



Malakoff Independent School District

Committed to Excellence

District of Innovation Plan

Revision approved:

July 20, 2020

2017-2022

Introduction

In 2015, the 84th Legislature passed HB 1842, which included provisions to allow Texas school districts who are in good academic standing (rated at least “Met Standard” by the Texas Accountability System) to become Districts of Innovation (DOI). Under a DOI plan, a traditional school district may access many of the flexibilities that are available to open-enrollment charter schools in Texas.

On April 17, 2017, the Board of Trustees of the Malakoff Independent School District adopted a resolution to direct the administration of MISD to explore the opportunity to designate itself a District of Innovation. The Board then held a public hearing on the topic and later voted to pursue a District of Innovation designation. The board also approved a DOI Planning Committee.

The DOI planning Committee included representatives from all aspects of MISD operations and the local community. The Committee began its work on April 26, 2017 and studied several “innovations” that could potentially be included in the plan.

After studying potential innovations, the committee identified and voted to include the following areas as innovations in the District of Innovation Plan:

- Flexible School Calendar
- Alternatives to Educator Certification
- Class Size Flexibility

- Teacher Contract Days
- Extension of Probationary Contracts for New Employees.

In July 2020 the District Wide Improvement Committee met and reviewed the proposed revisions and voted to submit the revision for the Board's approval. The Board approved the revision on July 20, 2020.

The goal of the Malakoff ISD District of Innovation Plan is to enhance local control and give the district greater flexibility to implement strategies and innovation that support the Board's mission, vision and goals, based on community and internal stakeholder input.

District of Innovation Planning Committee

Committee Members

Name	Role in MISD
Randy Perry	Superintendent
Sybil Norris	Assistant Superintendent
Mike Burns	Director of Curriculum and Instructional Technology
Kim Spencer	Business Manager
Martin Brumit	High School Principal
Quintin Watkins	Middle School Principal
Ronny Snow	Malakoff Elementary Principal
Christal Calhoun	Tool Elementary Principal
Danielle Copeland	Leo Orr Principal
Mandy Hancock	High School Teacher
Carol Tindel	Middle School Teacher
Tasha French	Tool Elementary Teacher
Christi Lee	Malakoff Elementary Teacher
Larry Larson	Technology

Peggy Dewberry	Member of the Board of Trustees
James Bass	Community Member
Halie Northcutt	Community Member
Helen Tippie	Community Member

**Malakoff Independent School District
Plan for Local Control**

The local District of Innovation Plan (DIO Plan) set out below is aligned with the Board’s vision, mission and goals. Unless otherwise indicated below, the DOI Plan is intended to apply District-Wide.

For each recommended element of the plan, the DOI Committee members considered relevant statutory or regulatory authority. They also identified barriers and/or obstacles that interfered with achievement of goals. Based on this analysis, committee members carefully crafted strategies to overcome the barriers and obstacles to achievement. The DOI Plan below was a result of the committee’s thoughtful and deliberate process.

Local Innovation Plan

Malakoff ISD Proposed Innovations:

Calendar (EB Legal, Local) (TEC 25.0811)

Texas state law currently states “a school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August” (TEC 25.0811).

MISD Innovation Strategy

School start dates is an area that the school district should be able to determine locally and on an annual basis to determine what will best serve our community. Having the ability to modify the start day of school allows Malakoff ISD the flexibility to balance semester days and align classes to college courses.

Teacher Certification (DK Legal, Local, Exhibit) (TEC 21.003)

Because Malakoff ISD is a small school district, it can be difficult to find qualified applicants to teach in certain fields. When it isn't possible to find a qualified, certified applicant, it is occasionally necessary to have a teacher enter a classroom that is outside of their certified teaching field. While this issue can sometimes impact many different teaching areas, one of the biggest problems a district faces is finding teachers who can teach courses in Career and Technical Education (CTE).

Current law states that in order for a teacher to teach outside their certification area, a school district must submit a request to the Texas Education Agency (TEA). TEA then approves or denies the request.

MISD Innovation Strategy

Malakoff ISD would benefit if the district were able to have the flexibility and ability to allow a teacher to teach outside their certified teaching field. The district can also benefit from having the flexibility to hire individuals with industry experience on a part or full time local certification. Malakoff ISD would make a full effort to hire qualified applicants with a TEA certification, but in instances that a qualified applicant is not available, the following procedures would be implemented district-wide:

- 1. The campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request to allow a certified teacher to teach a class outside their certified field. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses which qualify this individual to teach this subject.*
- 2. An individual with experience in a CTE field could be eligible to teach a vocational skill or course through a local teaching certificate. The principal will submit the request to the superintendent with all the individual's credentials. The superintendent*

will then approve the request if they feel the individual could be an asset to students. The superintendent will then report this action to the Board of Trustees prior to the individual beginning any employment. Local teaching certificates will be for one year. The employee will be at-will.

Class Size Waiver (EEB Legal, Local) (TEC 25.112)

State law requires that a school district may not enroll more than 22 students in a kindergarten, first, second, third or fourth grade class. If the need arises for a school district to exceed this cap, a waiver is required from TEA.

MISD Innovation Strategy

Since Malakoff ISD has a high mobility rate, there are often times when it becomes difficult for the district to maintain a 22 to 1 student to teacher ratio. More times than not, when a class exceeds 22 students and a waiver is requested, the class eventually drops down to the 22 to 1 level. Rarely has a class stayed above 22 students for longer than six weeks. In the event that a classroom exceeds a cap of 22 students to 1 teacher, the superintendent will report these findings to the board and the classroom will be able to reach a ratio of 24 to 1. This plan will only affect second, third and fourth grade. Kindergarten and first grade will not be affected and will still maintain a 22 to 1 ratio.

Malakoff ISD is committed to keeping class sizes at or below the current 22 to 1 ratio and will always look for avenues to reduce class sizes, but this innovation will give the district the flexibility that is sometimes required because of a high mobility rate.

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

Current education law requires a teacher who is on a 10 month contract to work an equivalent of 187 days.

MISD Innovation Strategy

In an attempt to align the teacher days to the 75,600 minutes required of students, the district would have the option to reduce the number of contract days with no effect on teacher salaries.

Extension of Probationary Contracts for New Employees (DCA Legal) (TEC 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 always a sufficient amount of time to evaluate the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom. Currently, contracts for Malakoff ISD employees occur in March, which demands that employment decision be made with very little time for evaluating teacher effectiveness.

MISD Innovation Strategy

For 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 with Malakoff ISD.

Teacher and Principal Evaluation (DNA Legal, Local) (TEC §21.203, §21.351, §21.352, §21.354, §21.3541)

The state of Texas has issued a teacher appraisal system called the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS) as well as a new principal evaluation system called the Texas Principal Evaluation and Support System (T-PESS). Under current law, "the employment policies adopted by a board of trustees must require a written evaluation of each teacher at annual or more frequent intervals" (TEC §21.203).

MISD Innovation Strategy

Districts currently have the option to only formally appraise teachers once every five school years. Malakoff ISD teachers were formally evaluated at least once every two years. Principals must also complete one formal walk-through each 6-week grading period. New staff members will have two additional formal walkthroughs throughout the year. Principals are evaluated annually on a locally developed plan.

Plan A committee of administrators and teachers would have the option to develop a teacher evaluation system that would be a combination of PDAS, T-TESS, and other best practices to develop a local instrument that fits the needs and goals of MISD.

Term

This local Innovation Plan will become effective upon approval by a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote of the Board of Trustees. It is designed to be implemented at the start of the 2017-2018 school year and continue for five years, through the end of the 2021-2022 school year, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The DOI committee will review the plan regularly to ensure that the recommendations continue to support the needs of the District. If the Committee recommends changes, the Plan would be amended in the manner required by law that includes public posting, and approval of the DOI Committee, the District Wide Improvement Team and the Board of Trustees.