

CISD INNOVATION PLAN INTRODUCTION

House Bill (HB) 1842, passed during the 84th Legislative Session, permits Texas public school districts to become Districts of Innovation and to obtain 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 including the uniform school start date and required minutes of instruction.

- **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 December 15, 2016 the Clarksville Independent School District's Board of Trustees ("Board") 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 December 15, 2016, the Board of Trustees appointed a District Improvement committee to act as District of Innovation Committee ("Committee") comprised of diverse leaders representing a cross-section of the District's stakeholders including teachers, principals, parents, community members, and administrators.

The Committee met on January 12, 2017, to discuss and draft the Local Innovation Plan. The Committee representative and the Board of Trustees met on January 19, 2017 to conduct a public forum and accept input on the proposed District of Innovation Plan.

The Innovation Plan was posted on the school webpage on January 20, 2017.

TERM

The term of the Plan is for five years, beginning July 1, 2017 and ending December 31, 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 appoint a new 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 the term of this Plan. The District may not implement two separate plans at any one time.

First Day of Instruction (Ed. Code 25.0811)(Ed. Code 25.0812)

Current Requirements:

Under the current regulations CISD may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.

Proposed:

Determine a school district calendar that best meets the needs of students, families, and teachers. Annually, members of the District Improvement Committee (DIC) will develop draft calendars, gather feedback from each school community, and conduct a school community vote.

Reasoning:

Exemption from the first day of instruction mandate may enable CISD to begin the school year on an abbreviated week, easing the transition for students entering kindergarten, intermediate school, and high school.

As part of the CISD Local Innovation Plan, draft calendars will continue to be developed, shared, and feedback gathered from members of the CISD school communities. Additionally, the District Education Improvement Committee will fully examine all input before making a final recommendation to the Superintendent.

Teacher certification Ed. Code 21.003) (Ed. Code 21.056)

Current Requirements:

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 submit a request to the Texas Education Agency. TEA then approves or denies this request. In certain circumstances, a district can use a local one-year permit.

Proposed:

The campus principal may 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.

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. Local teaching certificates will be for one year. The employee will be at-will.

Reasoning:

In order to best serve CISD students, decisions on certification will be handled locally. Districts in rural areas have difficulty attracting and retaining certified staff while trying to provide a curriculum that offers students with a variety of courses. There is a lot of bureaucracy and unnecessary paperwork involved in the process which hinders the Districts ability to plan effectively. This change will allow more flexibility in our scheduling and more options for our students in class offerings.

Teacher Employment Contracts (Ed Code 21.401)

Current Requirements:

Education Code Chapter 21 Teacher Contracts defines a teacher contract as a ten month contract equivalent to 187 days.

Proposed

All 187 day contracts will allow for 5 Flex days that will be designated by the District Improvement Committee School Calendar committee.

Reasoning:

Clarksville ISD would have the freedom to consider the reduction in contract days to better align with the 75,600 minutes required of students. The District would reduce all 187 day employee contracts to 182 days.. Compensation would still be figured on original the original 187 contract days.

Long Range Energy Plan (Section 44.902)

Current Requirements

The board of trustees of a school district shall establish a long range energy plan to reduce the district's annual energy consumption by 5% beginning with the 2008 fiscal year and consume electricity in subsequent fiscal years in accordance with the District's energy plan.

Proposed

Delete the requirement for the District to reduce energy consumption by 5% and to develop plans for that purpose.

Reasoning:

5% is an arbitrary number. Energy savings should be a District and Campus Building calculation Therefore, creating a "one size fits all" plan is not realistic

Teacher and Principal Evaluation (Ed.Code 21.352)(Ed. Code 21.3541)

Current requirements:

The commissioner by rule shall establish and shall administer a comprehensive appraisal and professional development system for principals and appraisals of teachers. Each school district shall use the appraisal process and performance criteria developed by the commissioner. (T-TESS and T-PESS)

Proposed:

A committee of Administrators will develop a Teacher and Principal evaluation tool that would include elements of the PDAS, T-TESS, T-PESS, and other best practices that would fit the needs of CISD.

CISD will utilize a locally developed Teacher and Principal evaluation tool.

All eligible Teachers would be evaluated a minimal of once every three years.

Probationary teachers would be evaluated every year.

Principals will continue to be evaluated annually on the locally developed evaluation tool.

Reasoning:

Recently the State of Texas replaced the PDAS system (used since 1997) with the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS) (effective 2016-2017). The Texas Principal Evaluation and Support System (T-PESS) was recommended for Principal evaluations starting in the 2016-2017 school year.

All CISD Teachers were evaluated annually while using the PDAS system. Due to the documentation requirements for the T-TESS system this was changed to new Teachers annually and the remaining Teachers on a rotation schedule.

Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator (TEC Sec. 37.0012)

Current requirements:

A person at each campus must be designated to serve as the campus behavior coordinator. The person designated may be the principal of the campus or any other campus administrator selected by the principal. The campus behavior coordinator is primarily responsible for maintaining student discipline and the implementation of discipline procedures for all students..

Proposed:

Exempt CISD from the requirement to designate a campus behavior coordinator.

Reasoning:

Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator Embedded in multiple strategies within the Clarksville ISD Strategic Plan is to help students become socially and emotionally intelligent individuals. Social and emotional learning is inhibited by Texas Education Code Section 37.0012, which constrains campus governance by requiring one person at each campus to be designated to serve as the campus behavior coordinator. This requirement inhibits social and emotional learning because it restricts the District's ability to promote a more collaborative discipline program in which the schools, along with the community provide social and emotional supports to students.

By obtaining exemption from Section 37.0012, the District will be better able to focus on establishing classroom protocols and utilizing school culture to foster the development of individual responsibility, positive behavioral interventions and supports while encouraging the social and emotional development of each student and his or her responsibility toward the community