

Three Way ISD

Three Way Independent School District
Local Innovation Plan



Local Innovation Committee Members

Paul Ryan, Superintendent

Ronda Melton, Principal

Carlos Ortiz, Technology Director

Sandy House, Kindergarten Teacher

Sherri Michael, Junior High Teacher

Crystal Rucas, Technology Teacher

Senaida Huerta, Parent/Community Member

Larry Sims, Parent/Community Member

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I. INTRODUCTION

House Bill 1842, passed during the 84th Legislative Session, provides the opportunity for Texas public school districts to pursue the designation of District of Innovation. This allows local school districts to obtain exemptions from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code to allow more flexibility and local control for innovative programming. On January 10, 2017 Three Way Independent School District passed a Resolution to initiate the process of designation as a District of Innovation in order to increase local control over District operations and to support innovation and local initiatives to improve educational outcomes for the benefit of students in the community.

On January 10, 2017, the TWISD School Board held a Public Hearing to allow the public to learn more about the designation and provide feedback. The School Board appointed a Local Innovation Committee comprised of community members appointed by the School Board Officers, parents, teacher leaders, and campus and district level administrators to prepare a Local Innovation Plan to address the needs of the District.

This Local Innovation Committee met to develop a draft of the Local Innovation Plan. The plan was posted online for public viewing and feedback on April 27, 2017 and remained online until May 30, 2017. The Local Innovation Committee will present the plan to the School Board for their consideration at the regular scheduled meeting on June 20, 2017.

II. Term

The term of the Local Innovation Plan will begin at the start of the 2017-2018 school year and end at the end of the 2020-2021 School Year, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The committee will revisit the plan annually to ensure that the recommendations are still in line with the needs of the district. Any changes recommended would be on the website for 30 days and require approval of the Innovation Committee, the Educational Improvement Committee and the School Board.

III. Continual Improvement

The Local Innovation Plan is guided by and aligned with the Board's Vision, Mission, Strategic Priorities, and Strategic Plan for the District as follows:

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Mission Statement

Our mission is to develop young men and women with active, creative, independent minds, strong character, and courage to think and act on their beliefs and interests, through collaboration, communication, and critical thinking skills.

Vision Statement

Our vision is building better citizens through high academic standards and equipping them with essential 21st century skills.

TWISD Goals

- Innovatively instruct every student in a climate of high expectations for success.
- Emphasize professional development and growth to maximize individualized instruction for every student.
- Communicate with parents and community members in the educational process to build relationships that promote the most advantageous learning environment for all students.
- Every student will learn communication, collaboration, problem-solving, creating, and critical thinking skills utilizing the latest technological tools and resources.

Innovations Recommended:

The TWISD School Board and the Local Innovation Committee considered all areas available for local innovation and decided to create a plan that centers around three areas:

I. First Day of Instruction:

TEC Code Requiring Exemption: TEC §25.0811

TEC §25.0811 states that a school district may not begin student instruction 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, even as early as the 2nd Monday in August.

Benefit of Exemption for TWISD:

A flexible start date would allow for a calendar which best fits the needs of our students, community, and school. Having the flexibility to establish an earlier start date will enable the District to better balance the amount of instructional time available in each semester, providing classroom teachers the opportunity to deliver more equitable learning experiences for students in the fall and spring semesters.

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Local Guidelines:

The district leadership along with the site-based management committee will receive input from parents and staff members, then subject to Board of Trustees approval, decide on an annual basis the beginning date of school.

Exemption from the Texas Education Code Section §25.081 will require revisions in the District policies at EB (LEGAL) and (LOCAL).

II. Teacher Certification

TEC Code Requiring Exemption: TEC §21.003

TEC §25.0811 states that a person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern or teacher trainee, librarian, educational aide, administrator, educational diagnostician, or school counselor by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued as provided by Subchapter B.

Benefit of Exemption for TWISD:

The current state teacher certification requirements inhibit the District's ability to hire teachers to teach hard-to-fill, high demand, dual credit, as well as career and technical courses. Three Way ISD is located in a rural area which limits course offerings and utilizes creative instructional methods district wide. Allowing the district local control in order to better enable students to obtain the educational benefits of such course offerings, the District seeks to establish its own local qualification requirements and its own requirements for training professionals and experts to teach such courses in lieu of the requirements set forth in law.

Local Guidelines:

The Superintendent, after consultation with the campus principal, will certify candidates that meet local credential guidelines. The Superintendent will notify the Board prior to the individual beginning employment.

Exemption from the Texas Education Code §21.003 will require the District to review its policies at DBA (LEGAL) and (LOCAL) as well as the policies at DK (LEGAL) and (LOCAL).

Criminal History:

All candidates must complete the criminal background check in compliance with State Board for Education Certification (SBEC) rules mandated by TEC §22.0833 for a non-certified employee.