

CELESTE ISD
District of Innovation Plan (HB 1842)
2017-2022

During the 84th Legislative Session, HB 1842 was passed in order to provide more local control in certain areas. HB 1842 allows a traditional public school to utilize the exemptions in Education Law that charter schools currently are entitled to. We feel this is a great opportunity for Celeste ISD to create a plan based on the needs of our students and community that will remain in effect for the next five years (2017-2022).

Timeline of Actions to Meet Requirements

Thursday, November 17 th , 2016	BOE Conduct Public Hearing, consider action to pursue designation as a District of Innovation and appoint a committee to develop the District of Innovation Plan.
Tuesday, November 29 th , 2016	DOIC meets to develop final Innovation Plan to be posted on school website for 30 days prior to BOE consideration for adoption.
Wednesday, November 30 th , 2016	Information on Final Innovation Plan posted on district Website for 30 days.
Wednesday, January 4 th , 2017	DOIC met for consideration of feedback and finalize plan.
Thursday, January 19 th , 2017	The District of Innovation plan will be presented to the BOE for consideration and approval.

1. First Day of Instruction

(EB LEGAL) (Ed. Code 25.811)

TEC Code Requiring Exemption

TEC Sec. 25.0811 states that a school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August. TEC Sec. 25.0811 allows no flexibility in the design of annual calendars to fit the needs of the community or the wishes of local Board of Trustees who represent community interests in this matter.

District of Innovative Strategy

Improve student success through the flexibility in the calendar by not beginning instruction for students any earlier than the **3rd Monday of August**. This strategy will allow first and second semesters to be closer in the number of days of instruction and create more instructional time before STARR/EOC exams. In addition balanced semesters will align with college semesters as well as allow more opportunities for summer school, internships and industrial certifications.

2. Teacher Certification

(TEC 21.003, DK LEGAL, DK LOCAL, DK EXHIBIT)

TEC Code Requiring Exemption

TEC 21.003 requires that a person may not be employed as a teacher by a school 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 emergency certification for the Texas Education Agency and/or State Board of Educator Certification.

Innovative Strategy

In order to best serve Celeste ISD students by allowing more flexibility in scheduling and more course offerings, decisions on certification will be handled locally. For grades 6-12, in all subjects except Special Education and ESL/Bilingual, the campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request for a local certification that will allow a certified teacher to teach one subject in a related field for which he/she is not certified. The principal must specify in writing

the reason for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses that would qualify the individual to teach the proposed subject.

This proposal will provide more flexibility in our scheduling and more options for our students in class offerings. We envision classrooms with multiple subjects being taught through multiple formats, in which the “teacher” will become a facilitator in student learning. The Superintendent will report this action to the Board of Trustees following the assignment.

3. Teacher Contracts

(TEC 21.102(b), DCA LEGAL)

TEC Code Requiring Exemption

TEC 21.102 requires that experienced teachers new to the district cannot have a probationary contract that exceeds one year if the person has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five out of the previous eight years.

Innovative Strategy

TEC 21.102 does not allow sufficient time to evaluate a teacher’s effectiveness in the classroom since teacher contract timelines demand that employment decisions be made prior to state assessment results. Therefore 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 which will ensure that students are being taught by highly effective teachers.

4. Teacher Contract Days

(DCB Legal, DCB Local) (Ed. Code 21.401)

TEC Code Requiring Exemption

TEC 21.401 defines a teacher contract as a ten month contract equivalent to 187 days.

Innovative Strategy

This plan reduces teacher contract days from 187 to 182 with no effect on teacher salaries. Due to low property values, it is difficult for Celeste ISD to compete with local schools in the area of teacher salary. This reduction in contract days at the current salary schedule would make our salaries more competitive by increasing the daily rate the district pays teachers, and enhance teacher recruitment, therefore putting the district on a more level playing field with neighboring districts.

If you have any comments or concerns about the District of Innovation Plan, please contact Superintendent Brad Connelly @ connellyb@celesteisd.org.