

# School Districts of Innovation



2025



**Department of  
Education &  
Workforce**

## 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 School Zone. School Districts of Innovation may seek waivers from certain education laws or administrative rules to implement an innovative educational program. Every three years, the district board of education must review the performance of the Innovation School and determine if it is making sufficient progress toward the improvements in student academic performance outlined in its innovation plan.

In February 2023, the State Board of Education of Ohio 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, comprise a single Innovation School Zone. These schools implemented online classroom lessons when the district was closed due to calamities, generally waiving certain requirements of R.C. 3313.482.

## Annual Report Requirements

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

### **Number of districts designated as a School District of Innovation in the preceding school year**

No districts were designated as a School District of Innovation during the previous school year.

### **Total number of School Districts of Innovation statewide**

There is one School District of Innovation statewide. Noble Local School District was approved by the State Board of Education as a School District of Innovation in February 2023, beginning with the 2022-2023 school year.

### **Number of Innovation Schools in each School District of Innovation and number of students served**

There is no singularly designated Innovation School.

### **Number of Innovation School Zones in each School District of Innovation, number of schools participating in each zone, and number of students served**

- There is one Innovation School Zone in the Noble Local School District.
- Two schools are participating in this Innovation School Zone:
  - Shenandoah Elementary School
  - Shenandoah High School
- Number of district students served by each participating school in the 2023-2024 school year:
  - Shenandoah Elementary School – 801

- Shenandoah High School – 249
- Percentage of district students served by each participating school:
  - Shenandoah Elementary School – 76%
  - Shenandoah High School – 24%

## **Innovations implemented in Innovation School Zones**

All 1,050 students in the Noble Local School District are served by Shenandoah Elementary School and Shenandoah High School, which account for 100% of the district's total population. The two schools in the district, Shenandoah Elementary School and Shenandoah High School, implemented online classroom lessons when the district closed school due to calamities (for instances such as unsafe transportation conditions due to inclement weather), generally waiving certain requirements of [R.C. 3313.482](#). As a result, the district used zero remote learning days in the 2022-2023 school year, four remote learning days in 2023-2024, and eight remote learning days in 2024-2025.

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. Revisions to HB 33 took effect 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.

Online day plans are an alternative to making up hours due to school closures under specified circumstances. Schools or districts may use online day plans 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 via online delivery when the schools are closed.

*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 per R.C. 3313.482(A)(2).*

Schools in Noble Local School District have implemented the following:

- Waived the limitation on the maximum number of hours (the equivalent of three school days), so distance learning days may be used as needed due to the high number of calamity days at the district
- Waived the requirement to adopt an [online day plan](#) prior to Aug. 1
- Removed references to “make-up” hours, as the schools do not consider their Distance Learning Innovation to be make-up hours

## **Academic performance data of students enrolled in an Innovation School Zone before and after the designation as a School District of Innovation**

The Ohio School Report Cards for Noble Local School District reflect the academic performance and attendance of the students enrolled in the Innovation School Zone as follows:

School Year	Overall Rating <sup>1</sup>	Achievement	Progress	Gap Closing	Graduation	Early Literacy	Chronic Absenteeism
2021-2022	N/A <sup>2</sup>	★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	25.4%
2022-2023	3.5	★★★	★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	19.5%
2023-2024	3.5	★★★	★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	15.5%

**Recommendations for legislative changes based on the innovations implemented or to enhance the ability of schools and districts to implement innovations**

The Department recommends the repeal of Ohio Revised Code (R.C.) 3302.06 through 3302.068. If repealed, all innovative programs moving forward would be considered under R.C. 3302.07. Designation as a School District of Innovation under R.C. 3302.06 is a highly prescriptive option and has been used only once since its enactment in 2011. Repealing that option in favor of the Innovative Education Pilot Program (R.C. 3302.07) will provide more flexibility for school districts, schools, and educational service centers to implement innovative educational practices with high impact for students.

<sup>1</sup> The Ohio School Report Card rating is measured in half-star increments from 1 to 5.

<sup>2</sup> Per [Ohio Revised Code 3302.03](#), the overall star rating began with the 2022-2023 school year.