

# Innovation Districts

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# Overview

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- **Am I eligible?**
- **How do I become an Innovation District?**
- **Who should be involved?**
- **What flexibilities are available?**
- **What's next?**

# Am I eligible?

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- Yes—if district academic accountability rating is at least acceptable (“C” or met standard)
- No—if final or preliminary rating is, “D”, “F” or Improvement Required

# How do I become an Innovation District?

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- Process begins either with a board of trustees resolution or by signed petition from a majority of your district-level advisory committee
- Board conducts a public hearing to consider developing an innovation plan
- Within 30 days of public hearing Board must formally decided to pursue or decline the opportunity

# We are moving forward!

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- Board appoints an Innovation Plan committee to write a plan that:
  - provides for a comprehensive educational program for the district, which program **may** include:
    - (A) innovative curriculum, instructional methods, and provisions regarding community participation, campus governance, and parental involvement;
    - (B) modifications to the school day or year;
    - (C) provisions regarding the district budget and sustainable program funding;
    - (D) accountability and assessment measures that exceed the requirements of state and federal law; and
    - (E) any other innovations prescribed by the board of trustees; and
  - identifies requirements imposed by this code that inhibit the goals of the plan and from which the district should be exempted on adoption of the plan.

# We have a plan...now what?

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- Post on your district website for at least 30 days
- Board notifies the Commissioner of intent to adopt plan
- Your Chapter 11 district committee holds a public meeting to consider and approve the final version with a majority vote
- Board of Trustees adopted with two-thirds majority vote



But wait! There is one more thing...

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**Notify the Commissioner!!**

# What flexibilities are available?

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# Prohibited exemptions include (but not limited to):

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- District Governance
- Curriculum
- State Assessment System
- State Accountability System
- School Finance
- Federal Requirement
- Other requirements in state law outside of the Education Code

## Allowable exemptions include (but not limited to):

- Educator Certification
- Teacher Contracts
- First and Last Day of School
- Length of School Day\*
- Class Size
- Certain Purchasing and Contract Requirements

\*Length of School Day requirements under TEC §25.081(e) [420 minutes] and §25.082(a) [7 hours] were repealed in the 85<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session.

# What's next?

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# Things to consider...

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- Do you need to update local policies to correspond with new exemptions?
- Articulate the problem your plan is addressing.
- Is there a program you are trying to implement?
- Is there a big area of need that can be addressed by this flexibility?
- Involve all of your stakeholders, including those who do not always agree with you.

# Learn from Others

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- **Spring Branch ISD**—<https://cms.springbranchisd.com/plan2012/Home>
- **El Paso ISD**—<https://www.episd.org/community/lic.php>
- **TASB**—<https://www.tasb.org/Services/Legal-Services/TASB-School-Law-eSource/Governance/Districts-of-Innovation.aspx>
- **TEA**—  
[http://tea.texas.gov/Texas\\_Schools/General\\_Information/Innovation/Districts\\_of\\_Innovation/](http://tea.texas.gov/Texas_Schools/General_Information/Innovation/Districts_of_Innovation/)