

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.

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District of innovation Plan
2018-2023

Term of Plan: January 23, 2018-January 22, 2023

Plan applies to: Entire District
 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 - § 21.102 (b)

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 §28.004

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District of Innovation Plan 2018-2023



Introduction

Itasca ISD is utilizing HB 1842 of the 84th Legislative Session, in order to have more local control in certain areas. HB 1842 allows a traditional public school so have some of the same local flexibility that public charter schools have always been allowed. We feel that this is a great opportunity for our local district to tailor plans based on the needs of our students and community.

Term

The term of this plan begins on January 23, 2018, after board approval and will last for a duration of five years unless terminated or amended by the Itasca ISD Board of Trustees in accordance with Texas Law, or terminated by the Commissioner of Education. The five year term will end on January 22, 2023.

District of Innovation Committee Members: (Proposed)

Mark Parsons - Superintendent

Kristi Sargent - I.M.S. Principal

Holli Merkel - Asst. Prin. & Coun. PK-8

Grace Hennig - H.S. Counselor

Emily Craig - Elem. Teacher

Greg Gipson - M.S. Teacher

Mike Rice - M.S. Teacher

Charlotte Martin - H.S. Teacher

Gabby Bell - M.S. Paraprofessional

Joe Marek - Business Member

Bob Wilson - Community Member

Andrew Rogers- Parent

Allison Middleton - I.H.S. Principal

Amy Reyna -I.E.S. Principal

Lisa Von Borstel - Special Programs

Toni Rutherford - Elem. Sp. Ed. Teacher

Chastity Benson - Elem. Teacher

Kelly Tinklenberg - M.S. Teacher

Cassi Stap - H.S. Teacher

Rebecca Villarreal - Elem. Paraprofessional

Gabrielle Massey - H.S. Paraprofessional

Isaie Coronado - Business Member

Michael Sweet- Parent

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Initial Planning Meeting

Briefing on the possibilities and benefits of District of Innovation
with District Educational Advisory Committee (DEAC)

November 15, 2017

Plan Proposal

Propose plan to the school board/board makes a resolution to pursue/hold a public meeting for
discussion/board approves the District of Innovation (D.O.I.) committee members.

December 11, 2017

D.O.I. Committee Develops Plan

December 12-14, 2017

**Proposed Plan Posted on District Website/
School Board Notifies the Texas Education Commissioner**

December 15, 2017

Final Approval

D.O.I. committee holds a public hearing and votes on proposed plan - 6:00pm

School Board votes on plan - 7:00pm

January 22, 2018

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District of Innovation Plan

1. School Start Date

Exemption from: TEC §25.0811

Related Board Policies: EB LEGAL

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan

TEC 25.0811 states that a school district may not begin student instruction before the 4th Monday of August. The current process allows little flexibility in the design of annual calendars to fit the needs of the community or the wishes of the local Board of Trustees who represent community interests in this matter.

Previously, districts had the option of applying to TEA for a waiver to start earlier, even as early as the 2nd Monday in August. Several years ago the legislature took away all waivers and dictated that districts may not begin until the 4th Monday, with no exceptions.

Innovation Strategies

a. Relief from the statute will allow IISD to develop a calendar that addresses student instruction and focused professional development in conjunction with the new instructional minutes requirement, rather than days.

b. Alignment of the district calendar with local universities, local districts with shared services arrangements, etc. will be possible.

c. Provide for increased local control of the instructional calendar in order to be responsive to community needs.

2. Teacher Certification

Exemption from: TEC §21.003; TEC §21.053; TEC §21.057

Relevant Board Policies: DBA LEGAL/LOCAL; DK LEGAL/LOCAL

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan

TEC 21.003 states that a person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern or trainee, librarian, educational aide, administrator, educational diagnostician, or school counselor 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 from the Texas Education Agency and/or State Board for Educator

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Certification. This system is burdensome and does not take into account the unique financial and/or instructional needs of the district.

TEC 21.053 requires a teacher to present his or her certificate to the District before their employment contract will be binding, and prohibits the District from paying an educator for teaching if the educator does not hold a valid certificate at the time.

TEC 21.057 requires that the District provide written notice to parents if an inappropriately certified or uncertified teacher is assigned to a classroom for more than 20 consecutive instructional days.

Innovation Strategies

a. The District will maintain its current expectations for employee certification. The District will make every attempt to hire individuals with appropriate certification for the position in question; however, where that is not reasonably possible, the District will have the flexibility to hire individuals who are knowledgeable in the area and equipped to effectively perform the duties of the position in question.

b. The campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request for local certification that will allow an already certified teacher to teach a course or grade level for which he/she is not certified. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials or life experience the teacher possesses that would qualify this individual to teach the proposed subject.

c. An individual with experience in the content of an elective course could be eligible to teach a vocational skill or elective course through a local teaching certificate. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials or life experience the teacher possesses that would qualify this individual to teach the proposed subject. Examples: an experienced homebuilder teaching a building trades course, a licensed corrections officer teaching a criminal justice course, or a retired CPA teaching an entry level accounting course.

d. Whenever possible, instructional planning for the uncertified teacher's course will be created in partnership with certified teachers in the same field. Uncertified teachers will be provided teacher mentoring, and may be subject to increased observations and feedback, professional development or instructional resources, or other supports.

e. Teacher certification waiver requests, state permit applications, or other paperwork will not be submitted to the Texas Education Agency. The District will ensure that all individuals assigned to teach have the knowledge and resources necessary to be successful.

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f. The superintendent will notify the board annually of the districts exercise of this flexibility.

3. Probationary Contracts

Exemption from: TEC 21.102(b)

Relevant Board Policies: DCA LEGAL

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan

For experienced teachers new to the district, the probationary period may not exceed one year if the person has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the previous eight years. A one year probationary period is not sufficient to evaluate the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom since teacher contract renewal timelines demand that employment decisions be made prior to District receipt of state assessment results.

Innovation Strategies

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. All other teachers hired in the District may remain on probationary status for three years, and may be issued a fourth year of probation in accordance with TEC 21.102(c).

4. Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator

Exemption from: Texas Education Code 37.0012

Relevant Board Policies: FO Legal/Local

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan

Senate Bill 107 amended the Texas Education Code by adding Section 37.0012, which requires the designation of a campus behavior coordinator on each campus. This designee is responsible for maintaining student discipline and the implementation of Chapter 37, Subchapter A. Placing all discipline decisions on one person is counterproductive to building capacity for self-motivated behavior changes, and places a staffing burden on small school districts.

Innovation Strategies:

- a. IISD seeks exemption from the state requirement that each school have a designated campus behavior coordinator. IISD's approach to discipline is becoming more collaborative, with multiple people providing emotional and social support to students, rather than just one person. Exemption from this requirement will allow the option of increasing collaboration in regard to student discipline, as outlined in the IISD Student Code of Conduct, and will

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provide campus administrators with flexibility when implementing the standards of conduct expected by the IISD board of trustees and community at large.

5. Teacher Contract Days

Exemption from: Texas Education Code 21.401

Relevant Board Policies: DCB Legal/Local

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan

Texas Education Code § 21.401 currently requires a contract between the District and an educator to be for a minimum 10 months. Additionally, an educator employed under a 10-month contract must provide a minimum of 187 days of service. This inhibits the local districts ability to build a calendar that provides the greatest flexibility to meet the LEA's staff development and planning needs.

Innovation Strategies:

- a. IISD teacher contract days will be based on the yearly needs of the student calendar, professional development goals and needs, and learning objectives of IISD students.
- b. Flexibility provided by this plan will allow teacher contract days to be a range from, no less than 182 days, and no more than 187 days, in any given staff calendar year. This stems from an attempt to provide flexibility to better align teacher service days to instructional days.
- c. The District Educational Advisory Committee will be provided with calendar options annually that indicate the required number of staff days to provide input and feedback.
- d. The Board of Trustees will be notified annually of the number of staff days in the calendar before taking action on the school calendar.
- e. Teacher salaries will not be affected by the number of staff days, student days, work days, and professional development days if the calendar reflects an expectation of employment for days less than 187 days.
- f. Teacher salaries will not be affected by the number of staff days, student days, work days, and professional development days if the calendar reflects an expectation of employment for days up to 187, but in a previous year the expectation was for less days. For example, year one of this plan a teacher works 186 days and in year three the calendar changes to 187 days.

6. LOCAL SCHOOL HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL AND HEALTH EDUCATION INSTRUCTION

Exemption from: Texas Education Code 28.004

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Relevant Board Policies:

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan

Sec. 28.004 (d) d-1 of this code requires the SHAC to meet four times annually. In a small district, the same staff members are required to sit on several different committees thus limiting their ability to effectively serve on those that meet at the same time, or require several meetings throughout the year. Additionally, the members of the SHAC will have a much more intimate relationship with the needs and goals of this committee due to the small number of students it serves, thus not requiring four meetings throughout the year to update its plan and vision.

Innovation Strategies:

- a. The District takes exemption from the requirement to hold a minimum of 4 meetings per year under Sec. 28.004(d-1) The IISD committee shall meet at least once each year, with a goal of once a semester. Rationale: As a small district committee members are intimately aware of the needs of the District's students and are often able to review and revise the District's plan in a single meeting. This should be a matter for the local board of trustees and the committee members to determine how often they need to meet to meet the district's needs.

7. Teacher and Administrator Appraisals

Exemption from: Texas Education Code Sections 21.352, 21.354, 21.3541

Relevant Board Policies:

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan:

The IISD's goal of developing exceptional staff requires building capacity towards personalize learning for students through an engaging, innovative learning environment including project-based, blended learning and competency based learning. This goal along with the implementation of the new state T-TESS and T-PSS evaluations require additional time allocated towards a support model surrounded by goal setting, observation and feedback through coaching and professional development. A comprehensive professional development plan that is personalized for staff requires flexibility in the evaluation process mandated by the TEC in the elements and timeline of the evaluation process. These goals have been bound by the laws governing educator appraisals set forth in Texas Education Code Sections 21.352, 21.354, 21.3541 to the extent these laws require that state standardized test scores be used as one of the evaluation measures for teachers and administrators.

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Innovation Strategies:

- a. In order to promote professional development that focuses on individual growth, the District needs to maintain local flexibility to build a system of evaluating its employees that includes goal setting, observations, and collaborative practices, which may encompass a variety of measurements and strategies available such as T-TESS, T-PESS, or a locally developed instrument.
- b. The board of trustees will approve annually the teacher and administrator appraisal method and calendar.