

Dodd City

Independent School District



District of Innovation Plan

2017-2022

Resolution by the DCISD Board of Trustees, December 1, 2016
District of Innovation Committee Meeting, December 5, 2016
Approved by the District Improvement Committee, January 7, 2017
Adopted by the DCISD Board of Trustees, January 19, 2017



Dodd City ISD District of Innovation - Plan 2017-2022

Introduction

During the 84th Legislative Session, HB 1842 passed that allows Texas public schools to become Districts of Innovation which would allow them to obtain flexibilities with certain provisions of the Texas Education code, most of which are available to Texas' open-enrollment charter schools. Dodd City ISD is exercising this opportunity of becoming a District of Innovation to obtain more flexibility in order to better meet the unique needs of our district, students and community.

Term

Dodd City ISD's Innovation Plan will begin with the 2017-2018 school year and conclude at the end of the 2021-2022 school year unless the plan is terminated or amended by the Dodd City ISD School Board in accordance with HB 1842.

Committee Members

Craig Reed - Superintendent
Lesia Bridges - Asst. Superintendent
Jason Crow - JH/HS Principal
JoAnna Collida - Elementary Principal
Angie Freeman - Counselor
Jennifer Cowan - Teacher
Teresa Massie - Teacher
Karen Kelton - Teacher
Tiffany Atchley - Elementary Secretary
Amanda McDonald - Parent
Meredith Munger - Teacher
Louise Knight - Teacher
Micah Rich - Teacher
Renea Knight - Community

District of Innovation - Timeline

Monday, November 14, 2016

Initial meeting with administrative staff to discuss the pros and cons of filing with TEA as a District of Innovation.

Thursday, December 1, 2016

7:00pm Special Board Meeting

*Board of Trustees approve a resolution to hold a public hearing to discuss the possibility of using HB 1842 to become a District of Innovation.

7:15 Regular Board Meeting

*Public Hearing to explain and discuss the possibility of becoming a District of Innovation.

*Approve a motion to pursue developing a District of Innovation Plan, proposed areas of focus, and members for the District Innovation Committee.

Monday, December 5, 2016

District of Innovation Committee meet to develop a plan.

Wednesday, December 7, 2016

Post District of Innovation Plan on website for 30 days.

Thursday, January 5, 2017

District Improvement Committee Public Hearing

District Improvement Committee vote on Local Innovation Plan

Monday, January 9, 2017

Notify Commissioner of Education of the board's intention to vote on adoption of the proposed plan.

Thursday, January 19, 2017 - Regular Board Meeting

*Approve the District of Innovation Plan

Monday, January 23, 2017

Notify the Commissioner of Education of the approval of the District of Innovation Plan.

Innovations

First Day of Instruction

TEC 25.0811: A school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.

Innovation Strategies:

- Calendar committee will have flexibility on the school start date. Beginning the third Monday in August or one day that week with staff beginning no earlier than the 2nd week of August.
- Starting earlier will help to balance the semesters with a natural Winter Break, set exams prior to Winter Break, and create more instructional time before STAAR/EOC exams.
- The balanced semesters will align with college semesters, allowing more opportunities for dual credit, summer school, as well as certification opportunities.
- The District Improvement Committee will receive parent and staff input, then decide, subject to School Board approval, the school start date.

Teacher Certification

TEC 21.003 requires that a person may not be employed as a teacher by a district unless the person holds an appropriate certification or permit issued by the appropriate state agency.

Innovation Strategies:

- Recruit teachers from the field, including individuals from certain trades and/or vocations with industry knowledge and real world experience.
- Allow consideration of part time professionals to teach courses - specifically trade related professionals the ability to teach related courses.
- The superintendent will determine whether it is in the best interest of the district to certify the individual. The superintendent will notify the school board.
- Allow experienced teachers to pick up an elective in an area they are qualified to teach. The principal may submit a request to the superintendent for local certification that will allow a certified teacher to teach one subject in a related field for which he/she is not certified.

Probationary Contracts (*DCA Legal*) (TEC §21.002,§21.102)

For experienced teachers new to the district, the probationary period 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. A one year probationary period is not a sufficient amount of time to evaluate the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom. Currently, contracts for employees occur in March or April which demands that employment decisions be made with very little time for evaluating teacher effectiveness as well as prior to state assessment results.

Innovation Strategies:

- Experienced teachers, counselors, librarians, 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, a probationary contract may be issued for up to two years from the first day of employment

Kindergarten-Grade 4 Class Size (TEC §25.112a-g)(TEC §25.113a-b) (EEB Legal)

Currently, districts are required to maintain a class size of 22 students or less for Kindergarten - 4th Grade classes. When any class exceeds this limit, the district must complete and file a waiver with the Texas Education Agency. The district is also required to notify parents of waivers or exceptions to class size limits. The proposal would look to keep class sizes below 22:1 but would streamline processes for when a specific class went over 22 by 1 or 2 students.

Innovation Strategies:

- The goal of Dodd City ISD will be to limit class size to the extent possible, meeting the required limits prior to the beginning of the school year. In the event that any class size exceeds this ratio during the school year, the superintendent and campus administration will determine whether to add another teacher. Class sizes are reviewed and reported to the school board at each regular meeting.

Teacher Contract Days (DCB Legal, DCB Local)(TEC§21.401)

TEC Code Requiring Exemption: current education law in Chapter 21 defines a teacher contract as a 10 month contract equivalent to 187 days.

Innovation Strategy:

- Decreasing contract days from 187 to 182 days
- Reduce teacher contract days from 187 to a decreased length with no effect on teacher salaries. This would be an attempt to better align the teacher days to the 75,600 minutes required of students - increasing the daily rate the district pays teachers - enhance teacher recruitment and improve teacher morale.
- Dodd City ISD will present a recommendation to the School Board regarding the number of contract days as a part of the total compensation and benefits program.