

Atlanta

Independent School District



District of Innovation Plan

2022-2027

INTRODUCTION

HB 1842 was passed during the 84th legislative Session in Spring 2015, and provides Texas public school districts the opportunity to be designated as a District of Innovation. To access these flexibilities, a school district must adopt an innovation plan, as set forth in Texas Education Code Chapter 12A.

Districts of Innovation may be exempted from a number of state statutes and will have: Greater local control as the decision makers over the educational and instructional model for students;

- Increased freedom and flexibility, with accountability, relative to state mandates that govern educational programming; and
- Empowerment to innovate and think differently.
Districts are not exempt from statutes including curriculum and graduation requirements and academic and financial accountability.

PROCESS

On January 5, 2017 the Atlanta Independent School District’s Board of Trustees initiated the process by passing a Resolution to Adopt a District of Innovation in order to support innovation and local initiatives to improve student learning.

On February 2, 2017 the Atlanta ISD Board of Trustees held a public hearing for public discussion on whether the District should develop a local innovation plan for the designation of the District as a District of Innovation. With there being no objection from the hearing, the Board of Trustees appointed the District Site Based Committee to discuss and draft this Local Innovation Plan. This committee represents various stakeholders across the district, including teachers, parents, campus administration, district administration and local business owners. The committee met initially on February 9, 2017 to discuss and develop the plan.

The plan was posted on the District website for 30 days, beginning February 10, 2017, before being presented to, and approved by the District Site Based Committee on March 16, 2017. Atlanta ISD notified the Texas Commissioner of Education of the District’s final District of Innovation Plan and the plan will be submitted to the Board of Trustees for final approval on March 28, 2017.

TERM

The District of Innovation Plan will become effective in March 2017 and will remain in effect for five years, through February 2021, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The District Site Based Committee will monitor the effectiveness of the Plan and recommend to the Board of Trustees any suggested modifications to the Plan.

TIMELINE

Timeline	Activity/Task	Action
January 5, 2017	Board of Trustees passes Resolution to initiate District of Innovation Plan	Complete
February 2, 2017	Board of Trustees holds public hearing / appoints committee to draft plan	Complete
February 9, 2017	Committee meeting to draft / finalize District of Innovation Plan	Complete
February 10, 2017	Post District of Innovation Plan on AISD website	Complete
March 16, 2017	Committee vote on District of Innovation Plan	Complete
March 17, 2017	Notify the Commissioner of Education of Districts intent to submit Plan	Complete
March 28, 2017	Board of Trustees vote on District of Innovation Plan	Complete
March 29, 2017	Final District of Innovation Plan submitted to Commissioner of Education	Complete

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Name	Member Category
Sidney Harrist	District Level Administrator
Joey Geletka	District Level Administrator
Nancy Rinehart	High School Administrator
Jay Wylie	Middle School Administrator
Todd Marshall	Elementary School Administrator
Donna Rice	Primary School Administrator
Rebecca Hearn	High School Teacher
David Wommack	High School Teacher
Cherise Wicks	Middle School Teacher
Loree Saffel	Elementary School Teacher
April Britton	Elementary School Teacher
Mary Kutz	Primary School Teacher
Elizabeth Booth	Non Teacher/Elementary
Rae Hammonds	Non Teacher/Primary
Linda Howard	Non Teacher/High School
Marilyn Cobb	District Level Professional
Caren Rumsey	District Level Professional
Hunter Tidwell	Business Member
Craig Hale	Business Member
Shirley Lightfoot	Parent
Kenisha Webster	Parent
Terri Peace	Parent
Stacie Holland	Parent
Susan Rich	Parent
Michelle Caver	Parent
Antwyn Falls Sr.	Parent

RENEWAL COMMITTEE

Boyce, Colby	Principal/Middle School
Allen, Brooke	Parent
Anthony, Stacy	Teacher/High School
Bush, Dana	Parent
Christian, Jennifer	Nurse
Cullins, Lori	Career & Technology Director
Hale, Craig	Business Member
Harris, Jason	District Level Administrator
Harrist, Sidney	District Level Administrator
Highland, Alison	Teacher/Elementary
McCasland, Jaci	Teacher/Primary
Smith, Stuart	Community Member
Wall, Holly	Teacher/Middle School
Williams, Misty	Principal/Primary

RENEWAL TIMELINE

Timeline	Activity/Task	Action
September 27, 2021	Final version of the proposed plan has been available on the district's website for at least 30 days	Complete
	The board of trustees has notified the commissioner of education of the board's intention to vote on adoption of the proposed plan	Complete
September 13, 2021	The district-level committee established under the Texas Education Code (TEC), §11.251, has held a public meeting to consider the final version of the proposed plan and has approved the plan by a majority vote of the committee member	Complete
November 30, 2021	The board of trustees adopts a proposed local innovation plan by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the membership of the board	Complete
December 1, 2021	The district notifies the commissioner of approval of the plan along with a list of approved TEC exemptions	
December 2, 2021	The district shall ensure that a copy of the local innovation plan is posted on the district's website in accordance with the TEC, §12A.0071, for the term of the designation as an innovation district.	Complete
December 2, 2021	Not later than the 15th day after the date on which the board of trustees finalizes a local innovation plan either through adoption, amendment, or renewal, the district shall provide a copy of [link to] the current local innovation plan to the Texas Education Agency for posting on the agency website	Complete

EXEMPTIONS

25.0811 UNIFORM SCHOOL START DATE

A district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August unless the district operates on a year-round system. A district may not receive a waiver for this requirement.

PROPOSED

Atlanta Independent School District will begin instruction no earlier than the second Monday of August in an effort to create greater flexibility in the school calendar. This flexibility will allow more opportunities to:

- schedule timely and meaningful staff development.
- provide additional days of instruction prior to state assessment.
- improve balance between the number of instructional days in Semester 1 and Semester 2.

LOCAL GUIDELINES

The District Site Based Committee will meet annually to develop a district instructional calendar that meets the needs of district and community stakeholders.

21.102 Probationary Contract

Currently, experienced teachers new to the district have a probationary period that may not exceed one year if the person has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the previous eight years.

PROPOSED

Experienced teachers and counselors new to Atlanta Independent School District that have been employed in public education for at least five of the previous eight years, a probationary contract may be issued for up to two years from the last date of district employment. Relief from Texas Education Code 21.102 will allow time to fully determine a staff member's effectiveness.

LOCAL GUIDELINES

At the time of contract recommendation consideration, teachers and counselors with the district, who have been employed in public education for at least five of the eight previous years and have completed their first probationary year with the district, may receive a probationary contract for the second year in order to continue to evaluate the staff member's performance. In determining an employee who will receive a second year probationary contract, the district will review:

- employees most recent evaluation conducted by AISD
- employees record of attendance
- district staffing patterns and needs

21.003 Certification

TEC 21.003(a) states a person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern or teacher trainee, librarian, educational aide, administrator, education diagnostician, or school counselor by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued as provided by Subchapter B. TEC 21.057 requires districts to provide written notice to parents when an inappropriately certified teacher is assigned to the same classroom for more than 30 consecutive instructional days during the same school year.

PROPOSED

In order to best serve Atlanta ISD students, decisions on certification will be handled locally. With the current teacher shortage, this exemption from teacher certification requirements will enable greater flexibility in staffing and will enrich applicant pools in specific areas of need. Exemption from TEC 21.003 would allow the district to consider part time professionals to teach courses, allow industry professionals to transition to the teaching profession in Career and Technology, and assist in staffing dual credit course offerings. Out of state certified teachers could be considered for positions upon local review of experience, education and credentials. Exemptions to this statute do not apply to special education and bilingual teachers.

LOCAL GUIDELINES

In order to best serve students, all decisions on teacher certification and assignments will be handled locally, and notification of District Teaching Permits (local certification) shall not be necessary.

The principal may submit to the superintendent and/or the superintendent's designee a request for District Teaching Permit (local certification) outlining the individual's credentials/qualifications. Qualification for local certification could include, but is not limited to:

- professional work experience
- formal training/education in the content area
- active/relevant professional industry certification/registration
- a combination of work experience, training, and education
- demonstration of successful experience working with students.

The superintendent or his/her designee will then approve the request if they believe the individual possesses the knowledge, skills and experience required of the position and feel the individual could be an asset to students. Employment is dependent upon Board approval. An employee working under a District Teaching Permit (local certification) will be appraised under the same teacher appraisal system as required of all certified teachers and will adhere to the same professional standards, ethics, and requirements of all certified teachers.