

## **Q & A**

### **DOI for United ISD**

#### **What is a District of Innovation or DOI?**

In 2015, a Texas law was passed which is known as House Bill 1842. This bill allows certain acceptably rated school districts to become Districts of Innovation and claim exemptions from many state laws from the Texas Education Code that affect public education locally.

#### **What are the benefits for United ISD to become a DOI?**

Even in the initial stages of this process we have come to realize the benefits of becoming a District of Innovation and the positive impact it will have in our District. The process of District of Innovation allows the school district to assess the benefit of allowing some key education decisions to remain local. Part of the process of DOI is to assess how an exemption from state law may better serve our students, employees, and community. More succinctly, the needs of UISD are not necessarily best served by every provision of state law.

#### **What provisions is United ISD considering being exempt from?**

The District is looking at the possibility of seeking exemptions in 5 areas.

Below is an explanation of the 5 areas the District is assessing as being better served by state exemption:

Through the District of Innovation program, the scope for exemptions will be narrow and limited to only five key areas for improvement.

1. the law prohibiting the District from beginning instruction before the fourth Monday in August;
2. the law that requires that minimum attendance (90% rule) for students for class credit or final grade;
3. the laws that limit the ability of the District to hire professionals in Dual Credit Programs and certain trades and vocations to teach the crafts of those trades and vocations (i.e. as Agriculture, Building Trades, etc.) in Career and Technical courses when certified teachers are not available;
4. the law that limits each campus to designate only one individual to serve as Campus Behavior Coordinator;
5. the law that authorizes each school district to provide a minimum of 75,600 minutes of instruction, including intermissions and recesses for students in half day Pre-Kindergarten Program and those enrolled in the Positive Approach to Student Success (PASS) Program.

#### **How was the Committee to approve the process for DOI selected?**

The administration has proposed a District Advisory Committee (DAC) comprised of teacher representatives from each campus, community representatives, and parents (the established

DEIC Committee with additional personnel added). This committee was appointed by the Board of Trustees through board action at the regular board meeting on Wednesday, December 14th.

### **What role will the DAC take in the DOI process?**

The DAC will be responsible for writing a comprehensive plan aligned with district improvement plans and is to include the following elements:

- a) a Comprehensive Education Program
- b) Texas Education Code provisions from which the district should be exempted from

In addition, the DAC members and each campus principal will present the proposed plan to the staff and teachers at each campus and receive feedback. The DAC will vote on the proposed plan. 2/3 of the committee must approve the plan before it is presented to the Board for approval.

### **What Assurances is the District Guaranteeing Employees About Other Exemptions?**

United ISD administrators amended the resolution to include assurance to our employees. The Board approved the resolution with these assurances on December 14, 2016. The Resolution states:

United ISD Board of Trustees and the United ISD Administration **will not seek,** under the District of Innovation process, exemptions from any existing laws relating to teacher contracts including salary or days of employment; teacher schedules, specifically: planning periods, duty free lunches; employee complaint procedures (grievance policies); or any other existing laws except as proposed below:

- 1) the law prohibiting the District from beginning instruction before the fourth Monday in August;
- (2) the law that requires that minimum attendance (90% rule) for students for class credit or final grade;
- (3) the laws that limit the ability of the District to hire professionals in Dual Credit Programs and certain trades and vocations to teach the crafts of those trades and vocations (i.e. as Agriculture, Building Trades, etc.) in Career and Technical courses when certified teachers are not available;
- (4) the law that limits each campus to designate only one individual to serve as Campus Behavior Coordinator;
- (5) the law that authorizes each school district to provide a minimum of 75,600 minutes of instruction, including intermissions and recesses for students.

Additional Questions and Answers will be added as the District continues with the process.