



CLIFTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
LOCAL DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLAN

*DRAFT: 2023-2024 THRU 2027-2028*

## I. INTRODUCTION

- A. The 84th Texas Legislature passed House Bill 1842, allowing public school districts to obtain the designation of District of Innovation and gain exemption from certain Texas Education Code provisions. This designation allows independent school districts to have flexibilities currently available to charter schools. During the spring semester of 2018, Clifton ISD began consideration of developing an innovation plan that reflects the unique needs of our district and allows the district to assume more local control within the decision-making processes.
- B. The term of the designation as an Innovation District may not exceed 5 years; therefore, in Spring 2023 Clifton ISD must re-apply for the next 5 year period in accordance with 19 TAC §120.1313(a) following the adoption process outlined in 19 TAC §120.1207 (renewal process).
  - 1. Amendments to the plan can occur at any time during the term of the plan in accordance with 19 TAC §120.1313(a).

## II. MISSION

- A. Clifton ISD intends to utilize this plan to support the district’s mission: striving to meet the diverse needs of all students, create a desire for lifelong learning and encourage our students to become a member of the broader Clifton community.

## III. PROCESS

- A. In accordance with the renewal process requirements outlined in 19 TAC §120.1207, using the process requirement chart below:

PROCESS REQUIREMENT	RENEWAL Requirements
Board Resolution/Petition signed by majority of District Advisory Committee	NOT REQUIRED
Public Hearing by School Board on whether to develop a plan (TEC §12A.002)	NOT REQUIRED
Final version of the proposed plan has been available on the district's website for at least 30 days	YES
The board of trustees has notified the commissioner of education of the board's intention to vote on adoption of the proposed plan (see applicable “Notification” section below)	YES
The district-level committee established under the Texas Education Code (TEC), §11.251, has held a public* meeting to consider the final version of the proposed plan and has approved the plan by a majority vote of the committee member (*meeting must be public for renewal)	YES
The board of trustees adopts a proposed local innovation plan by an	YES

affirmative vote of two-thirds of the membership of the board	
The district notifies the commissioner of approval of the plan along with a list of approved TEC exemptions by completing the agency form provided in the figure in this subsection (see applicable “Notification” section below)	YES
The district shall ensure that a copy of the local innovation plan is posted on the district's website in accordance with the TEC, §12A.0071, for the term of the designation as an innovation district.	YES
Not later than the 15th day after the date on which the board of trustees finalizes a local innovation plan either through adoption, amendment, or renewal, the district shall provide a copy of [link to] the current local innovation plan to the Texas Education Agency for posting on the agency website	YES

- Notification: Renewal When notifying the commissioner of the board's actions as they relate to renewing a DOI plan, please refer to the following [charts](#) on page 3 (NOTE: notification is required both before and after adoption of a renewed DOI plan).

B. The CISD Site-Based Committee held a public meeting to review the renewal and vote on the District of Innovation plan on *February 8, 2023*. *Public Notice was posted on the district calendar on Friday, February 3, 2023.*

District Site-Based Committee Members in Attendance during voting	
Tiffany Jones, Curriculum Director	Brian Bartlett, CMS Principal
Jimmy Jackson, CHS Principal	Barbi Ernst, CISD Technology Director
Laura Cospers, CES Counselor	Mary Hall, CHS Paraprofessional
Sherry Minatra, CES Paraprofessional	Dixie Terral, CMS Paraprofessional
Jose Ritz, Parent	Heather Willmann, Parent
Katherine Argo, CES Teacher	Jen DeJong, CHS Teacher (CTE)
Joe DeBorde, CMS Teacher	Becky Goolsby, CMS Teacher (ESL)
Chaunta Hunt, CMS Teacher (Intervention)	Kellie Mathis, CMS/CHS Teacher (Special Education)
Anabel Murillo, CHS Teacher (ESL)	

**C. Majority vote was obtained; all members present voted.**

1. With board approval, the committee chose to create a plan with three specific exemptions.

## IV. INNOVATION PLAN EXEMPTIONS

- A. Under the flexibility provided by the District of Innovation Plan, CISD seeks exemption from three laws currently under the Texas Education Code and will instead implement unique, local guidelines that better meet the needs of our students, staff, and community.

### 1. First Day of Instruction

- a) Exemption from [TEC §25.0811 \(a\)](#) - “Except as provided by this section, a school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.”
  - (1) To allow for a calendar that fits the needs of our students, staff, and community, we would prefer an earlier start date. An earlier start date will allow the fall semester to end before Winter Break and allow the fall and spring semesters to have relatively equal instructional days.
  - (2) An earlier start date will also allow more instructional days to occur prior to state testing dates and will result in an earlier end date, closer to the Memorial Day holiday.
  - (3) Preference will be given to starting instruction around the third week in August.

### 2. Teacher Certification

- a) Exemption from [TEC §21.003 \(a\)](#) - “A person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern or teacher trainee, librarian, educational aide, administrator, educational diagnostician, or school counselor by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued as provided by Subchapter B.”
  - (1) Relief from this statute will allow our district more flexibility to make local decisions in determining hires in areas that are often difficult to fill, such as career and technical education and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics) courses.
  - (2) The district fully intends to maintain its commitment to hire certified professionals and will continue to seek employees with appropriate and valid certifications. However, with this exemption the district could assign certified teachers to CATE areas outside the teacher’s current area of certification.

### 3. Interdistrict Transfers

- a) Exemption from [TEC §25.036](#) - TEC 25.036 has been interpreted to establish the acceptance of a transfer as a one-year commitment

by the District. Clifton ISD maintains a transfer policy under FDA ([Legal](#) & [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, the student's disciplinary records, work habits, and attendance records are also evaluated. Transfer students are expected to follow the attendance requirements, rules, and regulations of the District.

(1) 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.

(a) In addition, student attendance may fall below the TEA truancy standard. In these rare cases, *Clifton ISD seeks exemption from the one-year transfer commitment.*

(2) Nonresident students who have been accepted as inter-district transfers may have such transfer statute revoked by the Superintendent at any time during the year if the student is assigned disciplinary consequences of suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion.

(a) In addition, students not meeting the state's 90% attendance standard may also be subject to immediate revocation of the transfer status.

## V. TERM

- A. The initial Clifton ISD Local District of Innovation plan had a term of five years, beginning with the 2018-2019 school year and concluding at the end of the 2022-2023 school year.
- B. The renewed Clifton ISD Local District of Innovation Plan has a term of five years beginning with the 2023-2024 school year and concluding at the end of the 2027-2028 school year.
- C. The Board of Trustees has the right to amend or terminate the plan at any time and will review the plan annually.
  - 1. If additions or revisions are recommended, the review process will resume with the District Site-Based committee and adhere to the requirements of approval, including the required web posting and notification to the Commissioner of Education.