	Annetta
Kellie Truit	Annetta
Rod Arnold	LME
Linda Capps	LME
Mandy Musselwhite	Non-Teaching District Representative
Kayla Cope	Non-Teaching District Representative
Karen May	Non-Teaching District Representative
Candace Summerhill	District Representative
Heather Cohea	Parent Representative
Jodi Outland	Parent Representative
Catherine Parello	Business Representative
DeeAnne Younkin	Community Representative

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Exemptions

Teacher and Principal Evaluations

Exemption from: Tex. Educ. Code §§ 21.352, 21.3541

Related Board Policies: DNA (LEGAL), DNA (LOCAL), DNB (LEGAL), DNB (LOCAL)

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan: Beginning with the 2016-2017 school year, the State issued a teacher appraisal system called the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS) and a principal appraisal system called the Texas Principal Evaluation and Support System (T-PESS). While these systems are designed to meet the needs of the entire state, Aledo ISD seeks to customize certain aspects of the

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system to better meet the unique needs of its teachers and administrators.

Local Guidelines and Innovations Strategies: Aledo ISD is seeking flexibility within the recommended Texas appraisal process for teachers and administrators evaluated using the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS) and the Texas Principal and Support System (T-PESS). Aledo ISD seeks to continue utilizing portions of the T-TESS and T-PESS models as the evaluation appraisal instrument, while desiring exemption from the Student Growth Measure. Data provided from district and campus local assessments will continue to be utilized to determine overall student growth and performance.

School Calendar

Exemption from: Tex. Educ. Code § 25.0811

Related Board Policies: EB (LEGAL), EB (LOCAL)

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan: The Texas Education Code requires that students may not begin school before the fourth Monday of August. For many years this was the rule. However, districts had the option of applying for a waiver to begin school earlier. The waiver process was eliminated several years ago, mandating that all schools begin school no earlier than the fourth Monday of August, with no exceptions. This requirement inhibits the District's flexibility to develop a calendar that best meets students', staff, and community needs.

Additionally, the school districts surrounding Aledo ISD begin school prior to the fourth Monday in August. As stipulated by state law regarding educator contracts, the first day of school impacts when educators may resign without penalty, impacting the District's hiring processes. Aledo ISD seeks this exemption in an effort to not disadvantage itself in the employment market as compared to surrounding districts.
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Local Guidelines and Innovations Strategies: Research has found that a catalyst to accelerating student learning and improving teacher practice is allowing for structured time for educators to prepare, lesson plan, and engage in professional learning. A more flexible school calendar will allow for timely and meaningful staff development. Before the school year begins, teachers will have ample professional development and teacher preparation and planning time. In addition, the calendar will provide for additional designated time for professional development throughout the year.

When Aledo ISD has flexibility with respect to the instructional calendar start date, and is able to start school earlier, the District has access to more qualified educators because they will still be in the time frame in which they are permitted (under state law) to resign

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from any contract they may have with another school district.

Teacher Certification

Exemption from: Tex. Educ. Code §§ 21.003, 21.053

Related Board Policies: DBA (LEGAL), DBA (LOCAL), DK (LEGAL), DK (LOCAL), DK (Exhibit)

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan: State law and regulation require that all teachers be fully certified by the Texas Education Agency (TEA)/ State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC),regardless of previous work experience and/or demonstrated knowledge and skills in their area of specialty. Although it is possible to seek an emergency certificate, certification is dependent upon TEA approving the request. The current statute limits the ability to hire teachers in highly specialized or hard-to-fill areas.

Local Guidelines and Innovations Strategies: Aledo ISD remains committed to hiring highly qualified professionals with appropriate certifications, and will continue to seek certified teachers to best serve its students. Through an exemption from existing Texas teacher certification requirements, Aledo ISD will be granted flexibility to hire non certified professionals to teach in hard-to-fill and/or high demand positions, teachers certified in other states and countries, and professionals with experience in specialized industries in areas of needed expertise for courses. This exemption permits these professionals to meet standards designated by the State of Texas and permits the District to obtain the same weighted funding as would be available should the professional hold a traditional teaching certification for the course.

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~~**Behavior Coordinator**~~

~~**Exemption from:** Tex. Educ. Code § 37.0012~~

~~**Related Board Policies:** FO (LEGAL), FO (LOCAL)~~

~~***Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan:*** State law requires the designation of a campus behavior coordinator on each campus. Districts are required to name one individual per campus to serve as behavior coordinator. Due to the number of students on any given campus, it is unrealistic for the role of Campus Behavior Coordinator to be assigned to one person.~~

~~**Local Guidelines and Innovations Strategies:** Aledo ISD is seeking a more collaborative approach to behavior management through the utilization of a coordinated team of professionals collaborating to address student behavior needs.~~

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Student Transfers – Children of Peace Officers

Exemption from: Texas Education Code (TEC 25.0344)

HB 1959, passed during the 88th Legislative Session, created certain district and campus transfer provisions specific to the children of peace officers. After a request by a "peace officer," Texas Education Code §25.0344 states that a board of trustees or designee "shall transfer the student to another district campus or to another school district under an agreement under Section 25.035" of the Texas Education Code.

Related Board Policies: FDA (LEGAL) FDA(LOCAL); FDB (LEGAL) FDB (LOCAL)

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan: The ability for a school district, including Aledo ISD, to adequately prepare and plan for enrollment within the district is vital. As a fast-growth school district, Aledo ISD is faced with the challenge of properly staffing and resourcing its campuses to serve the students who reside in the district as the number of students who live in the district grows rapidly and throughout each school year.

The creation of campus attendance zones assists the District in planning for each school year, including the assignment of appropriate resources to individual campuses. Given the fast growth of the district, compliance with the requirement to transfer a peace officer's child(ren) from one campus in the district to another campus in the district (intradistrict transfer) has the potential to overcrowd classrooms/schools, require the hiring of additional staff when class sizes increase beyond state required and board approved ratios, and even prompt the need for additional space on campus to serve students.

Note: The requirement in Texas Education Code Section 25.0344 that a school district shall transfer a student to another district under an agreement under Section 25.035 is inapplicable in Aledo ISD due to the fact that Aledo ISD does not have such an agreement with any other school district. In fact, Board Policy FDA (LOCAL) expressly

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prohibits out-of-district (interdistrict) transfers into Aledo ISD.

Local Guidelines and Innovations Strategies:

Board Policies FDA (LOCAL) and FDB (LOCAL) address processes and requirements for intradistrict and interdistrict transfers. Although the District seeks to exempt itself from the requirements of Section 25.0344, the District will continue to process student transfer requests in compliance with applicable Board Policy.

Staff Development

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Exemption from Tex. Educ. Code § 21.451

Related Board Policies: DMA(LEGAL), DMA(LOCAL)

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan: Currently, the district is required to implement state-mandated professional development that may not be beneficial to our staff and/or student needs. This flexibility would provide intentional review of those requirements and adjustments to be made based on newly emerging data, staff experience, job responsibilities, and demonstration of mastery knowledge with pre-assessments.

Local Guidelines and Innovations Strategies: Aledo ISD seeks flexibility in establishing local guidelines to support the professional development of Aledo ISD educators to meet the unique needs of each student.

Student Transfers – Children of Servicemembers

Exemption from: Texas Education Code (TEC §25.0345)

HB 2892, passed during the 88th Legislative Session, created certain district and campus transfer provisions specific to the children of servicemembers. After a request by a "servicemember," Texas Education Code §25.0345 states that a board of trustees or designee "shall transfer the student to another district campus or to another school district under an agreement under Section 25.035" of the Texas Education Code.

Related Board Policies: FDA(Legal), FDA(Local)

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan: Texas Education Code §25.0345 requires a school district, upon request of a servicemember who is a parent of or person standing in parental relation to a student, to transfer the student to another district campus or to another school district under an agreement authorized by Section 25.035. The statute further provides that the transfer must be to the campus or school district selected by the servicemember.

The District recognizes and appreciates the sacrifice of servicemembers and the impact on families that deployment and mobility associated with service has on members of the United States Armed Forces and the Texas National Guard and their families. The District is committed to providing educational opportunities to eligible students of servicemembers while also maintaining the local authority necessary to operate its schools effectively and equitably.

The mandatory transfer requirements of TEC §25.0345 limit the District's ability to apply its established transfer-admission procedures uniformly to all students seeking transfer into the District. In particular, the statute may require the District to accept a student at a campus selected

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by a servicemember without regard to the District's established enrollment-management practices, available campus space, staffing, instructional capacity, or other legitimate operational considerations.

The District must be able to plan responsibly for student enrollment and allocate instructional personnel, classrooms, programs, transportation resources, and other District resources based upon reasonably anticipated enrollment. Campus capacity is a significant component of that planning process. Allowing unrestricted transfers outside the District's established transfer process may result in enrollment exceeding a campus's planned capacity, disruption of class-size and staffing allocations, and difficulty providing educational services and programs in an efficient and effective manner.

The District also has a responsibility to maintain safe, orderly, and productive learning environments. Students who attend the District pursuant to transfer should be subject to the same applicable attendance, discipline, and student-conduct expectations as other transfer students. The District therefore needs sufficient local authority to consider a student's compliance with District attendance requirements, the Student Code of Conduct, and other applicable transfer requirements when determining whether a transfer should be approved or continued.

Local Guidelines and Innovations Strategies: The District seeks an exemption from TEC §25.0345 to the extent necessary to permit the District to establish and administer reasonable, neutral, and uniformly applied procedures governing transfers of students who are children of servicemembers.

Under the exemption and in recognition of the unique circumstances of servicemember families, the District will provide an opportunity for up to ten (10) servicemember families per school year who reside outside Aledo ISD boundaries to be considered for an interdistrict transfer in accordance with the criteria and procedures established in FDA(LOCAL). Consideration of a transfer request does not guarantee approval. All requests will be evaluated based on the District's established transfer criteria as outlined below:

1. Campus capacity and enrollment: whether sufficient classroom, programmatic, and instructional capacity exists at the campus requested by the servicemember;
2. Staffing and instructional resources: whether the District has adequate staffing and instructional resources to serve the student at the requested campus;
3. Program availability: whether the student's grade level, instructional program, or other requested educational services are available at the requested campus;
4. Attendance: whether the student has demonstrated compliance with applicable state attendance requirements and District attendance standards;
5. Discipline and conduct: whether the student has complied with the District's Student Code of Conduct and whether the student's disciplinary history affects eligibility for a transfer under the District's generally applicable transfer standards; and

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A student who is approved for transfer under this provision shall be subject to the same applicable attendance, discipline, and other transfer-related requirements imposed on similarly situated transfer students. Continued enrollment under a transfer may be conditioned upon compliance with those requirements. The District will determine the campus that the student will attend in accordance with the considerations above and any other relevant considerations.

For students of servicemembers who reside within Aledo ISD boundaries, the District will continue to assign students to campuses in accordance with established attendance boundaries and District enrollment procedures.

This exemption will provide the District with the local flexibility necessary to balance the needs of children of servicemembers with the District's responsibility to plan for enrollment, maintain appropriate campus capacity and staffing, and operate safe, orderly, and effective schools.

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