

Idalou ISD

District of Innovation Plan

Introduction

House Bill (HB) 1842, passed during the 84th legislative session, permits Texas public school districts to become Districts of Innovation and obtain exemption from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code. On February 22, 2017 Idalou Independent School's Board of Trustees passed a Resolution to Adopt a District of Innovation and local initiatives. The adoption of this plan seeks to increase the District's flexibility in order to improve educational outcomes for the benefit of students and the community.

On February 22, 2017, the board of Trustees nominated a District of Innovation advisory committee comprised of diverse leaders representing a cross-section of the districts stakeholders including teachers, principals, parents, community members, and administration. The committee met Thursday, March 23, 2017 to discuss and draft the local innovation plan.

Term

The term of the Plan is for five years, beginning August 14, 2017 and ending August 13, 2022, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. If, within the term of this plan, other areas of operations are to be considered for flexibility as part of HB 1842, the Board will nominate a new committee to consider and propose additional exemption in the form of an amendment. Any amendment adopted by the Board will adhere to the same term as the original plan. The District may not implement two separate plans at any one time.

Innovations

- A. Certification Requirement (TEC 21.003) (DK legal) (DBA legal) (DBA Local) (TEC 21.002) (TEC.003). TEC 21.002 states that "a school district shall employ each classroom teacher..... under either a probationary, continuing, or term contract." TEC 21.003 states that "a person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern, or teacher trainee..... unless the person holds an appropriate certification or permit issued as provided by Subchapter B." The current certification requirements inhibit the District's ability to hire professionals with industry experience to teach Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) courses. In order to provide more students the opportunity to take such courses and obtain

professional certifications, the district seeks to establish its own local qualification requirements for such courses in lieu of the requirements set forth set forth in law. The District does not wish to be exempted from any existing laws relating to teacher contracts or teacher benefits. Flexibility to establish its own teacher certification requirements in CTE and STEM areas affords the District the following advantages:

Industry certified and/or trade professionals to teach specialized certification courses

Greater number of CTE course offerings resulting in more opportunities for students

Realistic requirement for professional transitioning from industry to teaching

The ability to employ part-time professionals to teach specialty courses.

B. Uniform School Calendar (TEC25.0811) (TEC 25.0812) (EB legal) (EB local)

The current law states that a school may not begin instruction before the fourth Monday in August. It also states that school may not end before May 15th. Local control of the instructional calendar affords the District the following advantages

Elimination of imbalanced 6 weeks and semester schedules while still ending the first semester prior to the Christmas Holiday break.

Alignment of calendar with dual credit classes, advanced placement exams and STARR/EOC timelines

To meet local and community needs.