



**La Feria Independent School District
District of Innovation Plan
2022-2023
2023-2024
2024-2025
2025-2026
2026-2027**

Amended June 12, 2023

i. Introduction

The 84th Legislative Session passed House Bill 1842, allowing Texas public school districts to become Districts of Innovation and thus permitting exemption from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code. To better serve and accommodate the diverse needs of all members, La Feria ISD seeks to become a District of Innovation. This distinction allows the District increased local control over the District calendar to improve the quality of services benefiting all stakeholders.

A resolution to initiate the process of La Feria ISD becoming a District of Innovation was adopted by the Board of Trustees on February 15, 2022. The Board of Trustees approved a committee that was charged with creating a local innovation plan to improve opportunities for the students of La Feria ISD. The District Innovation Committee (DIC) met on March 21, 2022 to develop the plan. Several components were discussed and data was reviewed to develop a plan that would systemically improve opportunities for students.

The La Feria ISD plan is for five years, beginning in 2022-2023 school year and ending in April 2027 school year. The board of trustees will need to renew the plan in April 2027 for it to remain effective for the rest of the 2026-2027 school year. The plan may be terminated or amended by the Board of Trustees at any time in accordance with the law. The committee will monitor its effectiveness and provide updates and/or necessary modifications to the Board of Trustees on a regular basis.

ii. District Innovation Committee

1. Lillian Ramos, Interim-Superintendent
2. Veronica Torres, Assistant Superintendent
3. Alejandro Cespedes, CFO
4. Hector Cazares, LFHS Principal
5. Oscar Salinas, Athletic Director
6. David Cardona, Band Director
7. Raquel Vento, Special Populations Director
8. Dr. Yvette Cantu, Testing and Accountability Director
9. Trisha Garza, D. Sanchez Principal
10. Arivay Ruedas, W.B. Green JH Teacher
11. Ada Brandt, Academy Teacher
12. Braulio Garcia, LFHS Teacher
13. Amanda Guevara, C.E. Vail Teacher
14. Abraham Mandujano, N. Dominguez Teacher
15. Nancy Loreda, Sam Houston Teacher
16. Stephanie Naylor, D. Sanchez Teacher
17. Scarlet Sanchez, Community Member
18. George Lazaro, Community Member
19. Cynthia Gonzales, Community Member
20. Maria Rios, Community Member

III. District Timeline

February 15, 2022	The board of trustees approved the Resolution to initiate consideration of a District of Innovation plan.
February 15, 2022	The board of trustees held a public hearing and approved the District of Innovation Committee being created.
March 2 & 4, 2022	Principals and administration staff reviewed becoming a District of Innovation district.
March 7, 2022	A survey was sent out to teachers, support staff, and administrators concerning start and end dates.
March 21, 2022	District of Innovation committee met to work on the plan.
March 22, 2022	The proposed plan was posted on the district website for 30 days.
March 23, 2022	A survey was sent out to parents concerning start and end dates.
March 24, 2022	The District of Innovation committee met to work on calendar recommendations.
April 25, 2022	The District of Innovation Committee (DOI) pursuant to Texas Education Code 11.251 held a public meeting to discuss the plan. A majority of the members voted to approve the plan with a vote of 13-1.
April 25, 2022	The Board of Trustees met and unanimously approved the District of Innovation Plan during the board meeting.

IV. The Plan

A. Flexibility with Calendars

A goal of La Feria ISD is to ensure all students are reaching post-secondary readiness. Currently, some students are discouraged from enrolling in dual credit programs because of a conflict between the district and college/university calendars. Exempting from the requirements of the Texas Education Code provisions listed below will encourage more students to enroll in dual credit courses because it will allow the district to adopt a calendar with a flexible start and end dates to match those of the colleges and universities with whom we collaborate with.

TEC Sec. 25.0811. FIRST DAY OF INSTRUCTION. (a) Except as provided by this section, a school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth MONDAY in August.

Strategy: Develop a calendar that assists our students taking dual enrollment classes that will match start and end dates of the colleges and universities with

whom we collaborate, which will also allow students to register for the first summer session at a local college or university. To develop a calendar that will allow the district to balance six weeks by the number of days which will include an extra week to prepare students who are re-taking End of Course exams.

DISTRICT OF INNOVATION AMENDMENT TIMELINE

The following timeline depicts dates to complete an amendment for the District’s current District of Innovation as per Texas Administrative Code 102.1313

Amendment, Rescission, or Renewal

- (a) A district innovation plan may be amended, rescinded, or renewed if the action is approved by a majority votes of the district-level committee established under the Texas Education Code (TEC), § 11.251, or a comparable committee if the district is exempt from that section, and a two-thirds majority vote of the board of trustees.

- (1.) Amendment. An amendment to an approved does not change the date of the term of designation as an innovation district. Exemptions that were already formally approved are not required to be reviewed.

<u>Action</u>	<u>Date</u>
Meeting with Cabinet members to discuss the proposed amendment	March 20, 2023
DOI Committing meeting Presentation to add exemption: Transfers of Students	April 27, 2023
Presented Board of Trustees with the proposed amendments to the District of Innovation Plan	June 12, 2023

Proposed Amendment

I. Term

The Amended Plan adopted by the LFISD Board of Trustees will adhere to the same term as the original plan. The District may not implement two separate plans at any one time.

II. Innovation

The District proposes flexibility in the following area:

Inter-District Transfer Students

FDA (LOCAL) & TEC 25.036

Transfer Students. Currently, under Texas Education Code 25.036, a district may choose to accept, as transfers, students who are entitled to enroll in the district, but TEC 25.036, has been interpreted to require a transfer to be for a period of one school year.

La Feria ISD Local Policy

La Feria ISD maintains a transfer policy under FDA (Local) requiring nonresident students wishing to transfer to file a transfer application each school year. In approving transfer requests, the availability of space and instructional staff, the student's disciplinary history and attendance records are evaluated. Transfers students are expected to follow attendance requirements, rules and regulations of the District. TEC 25.036

Proposed Amendment

La Feria ISD maintains a transfer policy under FDA(Local) requiring nonresident students wishing to transfer to file a transfer application each school year. In approving transfer requests, the availability of space and instructional staff, availability of programs and services, the student's disciplinary history records and attendance records are also evaluated. Transfer students are expected to follow the attendance requirements, rules and regulations of the district. TEC 25.036 has been interpreted to establish the acceptance of a transfer as a one-year commitment by the district. The district is seeking exemption from the one-year commitment in accepting transfer applicants and allow the district to rescind a transfer at any time during the school year if a student fails to comply with the transfer agreement.