



**Rankin Independent
School District**
Home of the Red Devils



DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLAN

ADOPTED – MAY 2021

REVISED – APRIL 2020

PROPOSED REVISION – MAY 2021

APPROVED BY BOARD – JUNE
2021

Rankin Independent School District

Local Innovation Plan

Local Innovation Committee Members:

January, 2017

DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES:

Mr. Keith Richardson	Superintendent
Mr. Sammy Wyatt	High School Principal
Mrs. Kristi Exum	Elementary Principal
Mr. Adrian Gallardo	District Counselor
Mrs. Elidia Gallardo	PEIMS/Federal Programs
Mr. Jeff Shelton	Athletic Director

JUNIOR/HIGH SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVES:

Mrs. Kendra Davidson	High School Teacher
Mrs. Susan Netopski	High School Teacher

ELEMENTARY REPRESENTATIVES:

Ms. Vonda Garner	Elementary Teacher
Ms. Barb Lawson	Elementary Teacher

PARENT & BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVES:

Mr. Pete Jackson	Parent
Mr. Paul Prewozniak	Parent
Mrs. Corey Owens	Business Partner/Parent

February, 2020

District Representatives:

Sammy Wyatt	Superintendent
Adrian Gallardo	HS Principal
Brad Riker	Elementary Principal
Kristi Exum	District Counselor
Vicki Templeton	Safety/Security Coordinator
Elidia Gallardo	PEIMS/Federal Programs
Garret Avalos	Athletic Director

Rankin School Representatives

Robin Wilkie	Asst. Principal/HS Teacher
Kendra Davidson	Technology

Barb Lawson	Teacher
Amy Loftin	Teacher

Parent Business Representatives

Pete Jackson	Parent
Corey Owens	Business Partner/Parent

May, 2021

District Representatives:

Sammy Wyatt	Superintendent
Adrian Gallardo	HS Principal
Brad Riker	Elementary Principal
Misti Tucker	District Counselor
Vicki Templeton	Safety/Security Coordinator
Elidia Gallardo	PEIMS/Federal Programs
Garret Avalos	Athletic Director

Rankin School Representatives

Robin Wilkie	Asst. Principal/HS Teacher
Olga Martinez	HS Teacher
Cindy Venegas	Elementary Teacher
Amy Loftin	Elementary Teacher

Parent Business Representatives

Pete Jackson	Parent
Corey Owens	Business Partner/Parent

DATE	LOCATION	ACTION/AGENDA
January 24, 2017	Admin Building	Discuss DOI Plan
February 7, 2017	Admin Building	Discuss DOI Plan
February 15, 2017	School Board Meeting	School Board adopts resolution to consider designation as a District of Innovation.
February 22, 2017	District Site Base Meeting	Discuss DOI Plan
March 8, 2017	School Board Meeting	School Board hold public meeting to discuss the possibility of becoming a DOI. School Board votes to move forward with plan. School Board approves members of the District of Innovation Committee
April 2017	RISD Website	Posted DOI for 30 days
April 26, 2017	DOI Committee Meeting	Committee meets for final vote on DOI Plan
May 10, 2017	School Board Meeting	School Board approves District of Innovation Plan
February 7, 2020	DOI Committee Meeting	Discuss possible changes to current DOI Plan
March 23, 2020	School Board Meeting	School Board adopts resolution to allow changes to current DOI plan
April 10, 2020	DOI Committee via email	Approves new DOI plan with changes
April 16-May 16	School Website	Revised Plan posted of District's Website for 30 days.
April 30, 2020	Via email	Inform Commissioner of Education - school board to vote on adoption of revised plan
June 10, 2020	School Board Meeting	Hold public meeting on DOI plan changes; SB will vote on adoption of revised plan.
May 4, 2021	DOI Committee Meeting via Email	Discuss possible changes to current DOI Plan – SB resolution to allow changes DOI was approved in March, 2020.
May 5, 2021	DOI Committee Meeting via E-mail	Approves DOI plan with changes.
May6, 2021	Via email	Inform Commissioner of Education - school board to vote on adoption of revised plan

May 6, 2021 – June 6, 2021	Rankin ISD website	Post DOI with amended changes for 30 days
June 16, 2020	School Board Meeting	Hold public meeting on DOI plan changes; SB will vote on adoption of revised plan.
July 2, 2021	Via Email	Inform Commissioner of Education on adoption of new DOI plan

I. INTRODUCTION

House Bill 1842, passed during the 34th, Legislative Session, permits Texas public school districts to become Districts of Innovation and to obtain exemption from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code. On February 15, 2017 the Rankin Independent School District's Board of Trustees ("Board") passed a Resolution to Initiate the Process of Designation as a District of Innovation in order to increase local control over District operations and to support innovation and local initiatives to improve educational outcomes for the benefit of students and the community.

On February 15, 2017, the Board appointed a Local Innovation Committee ("Committee") comprised of diverse leaders representing a cross-section of the District's various stakeholders, including teachers, principals, parents, community members, and administrators. The Committee met on February 22, 2017 and March 8, 2017, to discuss and draft this Local Innovation Plan ("Plan"). The Committee sought and considered input on the Plan through a survey distributed to teachers, principals, administrators, other District employees, parents, high school students, and community members. Based on direction provided by the Board and input from various District stakeholders, the Committee proposes this Plan.

II. TERM

The term of the Plan is for five years, beginning at the start of the 2018-2019 school year and ending at the end of the 2022-2023 school year, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The Committee will continually monitor the effectiveness of the Plan and recommend to the Board any suggested modifications to the Plan.

III. A COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The Plan's comprehensive educational program is guided by and aligned with the Board's Vision, Mission, Strategic Priorities, and Strategic Plan for the District.

A. Vision

The Board has adopted the following Vision to guide the District:

Every district graduate shall be prepared with the knowledge, academic foundation, and life skills to be a productive learner, an effective communicator, and a responsible citizen in order to be successful in an ever-changing world.

B. Mission

The Board has adopted the following Mission to guide the District:

Maximizing student achievement will be the goal of the Rankin Community. All students will be provided highly effective skills centered around respect, communication, leadership, discipline and accountability to successfully participate in life.

C. Strategic Plan

The Board recognizes that for students to succeed in today's world, schools must go beyond what has historically been limited to a set of credits that comprise graduation requirements. The Board believes that in addition to supporting students as they meet core credit requirements, there is a need to focus on college and career readiness, dual language, entrepreneurial mindsets, character development, social and emotional learning, and employability. Accordingly, the Board developed a Strategic Plan for the District including strategic priorities, focus areas, and initiatives pointing toward a broader set of outcomes that focus on powerful learning experiences and continual forward-looking growth for every student. In other words, the Strategic Plan is designed to create a system that puts learners at the center.

The Strategic Plan signals a transition from test preparation as the primary focus to meaningful, student-centered learning as a core design principle. The Strategic Plan emphasizes a commitment not only to established student priorities such as active learning, but also to offering quality options for every family and providing development opportunities to staff so that they can best support students.

D. Innovations

To achieve the District's Vision and Mission, the District needs the flexibility to exert local control, at both the District and campus levels, to:

- Promote innovative ideas regarding District/Campus governance
- Local control on Teacher Certifications Requirements
- Modify the school day
- Modify the school year

Promoting innovative ideas regarding campus governance and teacher certifications will help build strong supports for students, schools, and the community. Finally, modifications in the scheduling of the school year and the school day will allow for more time for innovative student enrichment opportunities as well as more time for professional development of staff.

E. First Day of Instruction

The Strategic Plan emphasizes the importance of active learning, college and career readiness, and social and emotional learning. Texas Education Code Section 25.0811 inhibits these goals by prohibiting the District from beginning instruction before the fourth Monday in August. Flexibility to begin instruction earlier in the calendar year will enable the District to improve active learning by balancing the amount of instructional time in the semesters, which will allow teachers to better pace and deliver instruction before and after the winter break. In addition, by having the flexibility to start and end the school year earlier, students will be able to enroll in college courses that start in early June, thereby increasing college and career readiness. Finally, starting the school year earlier for students transitioning from elementary school to middle school and from middle school to high school will promote social and emotional learning by giving those students additional time and support to enable them to adjust socially and emotionally to their new campus environments.

F. Teacher Certification

Within the focus area of providing engaging and challenging learning, the

Strategic Plan sets forth specific goals under the initiative to improve college and career readiness options. Three of these goals - development of post high school plans, improvement of workforce skills, and expansion of dual credit programs - are inhibited by Texas Education Code Sections 21.003, 21.053, 21.044 and 19 Texas Administrative Code Chapter 231 to the extent these laws limit the District's ability to hire teachers to teach hard-to-fill, high demand dual credit and career and technical/STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Mathematics) courses when high quality certified teachers are not available. In order to enable more students to obtain the educational benefit of such dual credit and career and technical/STEAM course offerings, the District seeks to establish its own local qualification requirements for such courses in lieu of the requirements set forth in law.

By obtaining exemption from existing teacher certification requirements for dual credit and career and technical/STEAM teachers, the District will have the flexibility to hire credentialed community college instructors or university professors in specific content areas in order to afford more students the opportunity to take dual credit courses if certified teachers are not available to teach those courses. In addition, this exemption will afford the District the flexibility to hire professionals in certain trades and vocations to teach the crafts of those trades and vocations (such as welding, fine arts, etc.) in career and technical/STEAM courses if certified teachers are not available to teach those courses.

AREA OF INNOVATION

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.

Preclusion from providing alternative Uniform Group Coverage Program once the program of coverages under Chapter 1579, Insurance Code is implemented.

Exemption from: TEC §22.004(i)

Related Board Policies: RISD CRD (LEGAL) and CRD (LOCAL)

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan

TEC §22.004 (i) states that a school district may not make group health coverage available to its employees pursuant to TEC 22.004(b) after the date a District implements the program of coverages provided under Chapter 1579 of the Texas Insurance Code. The current process allows no flexibility in the design of group health insurance benefits to fit the needs of all Rankin ISD employees. This provision also prohibits the District from procuring group health insurance benefits that may provide better coverages for its employees and at a lower cost. This provision is in direct contradiction to the wishes of the local Board of Trustees who represent community interests in this matter.

On March 23, 2020 the Board of Trustees adopted findings declaring that Texas Education Code 22.004 is not in any of the prohibited exemptions that can be included in a District's local innovation plan pursuant to Texas Education Code 12A.004 and the list of the Commissioner's prohibited exemptions in Texas Administrative Code Title 19, Chapter 102, subchapter JJ, Section 102.1309.

Innovation Strategies

Increased local control of the group health benefits plan to allow the District to be responsive to employee and community needs.

**SCHOOL DISTRICT DEPOSITORIES CONTRACT
(BDAE Legal & Local) (Ed. Code Subchapter G. 45.206)**

TERM OF CONTRACT. (A) Except as provided by Subsection (b), the depository bank when selected shall serve for a term of two years and until its successor is selected and has qualified. (B) A school district and the district's depository bank may agree to extend a depository contract for two additional two-year-terms. An extension under this subsection is not subject to the requirements of Section 45.206. (C) The contract term and any extension must coincide with the school district's fiscal year.

Proposed Exemption from School District Depositories Contract - (BDAE Legal & Local) (Ed. Code Subchapter G. 45.206)

By gaining exemption from these statutes, Rankin Independent School District would be able to allow the district's existing bank contract to be extended beyond the total 6-year allowable contract term if the district determines contract pricing remains competitive and there is no operational or financial reason to send the district's banking services out to bid.

At the end of each two-year term, the District and its depository bank may agree to extend the contract for multiple two additional year periods. The District must review the contract to ensure the best value and support for the District and obtain Board approval for each of the two year periods. Nothing in this process would hinder the District's ability to undertake bidding the District Depository Bank at the end of any of the two year periods.

This exemption would lessen the administrative burden related to preparing and reviewing a Request for Proposal (RFP) when there is are *no other banking institutions within district boundaries* available to bid on the district's business. In addition, this would further mitigate any impact to employees that would have to alter their direct deposit instructions and afford district flexibility with respect to local banking relationships.