

# School Districts of Innovation

## ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 2024

### Executive Summary

[Ohio law](#) permits the designation of an individual school operated by a school district as an innovation school or two or more schools in the district as an innovation zone. School districts of innovation may seek waivers from certain education laws or administrative rules to implement an innovative educational program.

- One district applied for and received a waiver in the 2022-2023 school year.
- Statutory changes to modernize the “blizzard bag” law were made in House Bill 33 of the 135<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

### Annual Report Requirements

In accordance with [Ohio Revised Code \(R.C.\) section 3302.068](#), the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (DEW) must issue an annual report on school districts of innovation detailing:

- The number of districts designated as school districts of innovation and the total number of school districts of innovation statewide;
- The number of innovation schools in each school district of innovation and the number of students served by the schools;
- The number of innovation school zones in each school district of innovation, the number of schools participating in each zone, and the number of students served by the participating schools;
- The innovations implemented in innovation schools and innovation school zones; and
- The academic performance of the students enrolled in an innovation school or an innovation school zone before and after the designation as a school district of innovation.

### 2022-2023 School Year

In February 2023, the State Board of Education [approved](#) Noble Local School District’s [application](#) to become a school district of innovation. The two schools in the district, Shenandoah High School and Shenandoah Elementary School, implemented online classroom lessons when the district was closed for calamities, generally waiving certain requirements of [R.C. 3313.482](#). All 962 students in the Noble Local School District are served by Shenandoah High School and Shenandoah Elementary School, which amounts to 100% of the district's total population.

The Noble Local School District's 2023 Ohio School Report Card reflected the academic performance of the students enrolled in the innovation school zone as follows: 3 stars in Achievement, 1 star in Progress, 5 stars in Gap Closing, 5 stars in Graduation, and 4 stars in Early Literacy. The district improved its Gap Closing, Graduation, and Early Literacy star ratings by 1 star in each category in comparison to the 2022 report card results.

[House Bill 33 of the 135<sup>th</sup> General Assembly](#) changed Ohio's calamity day statute by replacing the use of blizzard bags with online makeup days. H.B. 33 changes were effective on Oct. 3, 2023. [R.C. 3313.482](#) requires school districts, community schools, chartered nonpublic schools, and STEM schools to adopt [online day plans](#) by Aug. 1 of each year for the 2024-2025 school year and beyond.

*It should be noted that any school that uses a blended learning model or operates an online learning school is not eligible under the statute to use an online day plan. [R.C. 3313.482\(A\)\(2\)](#).*

Online day plans are an alternative to making up hours due to school closure under several circumstances. Schools or districts may use an online day plan to make up the equivalent of up to three school days via online delivery under allowable scenarios. The designation as a school district of innovation allows Noble Local School District to make up an unlimited number of days when the schools are closed via online delivery.

## Legislative Recommendations

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce has no legislative recommendations at this time.