

**Wimberley Independent School District
District of Innovation Proposal for 2022-2027
Proposal Draft to be voted on January 24, 2022**

School Calendar /Flexible Start Date

(TEC §25.0811) (TEC §25.0812)(EB LEGAL)

Current Law

Students may not begin school before the 4th Monday of August. For many years this was the rule. However, districts had the option of applying for a waiver to start earlier. The vast majority of districts applied for the waiver and would begin the 3rd Monday, some even going as early as the 2nd Monday. The Texas tourism groups lobbied to have this stopped because they believed it was hurting their tourism business. Therefore, several years ago the legislature took away all waivers and dictated that districts may not begin until the 4th Monday, with no exceptions.

WISD Proposal

Wimberley ISD would like the flexibility of looking at the calendar each year and starting earlier. Removing the uniform start date could also let the district start classes as mid-week, easing the transition for students entering kindergarten, middle school, and high school.

Class Size 22:1 Ratio

(TEC §25.112) (EEB LEGAL)

Current Law

Pre-Kindergarten – 4th Grade classes are to be kept at a 22 student to 1 teacher ratio according to state law. When a class exceeds this limit, the district must complete a waiver with the Texas Education Agency. These waivers are never rejected by TEA. Along with the waiver, it is required that a letter is sent home to each parent in the section that exceeds the 22:1 ratio, informing them the waiver has been submitted.

WISD Proposal

Over the last several years, Wimberley has had to write waivers for a handful of classes and the TEA always approves the waivers. Wimberley ISD would seek board approval to exceed the 22:1 in any PK-4th grade classroom. Parents will be notified within the first three weeks of the start of school of any classroom size that is above the 22:1 ratio.

Behavior Coordinator Assignment-Student Discipline Provisions

(FO LEGAL & LOCAL) (TEC §37.0012)

Current Law

Currently Senate Bill 107 requires the designation of a campus behavior coordinator on each campus. This designee is responsible for maintaining student discipline and the implementation of Chapter 37, Subchapter A.

WISD Proposal

The proposal is for the District to abstain from the state requirement that each school have a designated campus behavior coordinator. WISD's approach to discipline is becoming more collaborative, with multiple people providing emotional and social support to students, rather than just one person. Exemption from this requirement will allow the option of increasing collaboration in regard to student discipline, as outlined in the WISD Student Code of Conduct. Campus Administrators will continue to inform parents of discipline /incidents involving their children.

Teacher Contracts-Extension of Probationary Contracts

(TEC §21.102(b)) (DCA LEGAL)

Current Law

TEC 21.102(b) states that a probationary contract may not exceed one year for a person who has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment with the district.

This time period may not be sufficient to evaluate the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom since teacher contract timelines demand that employment decisions must be made prior to state assessment results.

WISD Proposal

Wimberley ISD would like to create a policy where experienced teachers, counselors, or nurses new to the district that have been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight previous years, may be issued a probationary contract for up to two years from the last date of district employment.

District Transfer Policy

(TEC §25.036)

Current Law

A district may choose to accept, as transfers, students who are not entitled to enroll in the district under §25.001. Under §25.036, a transfer is for a period of one school year.[64] The district may charge tuition under a transfer agreement to the extent permitted under §25.038.

WISD Proposal

The district would like the option of being able to terminate the transfer agreement for students in PK-11 when the student/ parent has not been forthcoming with information regarding discipline, special programs or other issues that end up costing the district to keep the student enrolled.

At any time during the school year, a transfer student who becomes a discipline issue, poor attendance, or is in need of special services which exceeds state funding for that student, WISD can terminate their transfer agreement.”

- **Students will be held to high expectations for appropriate behavior and conduct on campuses.**
- **Parents will be held to high expectations for appropriate behavior when interacting with school personnel on and off campus, phone and email.**
- **Students will meet the attendance expectations for the campuses of be withdrawn. If their attendance rate drops below 90%, the transfer may be revoked.**
- **When a transfer student has 2 disciplinary incidents, a campus administrator will review the details of the incidents and determine the status of the transfer.**
- **If a student receives a DAIE assignment, the transfer will be immediately revoked.**

Credit by Examination without Prior Instruction

(TEC 28.023 Board Policies EHDC (LEGAL) and Local))

Current Law:

Texas Education Code Section 28.083 allows an elementary student to skip a grade if he or she earns a score of 80 percent or above on an approved exam for acceleration. A student would need to pass all four core subject areas with the 80% on each area in order to go to the next grade level. A student in sixth grade and above can earn individual course credits with 80% prior to instruction.

Prior to the 83rd Legislative Session (2013), the passing score for credit by exam without prior instruction was 90 percent, rather than 80 percent. Several districts comparable to Wimberley ISD have returned to the 90 percent standard for student acceleration.

WISD Proposal:

- A. Relief from this statute permits the district to increase the standard required to be eligible for acceleration from 80% to 90%.
- B. Requiring a higher passing score ensures a student who accelerates a grade or course has more thoroughly mastered the content and is prepared to succeed in the next grade or series of courses.
- C. The new passing standard is applicable beginning with credit by examination administered after the 2021-2022 school year.