



# RANKIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

P.O. Box 90  
1201 Upton Street  
Rankin, TX 79778

Phone: 432-693-2461 Fax: 432-693-2353  
[www.rankinisd.net](http://www.rankinisd.net)

June 15, 2020

Mike Morath  
Commissioner of Education  
Texas Education Agency  
1701 North Congress Avenue  
Austin, Texas 78701  
[commissioner@tea.texas.gov](mailto:commissioner@tea.texas.gov)

RE: Notice to the Commissioner of Education of Rankin Independent School District Adoption of Amendment to Final Local Innovation Plan (as revised)

Dear Commissioner Morath,

On April 15, 2020, the Board of Trustees of the Rankin Independent School District (RISD) adopted a Resolution to initiate the process of amending its Local Innovation Plan (as revised). On April 16, 2020, the District posted on its website, the Resolution and the Proposed Amendment to the Plan (as revised). On April 30, 2020, the District notified you of the Board's intention to vote on the Proposed Amendment to the Plan (as revised) on June 10, 2020. On April 17, 2020, the district-level committee held a public meeting via online to discuss and vote on the Proposed Amendment to the Plan (as revised). The Rankin ISD DOI Committee passed the Proposed Amendment to the Plan (as revised).

On June 10, 2020, at its regularly scheduled meeting, the RISD Board of Trustees adopted the Proposed Amendment to the Plan (as revised). At the meeting, six of the seven Trustees were present. Trustee Cody Owens moved that the Board adopt the Amendment to the Plan (as revised). Trustee Jerry Jackson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 6-0. Enclosed is a copy of the Amendment to the Plan (as revised). Also enclosed is the completed form from TEA's website identifying the requirements imposed by the Education Code from which the District is exempted under the Plan (as Revised) and Amendment thereto. The link to the RISD website where the Amendment is located is <https://www.rankinisd.net/o/rankin-isd/browse/76294>.

If you have any questions, please contact me directly at 432-693-1130.

Sincerely,

Samuel Wyatt  
Superintendent

**SUPERINTENDENT**  
Sammy Wyatt

**BUSINESS MANAGER**  
Dawn Wyatt

**Rankin High School Principal**  
Adrian Gallardo

**Rankin High Asst. Principal**  
Robin Wilkie

**Gossett Elementary Principal**  
Brad Riker

**District Counselors**  
Kristi Exum  
Vicki Templeton

**Athletic Director**  
Garret Avalos

**Early College HS Director**  
Betsy Jones

**Technology Director**  
Michele Riker

**Food Service Director**  
Reyna Rodriguez

**Maintenance Director**  
Tracy Clanton

## **BOARD of TRUSTEES**

**PRESIDENT**  
Amanda Evridge

**VICE-PRESIDENT**  
Brett Clark

**SECRETARY**  
Bryan Skehan

Karrie Self  
Cody Owens  
Jerry Jackson  
Chad Fouts



## Figure: 19 TAC §102.1307(d)

### Innovation District

Please submit, on district letterhead, a letter to the commissioner of education stating the date that the board of trustees adopted a resolution to develop a local innovation plan for the designation of the district as an Innovation District.

A local innovation plan must be developed for a school district before the district may be designated as an Innovation District. A local plan must provide for a comprehensive educational program for the district, which may include:

- 1) Innovative Curriculum
- 2) Instructional Methods
- 3) Community Participation
- 4) Governance of Campuses
- 5) Parental Involvement
- 6) Modifications to the school day or year
- 7) Provisions regarding the district budget and sustainable program funding
- 8) Accountability and assessment measures that exceed the requirements of state and federal law; and
- 9) Any other innovations prescribed by the board of trustees.

A local innovation plan must identify requirements imposed by the Education Code that inhibit the goals of the plan from which the district should be exempted on adoption of the plan. The local innovation plan should specify the manner in which a particular statute inhibits one or more goals of the plan. Please use the form below to check the statutes specifically identified in your district's local innovation plan as inhibiting a goal of the plan. Checking a specific statute does not necessarily indicate eligibility for an exemption from all subsections of the statute. The local innovation plan controls with regard to the specific exemptions adopted by a district. The form below provides a reporting mechanism to fulfill the reporting requirements of the statute. Entire sections of code may not be eligible for exemption and each district should consult its legal counsel in developing its innovation plan.

Exemptions claimed for an Innovation District apply only to the specific provision of the Texas Education Code (TEC) cited, which may or may not be governed by a separate legal requirement. The exemption does not relieve the district of any requirement imposed by other state or federal law or a duty imposed under federal regulation, grant compliance, agency rule applicable to a charter school or a local legal requirement. Each district should consult its legal counsel to ensure adoption of necessary local policies to ensure compliance with all applicable legal requirements.

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of exemptions.

Term of Plan: 2017/2018 – 2022/2023

Plan applies to:  Entire District 231902 - Rankin ISD  
 Campus (list) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

**Chapter 11 – School Districts**

**Subchapter D. Powers and Duties of Board of Trustees of Independent School Districts**

- §11.1511 (b)(5), (14) Specific Powers and Duties of Board
- §11.162 School Uniforms

**Subchapter F. District-Level and Site Based Decision-Making**

- §11.251 Planning and Decision-Making Process
- §11.252 District-Level Planning and Decision-Making
- §11.253 Campus Planning and Site-Based Decision-Making
- §11.255 Dropout Prevention Review

**Chapter 21 – Educators**

**Subchapter A – General Provisions**

- §21.002 Teacher Employment Contracts
- §21.003 Certification Required
- §21.0031 Failure to Obtain Certification; Contract Void

**Subchapter B – Certification of Educators**

- §21.051 Rules Regarding Field-Based Experience and Options for Field Experience and Internships.
- §21.053 Presentation and Recording of Certificates
- §21.057 Parental Notification

**Subchapter C – Probationary Contracts**

**Subchapter D – Continuing Contracts**

**Subchapter E – Term Contracts**

**Subchapter H – Appraisals and Incentives**

- §21.352 Local Role
- §21.353 Appraisal on Basis of Classroom Teaching Performance
- §21.354 Appraisal of Certain Administrators
- §21.3541 Appraisal and Professional Development System for Principals

**Subchapter I – Duties and Benefits**

- §21.401 Minimum Service Required
- §21.402 Minimum Salary Schedule for Certain Professional Staff
- §21.4021 Furloughs



- §21.4022 Required Process for Development of Furlough Program or Other Salary Reduction Proposal
- §21.403 Placement on Minimum Salary Schedule
- §21.4031 Professional Staff Service Records
- §21.4032 Reductions in Salaries of Classroom Teachers and Administrators
- §21.404 Planning and Preparation Time
- §21.405 Duty-Free Lunch
- §21.406 Denial of Compensation Based On Absence for Religious Observance Prohibited
- §21.407 Requiring or Coercing Teachers to Join Groups, Clubs, Committees, or Organizations: Political Affairs
- §21.408 Right To Join or Not To Join Professional Association
- §21.409 Leave Of Absence for Temporary Disability
- §21.415 Employment Contracts
- Subchapter J – Staff Development**
- §21.451 Staff Development Requirements
- §21.452 Developmental Leaves of Absence
- §21.458 Mentors

**Chapter 22 – School District Employees and Volunteers**

**Subchapter A – Rights, Duties, and Benefits**

- §22.001 Salary Deductions for Professional Dues
- §22.002 Assignment, Transfer, or Pledge of Compensation
- §22.003 Minimum Personal Leave Program
- §22.006 Discrimination Based on Jury Service Prohibited
- §22.007 Incentives for Early Retirement
- §22.011 Requiring or Coercing Employees to Make Charitable Contributions

**Chapter 25 – Admission, Transfer, and Attendance**

**Subchapter C – Operation of Schools and School Attendance**

- §25.0811 First Day of Instruction
- §25.0812 Last Day of School
- §25.083 School Day Interruptions
- §25.092 Minimum Attendance for Class Credit or Final Grade

**Subchapter D – Student/Teacher Ratios; Class Size**

- §25.111 Student/Teacher Ratios
- §25.112 Class Size
- §25.113 Notice of Class Size
- §25.114 Student/Teacher Ratios in Physical Education Classes; Class Size

## Chapter 37 – Discipline; Law and Order

### Subchapter A – Alternative Setting for Behavior Management

- §37.0012 Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator
- §37.002 Removal by Teacher

## Chapter 44 –Fiscal Management

### Subchapter B – Purchases; Contracts

- §44.031 Purchasing Contracts
- §44.0331 Management Fees Under Certain Cooperative Purchasing Contracts
- §44.0352 Competitive Sealed Proposals
- §44.042 Preference to Texas and United States Products
- §44.043 Right To Work
- §44.047 Purchase or Lease of Automated External Defibrillator

### Subchapter Z – Miscellaneous Provisions

- §44.901 Energy Savings Performance Contracts
- §44.902 Long-Range Energy Plan to Reduce Consumption of Electric Energy
- §44.903 Energy-Efficient Light Bulbs in Instructional Facilities
- §44.908 Expenditure of Local Funds

## Chapter 45 – School District Funds

### Subchapter G – School District Depositories

- §45.205 Term of Contract
- §45.206 Bid Or Request for Proposal Notices; Bid and Proposal Forms
- §45.207 Award of Contract
- §45.208 Depository Contract; Bond
- §45.209 Investment of District Funds

## Other

Please list any additional exemption required for your Innovation District Plan:

Texas Education Code §22.004(i) by Amendment May 14, 2019

\*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.

\*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



**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



## District of Innovation Timeline

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 34<sup>th</sup> 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.