

# Brock ISD

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DISTRICT OF INNOVATION



*"Great Traditions... Great Expectations"*

# Brock Independent School District Local Innovation Plan

## I. INTRODUCTION

House Bill 1842 was passed during the 84th Legislative Session. This bill provides the opportunity for Texas public school districts to pursue becoming a District of Innovation, which allows districts to obtain exemptions from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code to allow more flexibility and local control for innovative programming.

Districts of Innovation provides opportunities for:

- Greater local control;
- Increased flexibility governing education programming; and
- Empowerment to innovate and think differently.

Districts are not exempt from statutes related to curriculum, graduation requirements, nor academic and financial accountability.

## II. PLANNING TIMELINE

**December 12th, 2016** - The Brock ISD Board of Trustees passed a resolution to initiate the process under Education Code, Chapter 12a to become a District of Innovation.

**January 9th, 2017** - The Brock ISD Board of Trustees held a Public Hearing to consider the "Development of a Local Plan for the Designation of Brock ISD as a District of Innovation"

**January 9th, 2017** - The Brock ISD Board of Trustees approved continuing with the District of Innovation planning process and appointing a committee to serve as the District of Innovation Planning Committee

**January 18th, 2017** - The Brock ISD District of Innovation Planning Committee conducted their first meeting at 5:00 PM in the Brock High School library. Committee introductions, explanation of what the committee's role is and opportunities/options for the DOI plan were discussed.

**January 25th, 2017** - 2nd scheduled meeting for the Brock ISD District of Innovation Planning Committee - 4:30 PM in the Brock High School library. DOI Committee reviewed Chapter 12 options and selected exemptions that support BISD goals and the goal of the DOIC – Develop a plan that will impact student achievement and maximize all BISD students' potential by expanding educational opportunities. Draft of the District of Innovation Plan was sent to committee members for review on Feb. 3, 2017

**February 8, 2017** – 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting scheduled for the BISD District of Innovation Planning Committee – 5:00 PM in the Brock High School library. The District of Innovation Plan draft was reviewed. Corrections and changes to the language in the plan were finalized. The plan was voted on and approved unanimously, 29-0 by the District of Innovation Planning Committee.

**February 8, 2017** – BISD District Improvement Committee meeting – 5:40 PM in the Brock High School library. The DIC voted to accept the plan unanimously 18-0.

Timeline cont.

**February 9, 2017** – The District of Innovation Plan posted on Brock ISD website, [www.brockisd.net](http://www.brockisd.net). The plan will be presented for approval to Brock ISD Board Trustees on March 21, 2017. For more information about the plan, contact Dee Ann Mills, Asst. Superintendent 817-594-7642.

**March 21, 2017** - BISD School Board Meeting – Plan approved by BISD Board

### **III. TERM**

The term of the Local Innovation Plan will be in place beginning the 2017 – 2018 school year through March 21, 2022 unless amended or terminated by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The Local Innovation Committee will revisit the plan annually to ensure that the recommendations still meet the needs of the district. Any recommended changes will be posted on the website for 30 days for feedback and require approval of the Local Innovation Committee, The BISD Site-Based Decision Making Committee, and the 2/3 vote of Board of Trustees.

### **IV. CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT**

The Local Innovation Plan is guided by and aligned with the Board of Trustee’s Mission and Strategic Priorities/Goals for the district as follows:

#### **BISD Mission Statement**

The Brock Independent School District, as established and supported by the community, is dedicated to helping each student prepare for independent, lifelong learning.

#### **BISD Strategic Priorities/Goals**

##### *Financial Responsibility*

Maintain efficient and effective management of resources and operations to maximize learning for all students and staff.

##### *School Climate*

Provide a safe, healthy, secure educational environment.

##### *Personnel*

Brock ISD focus is to recruit, retain, train highly qualified staff and reward the best qualified individuals for each staff position by providing competitive salaries, incentives and training that reflects our commitment to be the best.

##### *Parent and Community Involvement and Communication*

Strive to increase parental involvement and district communication so parents, students and staff can participate fully in the educational courses of action for the district.

##### *Academics and Accountability*

Provide effective future-ready teaching and learning that results in career preparation, student mastery for

graduation and post-secondary success, achieving STAAR scores above state and regional averages and attain the highest district and campus ratings recognized at the state and national level.

### **Brock District of Innovation Committee Goal**

Develop a plan that will impact student achievement and maximize all BISD students' potential by expanding educational opportunities.

To support the District's Mission and achieve the District's goals, as well as align to the DOIC goal, BISD needs the flexibility to exert local control at both the District and campus levels to:

- Promote what is BEST for all BISD students
- Promote innovative instructional practices and innovative curricular approaches
- Promote innovative ideas regarding campus governance
- Promote innovative ideas regarding parent and community involvement
- Promote innovative use of learning time by modifying the school calendar and the use of learning time.

In order to achieve BISD's goals, the district needs flexibility in the areas above to improve student learning and ensuring that graduates are responsible citizens, empowered learners and career and college ready. Scheduling flexibility supports new innovative approaches that engage students in enriched learning opportunities without the emphasis on "seat time" and more emphasis on "individual learning time". The flexible scheduling also allows for the potential to provide more high-quality, meaningful professional learning opportunities for staff so that they can enhance their professional capacity and collaborate regarding best practices.

This plan emphasizes a commitment to establish priorities for teaching and learning.

### **V. DISTRICT OF INNOVATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

The District of Innovation Committee contains members from the Brock ISD District Action/Improvement Committee, along with additional teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, parents, community members and business members who volunteered to serve on this committee.

- 3 – District Level Administrators
- 5 – Campus Level Administrators
- 6 – Elementary Faculty Representatives
- 5- Jr. High Faculty Representatives
- 6- High School Faculty Representatives
- 2 - District Paraprofessional Representatives
- 3- Campus Counselor Representatives
- 2- Community Representatives
- 1- Business Representative
- 3- Business/Parent Representatives
- 6- Parent Representatives

## VI. EXEMPTIONS REQUESTED IN THE TEXAS EDUCATION CODE

### **90 Percent Attendance Rule (FEC LOCAL) (TEC §25.092)**

**Current statute:** State law currently requires students attend class 90 percent of the school days on a district calendar to earn credit. The law requires districts to award class credit to students based on the time a student is present in a classroom for instruction, rather than mastery of content and subject proficiency.

#### **Proposed flexibility:**

The 90 percent rule is an arbitrary percentage, which means school districts award credit based on seat time rather than based on content mastery. Flexibility in abstaining from the requirement means the district won't have to penalize students who miss class due to enriching activities, academic activities, or other extenuating circumstances that support BISD's goal to educate the whole child. Exemption from the 90% requirement will provide educational advantages to students of the District by promoting active learning through innovation in methods, locations, and times instruction may be delivered to students. BISD may accommodate for students with legitimate scheduling conflicts and addressing the needs of an at-risk student, thereby reducing dropout potential.

Exemption from Section 25.092 will likely foster greater innovation to promote active learning and improve student outcomes. In addition, the exemption will allow BISD to meet the social and emotional issues BISD encounters when serving students who find themselves in situations that place them in alternative school.

To meet the needs of 21st century learners, BISD would like to investigate the option to provide students credit for courses based on content mastery, not the amount of time the student spends in the classroom. This exemption would allow the district to provide innovative options to promote student engagement in course material in flexible ways, ultimately allowing learning to happen anytime, anyplace apart from the traditional way of delivering instruction.

Relief from Section 25.092 does not in any way impact or alter existing compulsory attendance requirements or University Interscholastic League ("UIL") rules. Moreover, opting out of Section 25.092 in no way limits or modifies a teacher's right to determine the finality of a grade in accordance with Texas Education Code Section 28.0214, nor does it restrict or alter a teacher's right to assign grades in accordance with Texas Education Code Section 28.0216.

### **Minimum Minutes of Instruction (EC LEGAL & EB LEGAL) (TEC §25.081 & TEC §25.082)**

**Current Statute:** House Bill (HB) 2610, passed by the 84th Texas Legislature, amends the Texas Education Code (TEC) §25.081, by striking language requiring 180 days of instruction and replacing with new language requiring districts and charter schools to provide at least 75,600 minutes of instruction annually and 420 minutes of instruction daily. The bill allows school districts and charter schools to add minutes as necessary to compensate for minutes of instruction lost due to school closures caused by disaster, flood, extreme weather conditions, fuel curtailment, or another calamity. However, it eliminated any options to pursue state waivers to reduce the minimum number of minutes per day to allow for flexibility to pursue early releases for parent – teacher conferences, teacher professional development or innovative scheduling due to events.

TEC § 25.082 requires that each school day be at least 7 hours long (including intermissions and recess).

**Proposed Flexibility:**

The flexibility to adjust minutes of instruction will assist with personalizing learning to better meet individual student needs. Communication about student progress is essential for the innovative work taking place throughout our campuses. The BISD community values the opportunity to meet face to face with teachers to discuss student progress. Early release time would allow parent-teacher conferences to occur. A later start time or additional early release time would accommodate professional development/collaboration opportunities for teachers and provide opportunities for flexible scheduling needed throughout a school year.

**Probationary Contracts (DCA LEGAL) (TEC §21.102b)**

**Current Statute:** Under current guidelines, probationary periods for newly hired teachers who have been in public education for at least five of the previous eight years cannot exceed one year. This limited period is insufficient in some cases to fully determine the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom.

**Proposed Flexibility:**

Relief from Texas Education Code 21.102 will permit the District the option to issue a probationary contract for a period of up to two years for experienced teachers, counselors or nurses newly hired in BISD. This will allow BISD to better evaluate a teacher's effectiveness.

**Teacher Certification Required (DK & DBA LEGAL) (DK & DBA Local) (§TEC 21.044, §21.003)**

**Current Statute:** 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 certification or permit issued by the appropriate state agency.

**Proposed Flexibility:**

*Flexible Scheduling and Course Offerings* –BISD is committed to placing qualified, dynamic instructional leaders in every classroom. Current teacher certification requirements restrict the District's ability to hire teachers to teach hard to fill, high demand dual credit and career and technical/STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) elective courses and allow for teachers to teach one elective out of their field. The District seeks to establish its own local qualification requirements and its own requirements for training of professionals to teach such courses in lieu of the requirement set forth by law. This supports Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, new federal requirements).

**Local Guidelines:** This will allow more flexibility in our scheduling and more options for our students in class offerings and industry certifications.

- a) Local certification will be issued for teachers only.
- b) Local teaching certificates will be for one year.
- c) The employee will be at-will.
- d) The district will establish local criteria such as years of experience, qualifications, and industry certification to qualify for a local teaching certificate for CTE & STEAM electives, dual enrollment courses, and allow certified teachers to teach one elective out of their field if qualified.
- e) The campus principal shall submit to the superintendent a request to allow a certified teacher to teach one subject out of 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.

- f) 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
- g) Required training with deadlines for completion will be assigned.

**Teacher and Principal Evaluation (DNA & DNB LEGAL) (DNA & DNB LOCAL), (TEC §21.203) (TEC §21.352)(TEC§21.354)**

**Current Statute:** The state of Texas has used the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) teacher appraisal system since 1997. The state issued a new teacher and principal appraisal system in 2016-2017, the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS) and the Texas Principal Evaluation and Support System (T-PESS).

**Proposed Flexibility:**

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

BISD will utilize a locally developed teacher and principal evaluation tool.

- a) This instrument will be developed with input from central administration, campus administration, and teachers. It will use staff input, PDAS, T-TESS, T-PESS, and any other relevant best practice.
- b) Brock ISD will follow DNA (LOCAL) guidelines for annual or less than annual evaluation requirements, exceptions & eligibility, frequency, and annual review process.
- c) Every teacher will receive a minimum of six, informal walk-throughs per year.
- d) Principals will continue to be evaluated annually on a locally developed plan.
- e) These locally developed plans should reflect the strengths, areas of concern, and goals for BISD.

**Uniform School Start Date (EB LEGAL) (TEC §25.0811)**

**Current Statute:** *First Day of Instruction* – A school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August, no exceptions.

**Proposed Flexibility:**

*Flexible Calendar* –Brock ISD will waive the fourth Monday of August start date in an effort to create greater flexibility in the school calendar which will enable the district to be more responsive to students by balancing the amount of instructional time in the semesters, allowing teachers to better pace and deliver instruction.

**Local Guidelines:** The District Calendar Committee will receive staff and community input to build the school calendar. The recommended school calendar is subject to Board approval.