Background

The 84th Legislative Session passed House Bill 1842, allowing Texas public school districts to become Districts of Innovation and thus permitting exemption from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code. In an effort to unify a vision of college and career readiness by empowering every educational stakeholder, Cooper ISD seeks to become a District of Innovation. This distinction allows the District increased local control over District operations to improve the quality of services being provided to our students, parents and community members. A resolution to initiate the process of Cooper ISD becoming a District of Innovation was adopted by the Board of Trustees on January 2, 2017. A District of Innovation Leadership Team was established and charged with drafting an innovative plan to better serve and accommodate the diverse needs of our students.

The DOI Leadership Team considered our CISD mission, innovative instructional strategies, and district-wide needs assessment in an effort to construct a local innovation plan with flexibility to bring about systemic change in Cooper ISD. The Cooper ISD innovation plan will be effective for five years, beginning in the 2017-2018 school year and ending in the 2021-2022 school year. The plan may be terminated or amended by the Board of Trustees at any time in accordance with the law. The DOI Leadership Team will monitor the effectiveness of the plan and provide updates and/or necessary modifications to the Board of Trustees on a regular basis.
RESOLUTION TO ADOPT A DISTRICT OF INNOVATION

WHEREAS Education Code 12A.001 provides that a district is eligible for designation as a district of innovation if the district's most recent performance rating under Section 39.054 reflects at least acceptable performance, and that consideration of designation as a district of innovation may be initiated by a resolution adopted by the board of trustees of the district; and

WHEREAS the Cooper Independent School District's most recent performance rating under Education Code 39.054 reflects at least acceptable performance.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of Cooper Independent School District by adoption of this resolution initiates the process under Education Code Chapter 12A to become a district of innovation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that after this resolution is signed by the Board, a public hearing shall be held to consider whether the District should develop a local innovation plan for the designation of the District as a district of innovation and that after the public hearing the Board of Trustees of Cooper Independent School District shall appoint a committee to develop a local innovation plan or decline to pursue designation as a district of innovation.

Adopted this 2nd day of January , 2017 , by the Board of Trustees.

[Signatures]

Presiding Officer
Secretary

Board of Trustees

Thomas Darden  President
Blake Randle  Vice-President
Kregg Slakey  Secretary
Darren Braddy  Trustee
Jeff Phifer  Trustee
Mandy Freeman  Trustee
Lea Waller  Trustee
### District of Innovation Leadership Team Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denicia Hohenberger</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doug Wicks</td>
<td>Facilities/Operation Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charles Rutledge</td>
<td>Technology Director</td>
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<td>Ronnie Green</td>
<td>Athletic Director</td>
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<td>Rachel Darden</td>
<td>Human Resource Director</td>
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<td>Rachael Arthur</td>
<td>Business Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Richard Roan</td>
<td>High School Principal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amber Norris</td>
<td>Instructional Specialist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Julie Silman</td>
<td>Junior High Principal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Linny de la Pena</td>
<td>JH/HS Counselor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lynn Byrd</td>
<td>Elementary Principal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Katie Bassham</td>
<td>Elem. Asst. Principal/Instructional Specialist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeanette Burnett</td>
<td>Elementary Counselor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Janet Walker</td>
<td>Head Start Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neali Landers</td>
<td>Administrative Assistant</td>
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### District Advisory/Improvement Committee Membership

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anita Copeland</td>
<td>Elementary Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bonnie Hobbs</td>
<td>Community Representative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deena White</td>
<td>Jr. High Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denicia Hohenberger</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tracey Ruzicka</td>
<td>Para Professional</td>
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<tr>
<td>Freceia Robinson</td>
<td>Business Representative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jacie Ballard</td>
<td>Jr. High Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Danielle Weathers</td>
<td>High School Parent Representative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Judy Falls</td>
<td>High School Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly Chester</td>
<td>Jr. High Parent Representative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ashley Murphy</td>
<td>Jr. High Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charla Singleton</td>
<td>Community Representative.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doug Wicks</td>
<td>Non-Teaching Professional</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shelli Hilliard</td>
<td>Business Representative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heather Kwast</td>
<td>Elementary Parent Representative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeanette Burnett</td>
<td>Non-Teaching Professional</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pat Ainsworth</td>
<td>Elementary Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heath Petty</td>
<td>High School Teacher</td>
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Timeline

Legend
- District of Innovation (DOI) Leadership Team
- District Advisory/Improvement Committee (DAIC)
- Campus Team Teacher Groups
- Board of Trustees
- District Wide

- 10/25/16 Innovative Ideas School visit- North Garland High School
- 11/15/16 Leadership Team Overview of AVID and Commissioner’s data
- 11/17/16 Innovative Ideas School visit- Birdville ISD, Haltom High
- 11/17/16 DAIC District Needs Assessment and Calendar Planning
- 11/29/16 Leadership Team Data Review and Planning Session
- 12/5/16 Campus Team Data Review and Planning Session
- 12/10/16 Innovative Training- AVID National Conference
- 12/12/16 Board of Trustees preliminary District of Innovation discussion
- 12/13/16 Leadership Team researches District of Innovation rules
- 1/2/17 Board of Trustees considers District of Innovation Resolution
- 1/3/17 Leadership Team AVID implementation planning
- 1/16/17 Board hosts Public Hearing and considers Committee Appointment
- 1/17/17 DOI Leadership Team launches District of Innovation planning
- 1/18/17 Innovative Ideas School visit- Arlington, Bowie HS
- 1/23/17 DAIC Preview of Innovation Planning
- 2/2/17 Innovative Ideas School visit- College Station, Intermediate campus
- 2/7/17 DOI Leadership Team continues District of Innovation planning
- 2/9/17 Innovative Ideas School visit- Mansfield, Middle School
- 2/13/17 District Wide Staff Development for Innovation Planning
- 2/20/17 Board of Trustees update on Innovation Planning
- 2/21/17 DOI Leadership Team District of Innovation planning
- 2/28/17 Innovative Ideas School visit- Mansfield, High School
- 3/1/17 Innovative Ideas School visit- McKinney High School
- 3/2/17 Innovative Ideas School visit- Mansfield, Middle School
- 3/7/17 DOI Leadership Team refines Innovation Plan
- 3/10/17 CISD Website and TEA Postings of Innovation Plan
- 3/20/17 Board of Trustees presented with Innovation Plan
- 3/21/17 DOI Leadership Team final review of Innovation Plan
- 3/21/17 DAIC Meeting and Approval of Innovation Plan
- 4/17/17 Board of Trustees Final Approval of Innovation Plan and Policies
- 4/17/17 Board of Trustees Approval of 2017-2018 School Calendar
Comprehensive Educational Program

The local innovation plan is guided by and aligned with the mission, goals and innovation priorities of Cooper ISD to provide for a comprehensive educational program.

1. Our MISSION is to graduate all students with the necessary educational and social skills to maximize and attain personal and professional goals.

2. District Goals
   a. As a District of Innovation, develop a culture of continuous improvement through collaboration and shared responsibility.
   b. Cultivate a high performing learning environment through active campus leadership and quality instructional training.
   c. Engage all students in meaningful instruction that results in college and workforce preparedness.
   d. Provide a quality learning environment that is safe, protective and supportive for all students and staff.

3. Innovation Priorities
   a. Ensure instructional time is valued by modifications to the school year
   b. Continuous improvement through collaboration
   c. Provide ongoing meaningful professional development
   d. Design and deliver relevant and engaging inquiry based instruction
   e. Recruit and retain highly qualified staff
Cooper ISD District of Innovation District-Wide Focus Areas

Preparing students to become intrinsically motivated learners by empowering them with the infrastructure, strategies and relationships that support 21st century readiness, is considered a top priority for Cooper ISD. The DOI Leadership Team chose to focus our plan on innovative systemic changes that allow the district local control in closing the achievement gap for college and career readiness.

The District of Innovation focus areas include the following district-wide practices to support intrinsic learners:

1. District Non-negotiables for consistency across campuses  
   a. Professional Learning Communities  
   b. Multi-tiered systems of support  
   c. High yield Writing-Inquiry-Collaboration-Organization-Reading (WICOR) instructional strategies  
   d. Vertically and horizontally aligned curriculum

2. Additional Components  
   a. Data driven, student-centered decision making procedures  
   b. Formative and summative assessments  
   c. Differentiated instruction  
   d. Digital learning opportunities  
   e. College and career readiness opportunities  
   f. Modified instructional calendar
Innovative Local Control Requests

The following are exemptions requested in the Texas Education Code to benefit identified focus areas for Cooper ISD:

1. **§25.0811 First Day of Instruction**
   Texas Education Code states that a school district may not begin instruction prior to the fourth Monday of August. This restriction greatly limits the amount of flexibility that the planning committee and district has on the school calendar, which so often determines the planning of activities for local families and community members.

   Innovative Strategy
   While working with local stakeholders to ensure collaboration and local control, Cooper ISD will seek guidance from the District Improvement Team to determine the school start date which will create greater flexibility in the school calendar. This flexibility will create opportunities for more effective staff development as well as more balanced Fall and Spring semesters. Cooper ISD will begin instruction no earlier than the 2nd Thursday of August in an effort to meet these goals.

   This exemption aligns with Innovation Priorities a, b, and c.

2. **§21.404 Planning and Preparation Time**
   Texas Education Code states each classroom teacher will be given at least 450 minutes within each two-week period for preparation to teach, conducting parent conferences, and evaluating students' work. A planning period will be at least 45 minutes within the instructional day and teachers will have no other assignments during this time. Based upon Commissioner of Education interpretation, all conference period assignments are to take place when the students are in instructional attendance.

   Innovative Strategy
   Cooper ISD and its teachers place high value on teacher planning, effectiveness and collaboration. It is the philosophy of Cooper ISD to cultivate a high performing learning environment through collaboration, data analysis, and planning. Local control will allow flexibility in planning and preparation time and will determine when teachers planning and preparation period will occur. This flexibility will open up opportunities for teachers to collaborate during the instructional day. Professional Learning Communities will be conducted based upon the team's collaborative preference to meet after school or during the instructional day. In order to assure that teachers have adequate planning time, after school meetings will not be held on the same day as meetings held during the instructional day conference time.

   This exemption aligns with Innovation Priorities b, c, and d.
3. **§21.102(b) Teacher Employment Contracts**

Texas Education Code requires that teachers (the term “teacher” includes principals, supervisors, classroom teachers, school counselors, or other full-time professional employee who are required to hold a certificate) employed by the District for the first time with no experience are to be placed on a one-year probationary contract for up to three years. Those newly-hired having five years of experience in public education in Texas within the last eight years are placed on a one-year probationary contract, and after the first year, placed on a term contract. This law limits the District’s ability to sufficiently assess and determine whether a newly-hired teacher is a good fit for the District. The one-year probationary period is insufficient to evaluate the teacher’s effectiveness because the teacher contract renewal timelines demand that employment decisions be made before the end of the school year.

**Innovative Strategy**

To create equality in new hires, to give Cooper ISD the opportunity to serve students better, to allow administrators time to evaluate performance, and to provide opportunities for improvement, growth and professional development, the District will implement the following contract requirements for teachers (including principals, supervisors, classroom teachers, school counselors, or other full-time professional employee who are required to hold a certificate):

a. Beginning with the 2017-2018 academic year and beyond, all teachers newly-hired by the District will be issued a one-year probationary contract for a maximum of three years.

b. Teachers who are employed by Cooper ISD prior to the 2017-2018 school year are not subject to the proposed contract changes.

This exemption aligns with Innovation Priorities d and e.