

NAVARRO ISD

DISTRICT OF INNOVATION **DRAFT** PLAN

2022-2027

**Proposed Amendment: February 23, 2026**

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Navarro ISD has been a District of Innovation since August of 2017. By law, a District of Innovation may have a term of up to five years, then the plan must be renewed. At the time of renewal, the district has the opportunity to amend components of the current District of Innovation plan, rescind the plan, or renew the plan as it was originally written if the plan still meets the current innovative needs of the district.

During the renewal process of the plan, all sections and exemptions must be reviewed, and whether or not changes are made to the plan or exemptions, the School Board cannot vote to approve the plan until it has been posted online for 30 calendar days, the commissioner has been notified, and the District Educational Improvement Committee has held a public meeting to consider the plan, and then the DEIC must approve the plan by a majority vote.

**UPDATED TIMELINE of EVENTS**

**February 5, 2026** – The District of Innovation (DOI) Committee convened at 5:00 p.m. at Navarro High School in the Media Center to consider a proposed amendment to the current District of Innovation Plan.

In accordance with Texas Education Code Chapter 12A, the Committee reviewed the district's authority to amend its approved DOI Plan and discussed a proposed exemption from the grievance policy requirements established under Texas Education Code Chapter 26A.

During the meeting, the Committee:

- Reviewed applicable statutory provisions, including Chapters 12A and 26A of the Texas Education Code
- Examined the District's locally adopted and previously implemented grievance policies
- Evaluated the effectiveness of existing grievance procedures
- Considered the administrative and operational impact of the newly enacted statutory requirements

Furthermore, the Committee engaged in discussion regarding the alignment of local grievance procedures with the district's goals of ensuring equitable, timely, and efficient resolution of complaints.

**February 5, 2026** – Following deliberation, the District of Innovation Committee voted to approve and recommend an amendment to the current District of Innovation Plan for consideration by the Navarro ISD Board of Trustees.

**February 22, 2026** – Notice of the proposed DOI Plan amendment was posted on the district’s website in accordance with Texas Education Code §12A.007 and will remain posted for a minimum of 30 days to provide public notice and opportunity for review.

**February 23, 2026** – The Navarro ISD Board of Trustees will conduct a public meeting to consider the proposed amendment to the District of Innovation Plan.

**March 23, 2026** – Following completion of the required thirty (30) day public posting period, the Navarro ISD Board of Trustees will convene in a duly posted public meeting to consider adoption of the proposed amendment to the District of Innovation Plan.

At that meeting, the Navarro ISD Board of Trustees will consider any public comments received during the review period and take action to approve or deny the proposed amendment in accordance with applicable law.

If approved by a two-thirds majority vote, the amended District of Innovation Plan will include an exemption from the grievance policy requirements established under Texas Education Code Chapter 26A, and the district will implement its previously adopted grievance policies.

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### **Previous District of Innovation Plan Renewal Timeline of Events**

February 7, 2022 - The current Navarro ISD District of Innovation Plan was reviewed by the District Educational Improvement Committee at a public meeting. No changes have been proposed to the current plan at this time.

February 24, 2022 – The public was notified of a public meeting that will be held on Thursday, March 10, 2022, to consider the proposed renewal of the District of Innovation Plan and accept public comment about the plan.

February 28, 2022 – The Chief Academic Officer will notify the School Board of the district’s intent to renew the District of Innovation Plan.

March 10, 2022 – The District Educational Improvement Committee held a public meeting to provide an opportunity for the public to comment on the proposed District of Innovation plan renewal. A vote was conducted at the end of this meeting to approve the recommended District of Innovation renewal plan.

April 4, 2022 – The proposed District of Innovation renewal plan will be placed on the Navarro ISD website for the required 30 days.

May 16, 2022 – The final District of Innovation renewal plan was presented to the Board of Trustees for approval.

May 17, 2022 – The district notified the Commissioner of Education that the NISD School Board approved the District of Innovation renewal plan by a majority vote and a list of the exemptions claimed was provided to the Education Agency for review as required.

May 17, 2022 – The district provided a copy of the renewed and adopted District of Innovation plan to the Texas Education Agency after Board approval.

## **TERM**

By law, the term of the designation as a District of Innovation may not exceed five years. The term of the renewed Navarro ISD local Innovation Plan begins on May 23, 2022, and ends on May 23, 2027, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. District policies will be amended as necessary to be consistent with the statutory exemptions and the Local Innovation Plan. The District Educational Improvement Committee will continually monitor the effectiveness of the plan and recommend to the Board any suggested modifications to the plan. The District shall also notify the Commissioner of any actions taken to amend, rescind or renew the Plan along with the associated TEC exemptions and local approval dates.

## **EXEMPTIONS**

The District Educational Improvement Committee believes that Navarro ISD will be able to offer a more effective and comprehensive educational program by implementing the following exemptions:

### **1. Flexible Start Date**

Texas Education Code Section 25.0811 prohibits the district from beginning instruction prior to the fourth Monday in August.

Navarro ISD strives to support professional learning for staff members and meet the individual academic needs of its students. Flexibility to begin instruction earlier will enable the district to balance the amount of instructional time and professional learning time more evenly between semesters. Providing for increased time within the first semester will support learning for one-semester classes, as well as provide preparation time for students completing End of Course assessments during the December administration. Balancing the time between the semesters will also increase the opportunity to conclude the school year at the end of May, allowing teachers to prepare for summer school, and students to prepare for college enrollment, enrichment programs and summer employment.

### **2. Teacher Certifications in the High Need Areas of Dual Credit and Career and Technical Education**

Texas Education Code Section 21.003 says: *A person may not be employed as a teacher...unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued as provided by subchapter B.*

As the district seeks to increase course offerings to enhance college and career readiness for all students, we anticipate challenges in finding exceptionally qualified applicants in specific fields who are also traditionally certified teachers. Because we are a relatively small school district, and our teacher salaries are less competitive when compared to the larger districts around us, the district would benefit from having the ability to seek out people with specialized skills and experience in such areas as health careers, welding, law enforcement, business, and industry. As we develop more pathways and endorsement areas, it is critical that we are able to hire staff members that have relevant work experience and expertise in these expanded fields of study, even though they may not yet hold the required teacher certification. We would hope to attract community college and/or university professors, as well, to help us expand our on-campus dual credit offerings.

### **3. Class Size and Notice of Class Size, Grade Kindergarten through Fourth Grade**

Texas Education Code Section 25.112 requires public school districts to maintain a 22:1 student to teacher class ratio for students in kindergarten through fourth grade. If class size exceeds this ratio, the district must apply to TEA for a class size waiver. Texas Education Code 25.113 requires the district to send letters home with students notifying parents that the district has exceeded the required ratio.

At Navarro ISD we value relationships, and excellence is our standard in all that we do; however, we feel that it is not the specific number of students in a class that determines learning outcomes, but the environment in which the student is learning. As a district, we plan to stay within the requirements of TEC 25.112, and we do believe that smaller class sizes benefit students by providing more individual attention. However, in late fall or mid-year, when just a few new students may enroll in the district, it can be more disruptive than helpful to students to add a new teacher. The district seeks flexibility to manage unexpected increases in class size ratios, with the commitment to providing the optimum learning environment for our students. Each instance will be assessed by the teachers and campus principal affected, and an appropriate recommendation will be made to the Board of Trustees.

### **4. Planning and Decision-Making Process—Campus and District Levels**

Texas Education Code Section 11.251 requires that each campus level council and the district level council include community and business representatives, as well as parents and professional staff members. Due to the relatively small size of the district, and its still-rural nature, with little business and industry, it is difficult to systematically recruit and retain community and business participants. The district would like to be exempt from the requirement to have both representatives on each council. Each council will still be expected to have community or business representation, assuring that the interests of the community are heard and included in the decision-making process.

## **5. Contract Service Days for 10-Month Educators**

Texas Education Code Section 21.401 requires that school districts provide educators, employed on a 10- month contract, a minimum of 187 days of service. Navarro ISD would like the freedom to consider a reduction in contract days to better align with the 75,600 minutes required for student instruction and provide flexibility in staff development support to best meet teachers' learning needs, with no effect on teacher salaries. Teacher contract days would be reduced by no more than 5 days per contract year.

The district seeks to provide competitive compensation and attract a diverse staff to engage all students. By allowing flexibility with the number of teacher contract days, the district expects to boost teacher morale and provide an impetus to teacher recruitment and retention, while providing a schedule that best meets the learning needs of the students and employees.

## **6. Minimum Minutes of Instruction**

Texas Education Code §25.081 requires that each school year a district must operate for at least 75,600 minutes, including time allocated for instruction, intermissions, and recesses for students. This code standardizes the amount of time students engage in classroom learning across all school districts, and allows school districts and charter schools to add minutes as necessary to compensate for minutes of instruction lost due to school closures caused by disaster, flood, extreme weather conditions, fuel curtailment or another calamity.

The required operational and/or instructional minutes, as defined in the Student Attendance Accounting Handbook, will be followed by Navarro ISD, but we are seeking an exemption for greater flexibility and the opportunity to offer more professional development for all staff. As we develop professional development plans, we will use additional instructional minutes to train staff and address a variety of learning needs. The district will consider creative and flexible scheduling options that benefit students, teachers, and parents. The district will also establish a process to determine a school calendar that incorporates the necessary minutes of non-instructional time to realize our vision for the school district while providing the time necessary to cover the academic requirements.

## **7. Grievance Policy**

**(DGBA LEGAL/LOCAL)  
(FNG LEGAL/LOCAL)  
(GF LEGAL/LOCAL)  
(ED CODE 26A.001(a)-(c), (e); 26A.002; 26A.003)**

Texas Education Code 26A.001(a)-(c), (e), 26A.002, and 26A.003 requires a

school district to adopt a grievance policy. This policy, among other things, significantly extends the grievance timelines and delays the resolution of a complaint. In addition, the new policy prevents the district from resolving an issue or complaint at the most appropriate level.

Following implementation of the SB 12 mandated grievance framework, Navarro ISD has found that the new policy framework is significantly longer and the additional requirements go beyond what is necessary for fair and effective resolution and, in practice, create procedural redundancy and inefficiency. Therefore, Navarro ISD seeks an exemption from the mandated grievance framework under its District of Innovation plan and intends to implement the prior district grievance policies that were intentionally crafted to be straightforward, promote fairness and transparency, and ensure timely resolution of concerns while remaining responsive to community needs and operational realities.

Reinstating the District's previous grievance policies will:

- Preserve a clear and efficient local process for addressing complaints;
- Reduce administrative burdens that divert time and resources from instructional priorities;
- Maintain appropriate due process protections for students, parents, and employees; and
- Provide the District with the flexibility necessary to respond promptly and effectively to concerns.

Navarro ISD remains committed to complying with all applicable federal and state laws, including those governing nondiscrimination and due process. This amendment is intended to restore local discretion in structuring grievance procedures in a manner that best serves the students, staff, and the community, while maintaining transparency and accountability.