



# District of Innovation Plan

Miami ISD

Donna Hale

---

## **Timeline for developing the District of Innovation Plan**

**District Leadership—10/7/16** District Administration met to discuss the idea of becoming a District of Innovation. The decision was made to develop a team and approach the Board of Trustees to adopt a resolution.

**Initial Board Meeting 10/17/2016** The District of Innovation was on the Board agenda, seeking public comments before the resolution was issued. Public comments were heard and the resolution was passed.

**Initial Meeting DAC—10/21/16** The District Action Committee met for the first time for the Leadership team to present the District of Innovation, answer questions and solicit feedback from the Committee.

**DAC Approval Second Meeting—11/15/2016** The DAC met again to discuss the plan written by the leadership team. The DAC approved the Plan.

**Site Based Decision Committee—11/21/2016**

**Plan sent to TEA—11/18/2016—**Miami ISD's District of Innovation Plan was sent to Commissioner Mike Morath and the Texas Education Agency.

**Plan posted to Website—11/18/16—**The plan was posted to the school website for community review.

**Final Board Approval 12/19/2016—**The Board of Trustees is expected to approve the District of Innovation Plan.

**Final Letter sent to Commissioner notifying of the Board's decision sent June 6, 2017.**

### **District Action Committee**

**Donna Hale--**

**Superintendent Blair**

**Hall—Principal**

**Jennifer Brown—**

**Counselor Tori**

**Kelley—Counselor**

**Tory Peet—Jr High Math**

**Teacher Cara Hodges—**

**Elementary Teacher**

**Tom Grantham—President, Board**

**of Trustees Rusty Early—Secretary,**

**Board of Trustees Michael Wilkes,**

**TAMU Agrilife County Agent Serena**

**Alford—HS Art Teacher**

**Monty Wheeler—**

**Parent Sidney**

**Homfeld—Parent**

### **Uniform start and end date: TEC §25.0811 & 25.0812**

Miami ISD wishes to no longer be required to start school on or after the fourth Monday of August or not be permitted to conclude the school year prior to May 15. These requirements placed upon schools are greatly based on the lobbying conducted on behalf of the business and tourism industries. These statute requirements do not take into considerations of local education agencies and even more importantly, the needs of students. As such, MISD seeks relief from Texas Education Code Section 25.0811 dictating that schools must not start prior to the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday in August. Additionally, MISD also seeks relief from Texas Education Code 25.0812 stipulating that the last day of instructions must not be set prior to May 15.

#### *Innovative Practice:*

MISD seeks local control over the start and end dates of a school year. The MISD anticipates starting school during the month of August and concluding the school year in May. The primary goals of this change will be to better balance the days of instruction in each semester, afford greater flexibility in calendar options, and better align the district's calendar with the junior college in order to accommodate the Miami Early College High School. This will also allow time to provide student orientation time prior to the start of the college semester, eliminate inefficient time after the conclusion of the college semester, and allow break time prior to the start of summer school for all students.

### **Site-based decision making: TEC § 11.251 and TEC § 28.004**

The MISD seeks exemption from the site-based decision making process and the convening of the school health advisory committee and the many accompanying requirements falling under the governance of those two bodies. The statutory requirements as set forth for by the Texas Education Code in Chapter 11 and 28 are burdensome, time consuming, and ultimately cause a misdirection of resources from the primary focus of schools: the education of students.

Stakeholders will continue to be involved in the process, but one that meets the needs of this district, school, and community which will be better fit than the one size fits all approach as detailed in the TEC § 11.251 and TEC § 28.004. This will consolidate the number of meetings and the number of committees required by law and will better serve this community.

#### *Innovative practice:*

In place of the SBDM and the SHAC, a Miami Advisory Council (MAC) will be established, meet, review, analyze, and respond to both qualitative and quantitative data regarding the district's success and most importantly, student's success. This council will convene at least two times per year and generate the general direction of committees will yield greater opportunity for one council to address a multitude of needs as opposed to having one meeting after another throughout the year.

**Appraisal system: TEC § 21.352, TEC § 21.353, and TEC § 21.3541**

The MISD will utilize a teacher and principal appraisal system determined by the Miami Advisory Council. It is anticipated that T-PESS and T-TESS will be instituted in 2016-2017, however, in the subsequent years, the MAC may change directions and determine that an alternative evaluation system is needed. This aspect of the Local Innovation Plan affords the MAC to make that determination at a later time.

*Innovative Practice:*

TBD

**Length of school day: TEC § 25.081 and TEC 25.082**

The Texas Code 25.081 and TEC 25.082 address the length of the instructional day by limiting it to “420 minutes of instruction” or “seven hours each day including intermissions and recesses.” While the intent of the Legislature was to standardized across all districts the amount of time students spent learning in a classroom, MISD wishes to meet the goal of 75,600 minutes of instruction per year, but seeks an exemption from these statutes so that it may reach the 75,600 minutes’ total in a more creative manner without being limited to either 420 minutes or seven hours of instruction every day. The length of the instructional day cannot be changed absent the District becoming a District of Innovation.

*Innovative Practice:*

Miami ISD believes that having a flexible school day benefits teachers and campus leaders who participate in Professional Learning Communities, perfecting their craft, deepening their content knowledge, and analyzing student data.

**Teacher Contracts: TEC § 21.401**

Texas Education Code Section 21.401 stipulates that a teacher must provide a minimum of 187 days of service. MISD seeks to discard the minimum of 187 days of service and instead move to a 10-month professional contract ranging from August-May.

During those 10 months, teachers will be expected to meet the 75,600 minutes of daily instruction as well as serve in his/her professional capacity during staff development days and teacher work days. As exempt employees, professional teachers may be asked to work beyond the traditional work hours during a day. However, the assignments will be at discretion of the superintendent, or the superintendent’s designee. Those decisions will be based on what is in the best interest of the district which will be driven by what is best for the students of MISD.

*Innovative Practice:*

Teacher contracts will more closely align with the 75,600 instructional minutes required for students and will also include staff development/workdays. This added flexibility will afford the MISD teacher the opportunity to create a culture/climate that values an individual's time and empowers the ability to leverage that time in what will be a focus on student outcomes. Lastly, professional employees will not receive a reduction in pay for any reduction in their workload realized by this change.

### **Teacher Certification: TEC § 21.003 and TAC Chapter 231**

In the event a district cannot locate a certified teacher for a position or a teacher is teaching a subject outside their certification, the district must submit a request to TEA. TEA then approves or denies this request. There is much bureaucracy and unnecessary paperwork involved in the process.

#### *Innovative Practice:*

The campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request to allow a certified teacher to teach subject(s) out of their certified field. The principal must provide reasoning for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses which qualify this individual to teach this subject.

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 a 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 employment. Local teaching certificates will require an employment agreement rather than a contract.

An individual with an appropriate Bachelor's degree or higher, but does not have a Texas teaching certificate could be eligible to teach in the subject of their degree. The principal will submit a 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 employment. Local teaching certificates will require an employment agreement rather than a contract.

Individuals with a MISD local teaching certificate will receive mandatory professional development in best practices, classroom management, curriculum and instruction, pedagogy and professional responsibilities. This professional development will be taught by District leaders or the Regional Educational Service Center.

Miami ISD will notify parents if their child is being taught by a teacher outside of their teaching certificate or on a local certification. If parents have an objection to the teacher, then the student will be provided the opportunity to be enrolled in an online class.

MIAMI ISD PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO CURRENT LOCAL INNOVATION PLAN

With regard to each area of innovation, the District declares exemption from the listed statutory provision, as well as any implementing rules or regulations promulgated pursuant to those statutory provisions by any state agency or entity, including but not limited to the Commission of Education, Texas Education Agency, State Board for Educator Certification, and State Board of Education.

**Texas Education Code §22.004(i) Inhibits the Goals of the Local Innovation Plan**

*TEC §22.004(i) Group Health Benefits for School Employees states that a school district may not make group health coverage available to its employees pursuant to TEC §22.004(b) after the date a district implements the program of coverages provided under Chapter 1579 of the Texas Insurance Code. The current process allows no flexibility in the design of group health insurance benefits to fit the needs of all district employees. This provision also prohibits the district from procuring group health insurance benefits that may provide better coverages for its employees at a lower cost. This provision does not give the district the flexibility needed to acquire benefits packages that would potentially be more attractive to prospective employees.*

**Exemption from Texas Education Code §22.004(i)**

TEC § 22.004 is not included in any of the prohibited exemptions that can be included in a District's local innovation plan pursuant to TEC §12A.004 or the list of the Commissioner's prohibited exemptions in the Texas Administrative Code Title 19, Chapter 102, subchapter JJ, Section 102.1309. Therefore, in order to have the option to offer additional benefits options to employees and to increase local control of the group health benefits plan to allow the District to be responsive to employee and community needs, the district proposes that the District of Innovation Plan be amended to Exempt the district from the health insurance requirements in TEC §22.004(i)