



ALEDO ISD BOARD MEETING TEMPLATE

MEETING DATE: January 16, 2024

AGENDA ITEM: District of Innovation (DOI) Plan Revisions and Renewal

PRESENTER: Ingia Saxton, Assistant Superintendent Student & Community Programs

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

TEA DOI Renewal Guidelines:

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 would add flexibility and empower 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 a premiere education. The proposed DOI plan works in alignment with our district instructional goals to ensure a culture of excellence that supports teaching and learning.

The current AISD DOI plan was approved by the board in February 2019. TEA does require that approved DOI plans are renewed every 5 years. The current AISD DOI plan is due for renewal in February 2024.

During the renewal process, amendments to the adopted plan as well as new proposed flexibilities are allowed. These proposals and/or amendments must go through the district level committee for majority vote prior to being brought to the board for final approval. In addition, the plan is required to be available in draft form online for 30 days prior to final approval.

AISD Current Renewal Steps:

- November 2023 - DWEIC meeting to introduce DOI Renewal steps and potential flexibilities/amendments
- December 2023 - DWEIC meeting to review proposed flexibilities; members sought feedback from campus/group
- January 10, 2024 - Public DWEIC meeting to review feedback gathered from members; finalize wording for voting

- January 12, 2024 - final vote of DWEIC members on DOI Renewal and Proposed Flexibilities/Amendments
- January 17, 2024 - proposed AISD DOI draft as presented to the board will be posted on the AISD website for public view for 30 calendar days.

Proposed DOI Renewal Changes and Flexibilities

- Teacher Certification (*Proposed changes to the current DOI language in red.*)

Exemption from: Tex. Educ. Code §§ 21.003, 21.053; 19 Tex. Admin. Code § 231

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.

- Staff Development (New flexibility proposed.)

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 Peace Officers

Exemption from: Texas. Educ. Code §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 must transfer a student to another district under an agreement” pursuant to 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 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.

FISCAL INFORMATION:

No fiscal implications.

ATTACHMENTS:

Aledo ISD DOI Plan Renewal

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION:

None- communication item only