

Little Cypress-Mauriceville CISD

District of Innovation Plan

2019-2024



LCM CISD DISTRICT OF INNOVATION

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Little Cypress-Mauriceville CISD District of Innovation

Introduction

House Bill (HB) 1842, passed during the 84th Legislative Session, permits Texas public school districts to become Districts of Innovation and to obtain an exemption from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code. Potential benefits of becoming a District of Innovation include:

- **Flexibility:** Districts will have the flexibility to implement practices similar to charter schools, including exemptions from certain mandates.
- **Local Control:** Districts decide which flexibilities best suit their local needs.
- **Autonomy:** Districts must submit a district of innovation plan to the commissioner of education, but approval is not required.

On November 12, 2018, the Little Cypress-Mauriceville Consolidated Independent School District's Board of Trustees passed a Resolution to explore the development of a District of Innovation Plan to increase local control over District operations and to support 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 January 14, 2019 the LCM CISD Board of Trustees appointed a 23-member District of Innovation Committee comprised of teachers, parents, community members, business owners, and administrators. The DOI Committee met on January 22, 2019 and January 24, 2019 to discuss and draft the Local Innovation Plan. The Plan was posted online on February 4, 2019 for a 30-day notice. A Public Hearing was held March 7, 2019 to get community input on the plan. Based on the input received from the community, the Committee made adjustments to the plan and then approved the plan by a unanimous vote. The LCM CISD Board of Trustees will consider the Plan at the March 18, 2019 meeting.

Term of Plan

The term of the Plan is for five years, in effect for the 2019-2020 school year through the 2023-2024 school year, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The Plan will be reviewed

annually by the District of Innovation Committee. If within the term of this Plan, other areas of operation are to be considered for flexibility as part of HB 1842, the Board will appoint a DOI Committee to consider and propose additional exemptions in the form of an amendment to the Plan. Any amendment adopted by the Board will not extend beyond the term of this Plan. The District may not implement two separate plans at any one time.

**Little Cypress-Mauriceville CISD
District of Innovation Committee
2018-2019**

Name	Position
Aaron Arnold	Paraprofessional, Parent
April Beatty	Teacher, Parent
Carie Broussard	Campus Administration
Dana Cart	LCJH Representative
Jodie Cates	Business Owner, Parent
Emily Collier	Teacher, Booster President, Parent
Kimberly Cox	Campus Administration
Randy Crouch	Director of Athletics
Angie Eikenhorst	LCE Representative
Debbie Harris	Paraprofessional
Brenda Jones	LCI Representative, Parent
Farris Jones	Parent
Alisa Linscomb	Community Representative
Amanda Lisbony	Teacher, Parent
Betty Martin	MMS Representative
Kelly Meadows	Director of Health Services
Robin Milstead	Parent
Jose Ochoa	Director of Bands
Sommer Reynolds	MVE Representative, Librarian, Parent
Joel Russell	Technology, Parent
Kevin Sensat	Teacher, Business Owner
Wayne Stephenson	LCMHS Representative, Parent
Sharon Wood	Teacher, CTA

**Little Cypress-Mauriceville CISD
District of Innovation
Timeline of Events**

June 11, 2018-District Administrative Team

Initial meeting of District Administrative Team to discuss the interest and process of becoming a District of Innovation

October 16, 2018- Mauriceville Middle School

Faculty meeting to discuss the process of becoming a District of Innovation

October 17, 2018-Little Cypress Junior High School

Faculty meeting to discuss the process of becoming a District of Innovation

October 22, 2018-Little Cypress Elementary School

Faculty meeting to discuss the process of becoming a District of Innovation

October 23, 2018-Little Cypress-Mauriceville High School

Huddle faculty meetings to discuss the process of becoming a District of Innovation

October 24, 2018-Little Cypress Intermediate School

Faculty meeting to discuss the process of becoming a District of Innovation

October 29, 2018-Mauriceville Elementary School

Faculty meeting to discuss the process of becoming a District of Innovation

November 12, 2018-LCM CISD Board Meeting

Board of Trustees approval of a resolution to hold a public hearing to discuss becoming a District of Innovation (TEC 12A.001 (c)(1))

December 2018-All Campuses

Campuses vote to approve a DOI representative from each campus. Additional volunteers were secured to participate on the DOI Committee.

January 14, 2019-LCM CISD Board Meeting

Public Hearing to explain the process of becoming a District of Innovation (TEC 12A.002 (b)(2), 12A.003)

Board of Trustees approval to pursue the designation of District of Innovation, and the appointment of a committee to develop a local plan (TEC 12A.002 (b)(2), 12A.003)

January 22, 2019-LCM CISD Central Office

Initial meeting of the District of Innovation Committee

January 24, 2019-LCM CISD Central Office

Second meeting of the District of Innovation Committee

February 4, 2019-LCM CISD

District of Innovation Plan posted to the LCM CISD website for 30 days (TEC 12A.005 (a)(1))

March 5, 2019-LCM CISD

District Educational Improvement Committee reviews and approves the District of Innovation Plan

March 7, 2019-LCM CISD

District of Innovation Committee convenes in a public hearing to approval the final District of Innovation Plan

March 8, 2019-Commissioner Notified via email

Commissioner notified of Board's intent to vote of the District of Innovation Plan

March 18, 2019-LCM CISD Board Meeting

Board approval of the District of Innovation Plan by at least 2/3 majority (TEC 12A.005 (a)(1))

March 26, 2019-Commissioner Notified of DOI Plan

District of Innovation Plan sent to Commissioner (TEC 12A.005 (a)(2))

Little Cypress-Mauriceville CISD District of Innovation Plan

Innovation Plan Exemptions

With regard to each area of innovation, the District declares exemption from the listed statutory provisions, 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 Commissioner of Education, Texas Education Agency, State Board for Educator Certification, and State Board of Education.

First Day of Instruction

Exemption from: TEC 25.0811; TEC 25.0812

Relevant LCM Board Policies: EB (Legal)

Manner in which the statute inhibits the goals of the plan:

TEC 25.0811 states that a district may not begin student instruction before the fourth Monday of August. TEC 25.0812 states a district may not schedule the last day of school before May 15. The current process allows no flexibility in the design of annual calendars to fit the needs of the community or the wishes of the local Board of Trustees who represent community interests in this matter. Previously, districts had the option of applying to TEA for a waiver to start earlier but this was stopped, due to the lobbying efforts of Texas tourism groups.

The current code allows too little flexibility in the design of school calendars to provide optimal accommodation to both elementary students' needs and those of secondary students involved in various academic plans and extracurricular activities.

Innovation Strategies:

LCM CISD will gather input from the District Education Improvement Committee (DEIC) and district staff on the development of an annual calendar that best accommodates the interests and needs of the students, staff, and community. The district will not begin instruction prior to August 15, thereby providing a more appropriate balance of semester instructional days.

Teacher Certification

Exemption from: TEC 21.003; TEC 21.0031; TEC 21.051; TEC 21.057

Relevant LCM Board Policies: DBA Legal/Local; DK Legal/Local

Manner in which the statute inhibits the goals of the plan:

TEC 21.003 states a person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern, or trainee, librarian, educational aide, administrator, educational diagnostician, or school counselor by a district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued by the appropriate state agency.

In the event a district cannot locate a certified teacher for a position or a teacher is teaching a subject outside of their certification, the district must request an emergency certification from the Texas Education Agency and/or State Board for Educator Certification. This system is burdensome and does not take into account the unique financial and/or instructional needs of the district.

TEC 21.0031 provides that an employee's probationary, continuing, or term Chapter 21 contract is void if the person does not hold a valid certificate or permit issued by the State Board for Educator Certification or fails to fulfill the requirements necessary to renew or extend the employee's issued certificate.

TEC 21.051 states that before a school district may employ a candidate for certification as a teacher of record, the candidate must complete at least 15 hours of field-based experience in which the candidate is actively engaged in instructional or educational activities.

TEC 21.057 requires that the district provide written notice to parents if an inappropriately certified or uncertified teacher is assigned to a classroom for more than 30 consecutive instructional days.

Innovation Strategies:

The flexibility in allowing LCM CISD to make local decisions regarding grades 5-12 teacher certification would provide more opportunities to offer innovation in course selections for Career Technical Education (CTE) courses, as well as hard-to-fill and high-demand academic and dual credit courses. By obtaining an exemption from existing teacher certification requirements, the District will have the flexibility to hire community college instructors, university professors, experts in a profession or industry, or internal applicants seeking assignments

outside of their traditional certification area. This strategy will enrich applicant pools in specific content areas and afford more students the opportunity to take CTE, dual credit, and some unique academic courses if certified teachers are not available to teach those courses.

Local Guidelines will include:

1. LCM CISD will maintain the current expectation for employee certification and is committed to hiring individuals with appropriate certification for the position in question. When that is not reasonably possible, the District will have the flexibility to hire individuals who are knowledgeable in the areas and equipped to effectively perform the duties of the position in question.
2. The campus principal shall submit to the superintendent a request to allow a certified teacher to teach a subject or grade level out of their certification area. The principal must specify the reason for the request and document credentials the teacher possesses.
3. Teachers teaching outside of their certification area will be provided teacher mentoring, increased observations and feedback, professional development, or other supports.
4. The Board of Trustees will be notified of the pending local teaching certification prior to employment. The board agenda, board meeting minutes, and related reports will suffice as parental notification.
5. An employee hired under a local teaching certificate will be employed under a probationary contract. The employee must be fully certified within the assigned subject area prior to issuance of a term contract or within 4 years. Local teaching certificates may be renewed each year at the superintendent's discretion during the probationary status.
6. Due diligence will be made on the part of the District to hire certified teachers and qualified professionals prior to reassignment of a currently employed teacher to a position for which they are not certified. At the employee's request, the principal and superintendent agree to meet with the employee prior to a reassignment.
7. Special Education and Bilingual teachers must meet all SBEC certification requirements.

Probationary Contracts

Exemption from: TEC 21.102(b)

Relevant LCM Board Policies: DCA Legal

Manner in which the statute inhibits the goals of the plan:

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 last eight years. A one-year probationary period is not sufficient to evaluate the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom since the teacher contract renewal timeline demands that employment decisions be made prior to the district receipt of state assessment results.

Innovation Strategies:

For experienced teachers, counselors, 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. All other teachers hired in the District may remain on a probationary status for three years and may be issued a fourth year of probation in accordance with TEC 21.102(c).

Transfer Students

Exemption from: TEC 25.036

Relevant LCM Board Policies: FDA (Local)

Manner in which the statute inhibits the goals of the plan:

TEC 25.036 states that students attending a district through a district transfer may apply for transfer annually. On rare occasions, student behavior warrants suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion or the student attendance may fall below the TEA truancy standard (TEC 25.093).

Innovation Strategies:

The District is seeking to eliminate the provision of a one-year commitment in accepting transfer applicants. In order to maintain student safety and fiscal and operational responsibility, LCM CISD will revoke a K-11 grade student's

transfer at any time during the academic year, based on disciplinary or attendance reasons.

The district may revoke the transfer of a student under the following guidelines:

1. The principal will recommend a revocation with supporting evidence to the superintendent or superintendent's designee, who will make a final determination on the student's transfer status.
2. A transfer may be revoked if the student has been absent without an excuse acceptable to the District for 10% or more of the number of days of school.
3. A transfer may be revoked if the student engaged in behavior or conduct, on or off campus, that:
 - a. Resulted in the placement of the transfer student in the District disciplinary alternative school;
 - b. Resulted in being charged with, convicted of, or deferred adjudication for a felony offense;
 - c. Resulted in being charged with, convicted of, or deferred adjudication for a misdemeanor offense that contains any element of assault or is drug or gang related; or
 - d. Disrupted the learning environment, placed other(s) in harm, and/or negatively impacted the orderly operations or climate of the school.

Removal of Individuals from District Property/Facilities

Exemption from: TEC 37.105

Relevant LCM Board Policies: GKA Legal/Local

Manner in which the statute inhibits the goals of the plan:

TEC 37.105 requires the District to maintain a record of each verbal warning of potential removal from District property and facilities, including the name of the person to whom the warning was issued and the date of the issuance. At the time a person is refused entry or removed from District property/facilities, the District is also required to provide to the person written information explaining the appeal process. The current law makes it unnecessarily complicated to remove a dangerous or disruptive individual in a timely manner.

Innovation Strategies:

To better ensure the safety and security of students and staff, LCM CISD would allow designated staff members the authority to remove parents or visitors, whose behavior is deemed inappropriate, from District property or facilities without warning or written notice.

Out-of-School Suspensions for Students Below Grade Three

Exemption from: TEC 37.005

Relevant LCM Board Policies: FOB (Legal)

Manner in which the statute inhibits the goals of the plan:

TEC 37.005 states that a student enrolled in a grade level below grade three may not be placed in out-of-school suspension unless the infraction occurs while on school property or at a school-related event where the student engages in:

- Conduct that contains the elements of an offense related to weapons;
- Conduct that contains the elements of a violent offense;
- Selling, giving, or delivering to another person or possessing, using, or being under the influence of a controlled substance, dangerous drug, or alcoholic beverage.

The law limits the District’s ability to implement a safe and secure facility for all students and staff in the event a significant issue arises with a student under grade three.

Innovation Strategies:

To best serve the students of LCM CISD, we propose that school administrators be able to exercise their professional judgement and suspend students when they deem it necessary in order to maintain an orderly and safe learning environment for all students. Specifically, the District seeks the flexibility to authorize school administrators to suspend students below grade three when necessary.

The District currently monitors the suspensions of all students, regardless of grade level, to ensure the District policy and the Student Code of Conduct are applied appropriately across the District. Should an exemption from TEC 37.005 be granted, the District would continue to monitor the suspension of all students, which would now include students in grades below three, to ensure that suspensions are appropriate. The benefits of this strategy allow for school-based decision making, assists in maintaining an orderly learning environment for all students, and allows school administrators to more effectively ensure the safety and security of all students and staff.

Campus Behavior Coordinator

Exemption from: TEC 37.0012

Relevant LCM Board Policies: FO Legal/Local

Manner in which the statute inhibits the goals of the plan:

TEC 37.0012 requires that a person be designated to serve as the Campus Behavior Coordinator (CBC), who is primarily responsible for maintaining student discipline and implementation of Chapter 37. This provision also allows duties imposed on a campus principal or other campus administrator to be performed by the CBC.

Innovation Strategies:

To best serve the needs of LCM CISD students and staff, we propose the District abstain from designating only one person as the Campus Behavior Coordinator. LCM CISD campus administrative staff consists of a principal and assistant principal(s), who by job description, serve in this capacity already. Administrators work together to ensure compliance with Chapter 37, Subchapter A. Our District believes in a collaborative approach to discipline, with multiple people providing emotional and social support to students, rather than just one person. Exemption from this requirement will allow the option of increasing collaboration regarding student discipline, as outlined in the LCM CISD Student Code of Conduct.

School Health Advisory Council

Exemption from: TEC 28.004(d-1)

Relevant LCM Board Policies: BDF (Legal)

Manner in which the statute inhibits the goals of the plan:

TEC 28.004(d-1) states the Board of Trustees of each school district shall establish a local school health advisory council to assist the District in ensuring local community values are reflected in the District's health education instruction. The council shall meet at least four times each year. The committee consists of parents, community members, and a District liaison.

Innovation Strategies:

The District School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) will meet a minimum of two times annually, once each semester. The council may convene for additional meetings if necessary. This will allow the council to meet, review, and respond to data regarding the District's goals without creating a hardship on the membership.

RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION TO INITIATE THE PROCESS OF EXPLORING THE OPTION OF DESIGNATING LITTLE CYPRESS-MAURICEVILLE CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT AS A DISTRICT OF INNOVATION

Whereas, the Little Cypress-Mauriceville CISD Board of Trustees is committed to graduating young adults with the knowledge and skills necessary for success in an ever-changing technological society by guaranteeing each student an individualized and well-rounded education; and

Whereas, the Texas Education Code provides Texas public school districts the opportunity to be designated as Districts of Innovation if the district's most recent performance rating reflects at least acceptable performance, and that consideration of the designation as a district of innovation may be initiated by a resolution adopted by the Board of Trustees of the district; and

Whereas, Texas districts designated as Districts of Innovation may be exempted from certain state laws; and

Whereas, The Little Cypress-Mauriceville CISD Board of Trustees seeks to support innovation and local initiatives to improve educational outcomes for the benefit of LCM students and the community; and

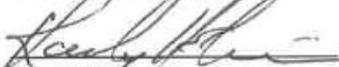
Whereas, Section 12A.003 of the Texas Education Code requires districts seeking to be designated as Districts of Innovation develop a local innovation plan providing for a comprehensive educational program and identifying the requirements imposed by the Texas Education Code that inhibit the goals of the plan; and

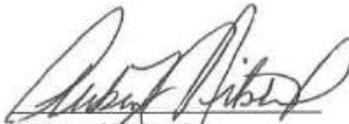
Whereas, the Little Cypress-Mauriceville CISD Board of Trustees will hold a public hearing and receive feedback from stakeholders to consider the development of a local innovation plan; following the public hearing, the Board of Trustees may decline to pursue the designation or may appoint a committee to develop a plan in accordance with Section 12A of the Texas Education Code; now therefore, be it

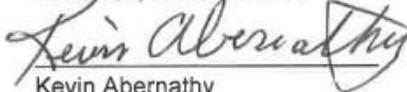
Resolved, that the Little Cypress-Mauriceville Consolidated Independent School District Board of Trustees initiates the process of exploring and considering the option of designating LCM CISD as a District of Innovation under HB 1842.

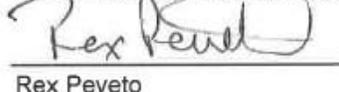
Witness these signatures on the 12th day of November, 2018.

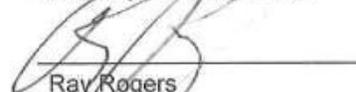

Marlene Cournier
President, Board Trustee

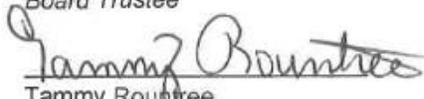

Randy McIlwain
Vice President, Board Trustee


Aubrey Milstead
Secretary, Board Trustee


Kevin Abernathy
Board Trustee


Rex Peveto
Board Trustee


Ray Rogers
Board Trustee


Tammy Rountree
Board Trustee