



# **District of Innovation Plan**

**February 2017- January 2022**

## **Introduction**

House Bill 1842 passed in the 84th Texas Legislative Session, provides an opportunity for Texas public school districts to modify state requirements at the local level to better meet the needs of their unique student populations in order to prepare them for success and lifelong learning. As a District of Innovation, Malta ISD wishes to implement an Innovation Plan with increased flexibility and freedom necessary to personalize learning experiences. As a District of Innovation, Malta ISD intends to utilize the opportunity to enact maximum local control and design local policies as needed to best meet the needs of our students, employees, and community.

## **Term**

The District of Innovation Plan will become effective February 2017 and will remain in effect for five years, through January 2022, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The District of Innovation Planning Committee will monitor the effectiveness of the plan and recommend to the Board of Trustees any suggested modifications to the plan.

## **Timeline**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Activity/Task</b>
December 12, 2016	Board of Trustees passes Resolution to initiate District of Innovation Plan
December 12, 2016	Board of Trustees held public hearing and appointed District of Innovation Planning committee to draft plan
January 2, 2017	Initial planning meeting of the DOI Committee
January 13, 2017	District of Innovation Plan placed on school website
January 17, 2017	DOI Planning Committee approves finalized plan
January 18, 2017	DOI plan submitted to the Commissioner of Education
February 13, 2017	Board of Trustees vote on DOI Plan

## **Planning Committee**

Member Name	Representation
Kinsey Dick	Parent
Ashlee Phillips	Parent
Shana Rivas	Parent
Lynn Oakley	Teacher
Debbie Campbell	Teacher
Dot Martin	Administrative Assistant
Samantha Morgan	Business Owner
Stacy Starrett	Principal
Brian Bobbitt	Superintendent

## **School Start Date**

Exempt from: TEC 25.0811

Relevant Board Policy: EB LEGAL

### **Currently**

*TEC 25.0811 states that a school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.*

### **Proposed**

Malta ISD would like to locally determine the school start date for school. This flexibility would allow the district to determine, on an annual basis, what start date best meets the needs of the student. It also offers the following opportunities:

- Beginning school before the fourth Monday in August gives the ability to help balance semesters.
- An earlier start permits students additional instruction prior to state assessments.
- This will allow for a calendar that fits the needs of our local communities, staff, and students.

## **Class Size Waiver**

Exemption from: TEC 25.112; TEC 25.113

Related Board Policy: EED LEGAL

### **Currently**

*Texas Education Code 25.112 limits the number of students in Kindergarten through 4th grade to 22 students per teacher. While the maximum number of students in K-4 classrooms may be addressed by a state waiver, the waiver must be applied for annually. Texas Education Code 25.113 requires districts to notify each parent in the class section that exceeds the 22:1 ratio and inform them the waiver has been submitted.*

### **Proposed**

While Malta intends to remain within the education guidelines with regard to class size ratios, we seek local control to manage increases in class size to provide the best learning environment for our K-4 students. Research shows it is the teacher in the classroom that has the greatest impact on student learning and not the absolute class size. Small class sizes may have a positive effect in the classroom, but must also be balanced with the timing of adding staff, the qualifications of staff available, the makeup and chemistry of the classroom and other classroom influences.

## **Contract Service Days**

Exemption from: TEC 21.401

Related Board Policy: DC LEGAL

### **Currently**

*Texas Education Code requires educators employed on a 10-month contract to provide a minimum of 187 days of service.*

### **Proposal**

With the passage of TEC 25.081 which changed the required days of instruction to minutes, the law did not address contract days for 10-monthly contract employees. The determination of how many days are required to fulfill an employee's contract should be a local decision. Malta proposes to reduce teacher contract days from 187 to 185 with no effect on teacher salaries. This proposal will increase the daily rate the district pays teachers and should enhance teacher recruitment morale.

## **Employment Contracts**

Exemption from: TEC 21.102

Related Board Policy: DCA LEGAL

### **Currently**

*For experienced teacher 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 previous eight years.*

### **Proposed**

For experienced teachers new to the district that have been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the past eight previous years, a probationary contract may be issued for up to two years. This will allow the district to more fully determine the staff member's effectiveness.

## **Transfer Students**

Exemption from: TEC 25.036

Related Board Policy: FDA (LOCAL)

### **Currently**

*Under Texas Education Code 25.001, a district may choose to accept, as transfers, students who are not entitled to enroll in the district. Under TEC 25.036, a transfer is interpreted to be for a period of one school year.*

### **Proposed**

Malta ISD maintains a transfer policy under FDA (Local) requiring nonresident students wishing to transfer to file a transfer application each school year. In approving transfer requests, the availability of space and instructional staff, availability of programs and services, the student's disciplinary history records, work habits, and attendance records are also evaluated. Transfer students are expected to follow the attendance requirements, rules and regulations of the District. TEC 25.036 has been interpreted to establish the acceptance of a transfer as a one year commitment by the District. The District is seeking to eliminate the provision of a one year commitment in accepting transfer applicants. On rare occasions, student behavior warrants suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion. In addition, student attendance may fall below the TEA truancy standard. In these rare cases, Malta ISD seeks exemption from the one year transfer commitment.