



DISTRICT OF INNOVATION

IRVING ISD

RENEWAL PLAN

Introduction

The 84th Legislative Session, through House Bill 1842, created Districts of Innovation (DOI) in Chapter 12A of the Texas Education Code. This law allows independent school districts to access flexibilities available to Texas' open enrollment charter schools. Districts are permitted to adopt these flexibilities through the approval of a school district's board of trustees. Irving ISD adopted the innovation plan in 2017. The term of the Local Innovation Plan is for a period of five years, beginning at the start of the 2017-18 school year and ending at the 2021-22 school year.

Background and Process

On December 12, 2017, the Irving ISD Board of Trustees voted to approve a Resolution, allowing the district to initiate the process to be designated as a District of Innovation. Moreover, the Board voted to approve the original District of Innovation plan on April 4, 2017. The plan was amended on three separate occasions over the five-year period.

On February 22, 2022, the Irving ISD Board of Trustees and the Superintendent appointed a District Advisory Committee composed of teachers, principals, parents, administrators, and community members. The committee membership represented a cross-section of the District. The committee met on March 3, 2022, and March 10, 2022, to review and revise the DOI plan for renewal. In addition, the committee was provided the final document for their approval on March 24, 2022, to finalize the proposed DOI language. The District Advisory Committee held a public meeting on May 12, 2022, on the approval DOI plan.

Term of DOI Plan

The term of the plan will be for five years, May 16, 2022 through May 16, 2027 (**pending board approval May 16, 2022**), unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in

accordance with the law. In addition, the Board of Trustees may consider exemptions in the form of an amendment at any time during the term of this plan.

Innovations

Irving ISD seeks exemptions from the following Texas Education Code provisions:

<u>Designation of Campus Discipline Coordinator</u>	
Texas Education Code 37.0012(a)	FO(LLEGAL)

Innovation:

Texas Education Code 37.0012(a) states that a person at each campus must be designated to serve as the Campus Behavior Discipline Coordinator. The person designated may be the principal of the campus or any other campus administrator selected by the principal.

Rationale/Benefits:

Relief from this status will allow the following opportunities:

- Principals and Assistant Principals already serve to monitor and respond to campus behaviors and discipline concerns and it is necessary in Irving ISD.
- The collaboration between a principal and their assistant principal(s) is valued in implementing Chapter 37 of TEC.
- Developing rapport with students, administrators can hold students accountable while supporting students to effectively monitor their own behavior.
- Having both Principals and Assistant Principals respond to behavior and discipline concerns allows for better use of staff resources to address student behavior in a timely manner. Students will benefit when behaviors are addressed immediately rather than waiting for the availability of a single Campus Behavior Coordinator to respond.

<u>Planning and Preparation Periods</u>	
Texas Education Code 21.404	DL(LLEGAL)(LOCAL)

Innovation:

Texas Education Code 21.404 requires each classroom teacher to receive at least 450 minutes within each two-week period for instructional preparation, including parent-teacher conferences, evaluating students' work, and planning. A planning and preparation period under this section may not be less than 45 minutes within the instructional day. During a planning and preparation period, a classroom teacher may not be required to participate in any other activity.

Rationale/Benefits:

- To best serve the students of Irving ISD, we propose flexibility in meeting the needs of our students by affording secondary teachers an opportunity to voluntarily provide temporary classroom coverage for other classes during their planning time, on an as-needed basis
- The District would afford those teachers with additional compensation for voluntarily opting to participate in assisting the campus with their ongoing needs to provide constant, appropriate supervision for all students.
- This innovation allows for greater school-based decision making, assists in maintaining an orderly learning environment for all students, and allows school administrators to more effectively ensure the safety and security of all students.

Probationary Contracts

Texas Education Code 21.102

DCA(LEGAL)

Innovation:

Texas Education Code 21.102 states that new hires entitled to a Chapter 21 are generally employed for up to three years on a probationary contract. An exception to this rule is for employees who have been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight years immediately preceding employment by the District; under current law, these employees (if rehired) are entitled to a term contract in their second year of employment (this procedure is commonly referred to as the “five of eight” rule.) Texas Education Code 21.102 also limits the District from extending probationary contracts for a fourth year without seeking Board approval in the event there is doubt as to whether the teacher should be given a term contract.

Rationale/Benefits:

- Flexibility in offering a probationary contract for up to three years for employees hired under the “five of eight” rule will allow the District to provide more support and/or coaching to employees new to the District and/or newly promoted to a new position prior to offering a term contract.
- This innovation would allow the District to place employees who meet the “five of eight” criteria for years of experience outside the District to be placed on a probationary contract for up to three years upon hire into the District.
- Flexibility in offering a teacher a fourth year on a probationary contract would allow the District to provide teachers with additional opportunity for professional growth and increase opportunities for employee retention for those employees prior to offering a term contract to those employees.

Removal of Individuals from District Property/Facilities

Texas Education Code 37.105

GKA(LOCAL)(LEGAL)

Innovation:

Texas Education Code 37.105 states the District must maintain a record of each verbal warning of potential removal from district property/facilities, including the name of the person to whom the warning was issued and the date of the issuance. At the time a person is refused entry or removed from district property/facilities, the District is also required to provide to the person written information explaining the appeal process.

Rationale/Benefits:

- To better ensure the safety and security of students and staff in Irving ISD, we propose that the District not be required to maintain a record of each verbal warning of potential removal from District property/facilities, nor be required to provide written information explaining the appeal process to those who have been refused entry to District property/facilities or removed from District property/facilities.
- Under this innovation, District staff/administrators will be better able to maintain an orderly and safe environment for students, staff and visitors and ensure that potentially dangerous or disruptive situations are handled as expeditiously as possible.

Teacher Certification

Texas Education Code (21.003) and 21.053

**DBA(LEGAL, LOCAL) and DK(LEGAL)
DCA(LOCAL) and DCE(LOCAL)**

Innovation:

Texas Education Code 21.003(a) requires that all district teachers be certified in accordance with rules adopted by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC). 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. Similarly, Texas Education Code 21.053 prevents a Chapter 21 contract from being binding or an educator from being paid without a valid certificate with an effective date prior to the first date of work.

Rationale/Benefits:

- These exemptions allow the District to hire the most qualified candidates for teaching positions that are difficult to fill, if qualified and certified teachers are not available.

- Under this innovation, the District can best use local discretion to hire teachers who meet District teaching qualifications in high needs areas; Career and Technology (with an addendum to attain qualifications in three years), Advanced Math/Science, and Dual Credit programs.
- The District will set local criteria in order to maintain high standards of excellence in hiring.

Uniform School Start Date

Texas Education Code 25.0811

EB(LLEGAL)

Innovation:

Texas Education Code 25.0811 prohibits a school district from beginning instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August and ending instruction prior to May 15.

Rationale/Benefits:

- Under this innovation, the District is able to balance the instructional time/days per semester.
- This exemption also offers flexibility at the start and end of the school year to create opportunities for professional development, discretion in calendar planning, and additional instructional days for students before required state assessments.