

**RICHARDSON INDEPENDENT
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Every Child. Every Leader. Every Teacher. Every Day.



District of Innovation Plan

Date	Approval
Original DOI Plan	
December 1, 2016	DOI Committee
January 6, 2017	District Planning Committee
January 9, 2017	RISD Board of Trustees
Amended DOI Plan	
February 11, 2019	DOI Committee
April 26, 2019	District Planning Committee
June 10, 2019	RISD Board of Trustees
Renewal DOI Plan	
June 9, 2022	DOI Committee
July 14, 2022	District Planning Committee
July 15, 2022	RISD Board of Trustees
Amended DOI Plan	
July 12, 2023	DOI Committee
July 12, 2023	DPC Committee
September 21, 2023	RISD Board of Trustees

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Vision

Every Child, Every Leader, Every Teacher, Every Day.

North Star Goal

Every student, teacher and leader will meet and/or exceed their academic growth goals.

Beliefs

To ensure the academic success of all students, we believe...

- In creating a safe learning environment that empowers every student in RISD to take risks, be creative, find acceptance and grow.
- That education is an effective tool that can prepare every student in RISD for life after high school, including teaching life skills.
- Every student in RISD will have the capability and desire to learn and rise to the level of expectations for individual success.

Goals

1. We will design and implement systems that provide the necessary structure, support and tools to ensure that staff and students achieve individual growth.
2. We will reimagine the way we recruit and retain quality staff through comprehensive strategies.
3. We will establish systems for curriculum and learning experiences which support the individual growth goals of all students and staff.
4. We will create opportunities to ensure engagement with community members in RISD.
5. We will increase efficiency and effectiveness in operations and personnel and seek additional fiscal resources to accomplish our call to action.

Policy Reference: AE (Local), BQ (Local)

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 the 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 was 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. The Board approved the original DOI Plan on January 9, 2017 for a five-year term.

The DOI Committee reconvened on February 11, 2019, to review the overall DOI Plan and to consider any recommendations for revisions. Committee members affirmed the continued appropriateness of the contents of the original Plan. Committee members also discussed the identified need for continued flexibility to hire qualified staff to teach course offerings through the career and technology education programs as well as STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), Dual Credit, and World Language Programs. RISD continues to expand course offerings in these areas and has experienced ongoing difficulty hiring qualified instructors for the classes. To help address

these challenges and needs, the Committee recommended the revisions to paragraph III. C and D of the original Plan. The Board approved the Amended Plan on June 10, 2019.

Renewal

The DOI Plan was subject to renewal in 2022. The DOI Committee met virtually on June 9, 2022. At that meeting, all voting members in attendance voted on recommending renewal of the original and amended plan, as well as three additional exemption areas. The DOI Renewal Plan maintained the elements of the original DOI Plan and Amendment related to First Day of Instruction; Length of Instructional Day; Teacher Certification; Teacher Appraisal; and Minimum Attendance for Class Credit. The DOI renewal plan also added additional certification consideration and financial consideration related to the depository contract. The District Planning Committee considered and supported proposed revisions at its public meeting on July 14, 2022. The Board of Trustees voted unanimously to renew the DOI Plan for five years on July 15, 2022.

2023 Amendment

A review of the DOI plan was conducted for the 2023-24 school year. The DOI Plan Committee met virtually on July 12, 2023. At that meeting, all voting members in attendance voted on recommending revisions to the plan. The proposed amendments reflect updated language for the vision, North Star Goal, beliefs and goals resulting from the RISD Strategic Plan 2023. Additionally, the proposed amendment removes references to Pre-Kindergarten in section II- Length of Instructional Day to reflect that Pre-Kindergarten offerings are all full-days. The District Planning Committee considered and supported the proposed amendments at the public meeting on July 12, 2023.

DOI PLANNING COMMITTEE

Facilitators: Mike Jasso (Chief of Staff)

DOI Renewal Committee Members	
Name	Role in RISD
Ellen Alexandrakis	Area Parent Representative
Victoria Behrman	Elementary School Teacher
Jeff Bradford	Athletics/Fine Arts Representative
Kristin Byno	Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning
Meredith Childress	Area Parent Representative
Matthew Gibbins	Assistant Superintendent of Administrative Services
Regina Harris	Board of Trustees Representative
Sandra Hayes	Assistant Superintendent of Operations
Melissa Heller	Assistant Superintendent of Strategy & Engagement
Yolanda Jackson-Gaither	Junior High School Principal
Sara Kate Miller	Elementary School Assistant Principal
David Pate	Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Support Services
Debbi Richards	Community Partner
Elizabeth Swaner	Executive Director of College & Career Readiness
Misty Wilson	Executive Director, Human Resources
Anne Marie Yarborough	Teaching & Learning Representative
Michelle Zupa	Elementary Principal

The DOI Plan Committee met virtually on July 12, 2023. After the meeting, the voting members in attendance voted to recommend the amendment to the DOI Plan. The District Planning Committee met virtually on July 12, 2023. After the meeting, the voting members in attendance voted to recommend the amendment to the DOI Plan

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 identified in the RISD Strategic Plan or in 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, Objective 1 and Goal 4, Objective 1
- 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: Except as authorized under Subsection (b) of this section, Section 25.0815, Section 25.084, or Section 29.0821, 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. (Board Policy Ref: EC (Legal) School Day)

B. DIP References: Goal 3, Objective 1

C. Challenges/Obstacles:

a. Pre-school program for Children with Disability Students – RISD offers pre-school program for children with disabilities classes. (PPCD) The PPCD classes are offered in two sessions each day – morning and afternoon (8 – 11 a.m., 12 -3 p.m.;). The Commissioner may adopt rules to determine the minutes of operation that are equivalent to a day. 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 non-traditional program sessions are offered in two sessions each day – morning and afternoon (8:30-11:30a.m., 12:30-3:30p.m.;). 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. 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; § 21.053: (a) 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. (b) An educator who does not hold a valid certificate may not be paid for teaching or work done before the effective date of issuance of a valid 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 2, Objective 1 and 2
- C. Challenges/Obstacles: The traditional certification requirements under the Texas Education Code are not aligned with realities of the current educational environment, teacher shortage and the need to hire industry experts to teach many of the course offerings through the career and technology education, STEM (Science Technology, Engineering, and Math), Dual Credit, World Language, Core and Extracurricular programs offered in most districts.

Traditionally, RISD has relied on colleges to provide their own staff for dual credit coursework, but the increase in dual credit programming has increased the need for more adjunct professors. As a result, RISD has been unable to offer some requested courses or has placed long- term substitute teachers in positions due to the lack of certified candidates. The limitation on course offerings reduces student engagement and satisfaction and deprives students of quality high school preparation for college and 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 core, extracurricular, career and technology education, STEM, Dual Credit, and World Language courses for which teachers holding traditional certifications are not readily available. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) offers an “Out of State” exemption plan for candidates who hold a standard teaching certificate from another state.

However, the timing of this process does not allow an educator to receive the reciprocal Texas certification within one year under the state's probationary certificate format, and causes the candidate to be out of compliance with his/her certification requirements before a Texas Standard Teaching Certificate can be issued.

The RISD's special education and bilingual/ESL teachers will continue to be SBEC certified.

- D. Proposed Innovation/Benefits: RISD will continue to seek traditionally certified candidates for all teaching positions. However, for those career and technology education, STEM, Dual Credit, core extracurricular and World Language courses for which a traditionally certified, qualified candidate is not identified, the District will recruit persons with industry experience, expert knowledge, and language proficiency in the field of need to teach those classes.

These credentials will allow content experts the ability to instruct content coursework for which they are highly qualified. 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. RISD will recognize "out of state" content standard teaching expertise after the original, successful Texas probationary certification period by providing an "Out of State Gap-Year Exemption" while TEA reviews credentials and posts the candidate's Texas Standard Certificate.

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 core, extracurricular and 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: The Commissioner is charged with adopting regulations under Texas Education Code §21.352: 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 2, Objective 1 and 2
- 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 conducts 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
- 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.

VI. School District Depositories – Term of Contract

- A. Statutory Exemption: Texas Education Code §45.205. TERM OF CONTRACT.
 - (a) Except as provided by Subsection (b), the depository bank when selected shall serve for a term of two years and until its successor is selected and has qualified.
 - (b) A school district and the district’s depository bank may agree to extend a depository contract for three additional two-year terms. The contract may be modified for each two-year extension if both parties mutually agree to the

terms. An extension under this subsection is not subject to the requirements of Section 45.206. (Board Policy Ref: BDAE (Legal): Officers and Officials Duties and Requirements of Depository: Contract Term)

- B. DIP References: Goal 5, Performance Objective 1
- C. Challenges/Obstacles: Texas Education Code §45.205 mandates a two-year initial term for depository contracts and three two-year terms for depository contract extensions. This limits the District's ability to address customer services issues with its depository bank that directly impact the District's employees and operational efficiency.
- D. Proposes Innovation/Benefits: RISD will continue to select a depository through competitive bidding or through requests for proposals no less than once every eight years. The District will structure its bids or proposals, and depository contract to specify a one-year term renewable annually for up to seven additional years (for a total of eight years) if both parties mutually agree to the terms. This will provide the District additional flexibility in managing its depository contract.

VII. School District Depositories – Depository Contract

- A. Statutory Exemption: Texas Education Code §45.208. DEPOSITORY CONTRACT; BOND. (a) The bank or banks selected as the depository or depositories and the school district shall enter into a depository contract or contracts, bond or bonds, or other necessary instruments setting forth the duties and agreements pertaining to the depository, in a form and with the content prescribed by the State Board of Education. The parties shall attach to the contract and incorporate by reference the bid or proposal of the depository. Texas Administrative Code, Title 19 Education, Part 2 Texas Education Agency, Chapter 109 Budgeting, Accounting, and Auditing, Subchapter D Uniform Bank Bid or Request for Proposal and Depository Contract §109.52. (Board Policy Ref: BDAE (Legal): Officers and Officials Duties and Requirements of Depository: Contract Form)
- B. DIP References: Goal 5, Performance Objective 1
- C. Challenges/Obstacles: The form of the Uniform Depository Bank Contract and Surety Bond Forms specifies an initial two-year term for depository contracts and three two-year terms for depository contract extensions. This limits the District's ability to address customer service issues with its depository bank that directly impact the District's employees and operational efficiency.
- D. Proposed Innovation/Benefit: RISD will continue to select a depository through competitive bidding or through requests for proposals no less than once every eight years. The District will structure its bids or proposals, and depository contract to specify a one-year term renewable annually for up to seven additional

years (for a total of eight years) if both parties mutually agree to the terms. This will provide the District additional flexibility in managing its depository contract.

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 2022-2023 school year and continue for five years, through the end of the 2026-2027 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
2023-24**

Goal 1: We will develop and implement systems that provide the necessary structure, support and tools to ensure students and staff achieve individual growth.

Performance Objective 1: Develop and implement a system to house goals and evidence toward goals and tools for progress measurement.

Goal 2: RISD will reimagine the way we recruit and retain quality staff through comprehensive strategies.

Performance Objective 1: Provide competitive compensation, incentives and benefits that attract and retain high-quality and diverse teachers and staff.

Performance Objective 2: Develop and execute innovative plan for employee recruitment.

Goal 3: We will establish systems for curriculum and learning experiences which support the individual growth goals of all students and staff.

Performance Objective 1: Implement a learning framework that provides all RISD experiences to develop competencies aligned with the graduate profile.

Performance Objective 2: Create a professional learning system that promotes continuous growth and equips all employees with the knowledge and skills they need to reach their individual growth goals.

Performance Objective 3: Ensure all students graduate college and career ready as measured by CCMR indicators.

Goal 4: We will create opportunities to ensure engagement with community members in RISD.

Performance Objective 1: Create reciprocal pathways for families to increase and deepen engagement.

Goal 5: We will increase efficiency and effectiveness in operations and personnel and seek additional fiscal resources to accomplish our call to action.

Performance Objective 1: Ensure operations are conducted in a financially efficient and effective manner.

Performance Objective 2: Provide a safe, comfortable and well maintained environment at all campuses.

Performance Objective 3: Provide a safe, secure and reliable technology infrastructure to support teaching, learning and operations.