

Celina ISD

District of Innovation Plan

District of Innovation:

I. INTRODUCTION

House Bill (HB) 1842, passed during the 84th 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 November 14, 2016, Celina Independent School District's Board of Trustees ("Board") passed a Resolution to Adopt a District of Innovation Plan to increase local control over District operations and to support innovation and local initiatives. The adoption of this plan seeks to increase the District's flexibility in order to improve educational outcomes for the benefit of students and the community. On December 12, 2016, the Board appointed a twenty-two member District of Innovation Advisory Committee ("Committee") comprised of diverse leaders representing a cross-section of the District's stakeholders including teachers, principals, parents, and administrators. The Committee met on Tuesday, December 13, 2016 to discuss and draft the Local Innovation Plan ("Plan").

The Committee met on Wednesday, October 20, 2021 to review and consider additions or deletions to the current Local Innovation Plan. The recommendation was to retain the current plan without changes.

II. TERM

The term of the Plan is for no more than five years, beginning January 31, 2022 and ending January 31, 2027, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. If, within the term of this Plan, other areas of operations are to be considered for flexibility as part of HB 1842, the Board will nominate a new committee to consider and propose additional exemptions in the form of an amendment. Any amendment adopted by the Board will adhere to the same term as the original plan. The District may not implement two separate plans at any one time.

III. INNOVATIONS

The District proposes flexibility in the following areas:

A. Certification Required

Applicable Provisions from the Texas Education Code: TEC 21.003 and TEC 21.057

Policies that may be affected: DBA (LEGAL), DBA (LOCAL), DK (LEGAL), DK (LOCAL), and DBP (LEGAL)

TEC 21.003 states “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.” TEC 21.057 requires that a “school district that assigns an inappropriately certified or uncertified teacher to the same classroom for more than 30 consecutive instructional days during the same school year shall provide written notice of the assignment to a parent or guardian of each student in the classroom.” The current certification and notice requirements inhibit the District’s ability to hire professionals with industry experience to teach Career And Technical Education (CATE) and Science, Technology, Engineering, (Art), & Mathematics (STEM/STEAM) courses. In order to provide more students the opportunity to take such courses and obtain professional certifications, the District seeks to establish its own local qualification requirements for such courses in lieu of the requirements set forth in law. The District does not wish to be exempted from any existing laws relating to teacher contracts or teacher benefits.

Flexibility to establish its own teacher certification requirements affords the District the following advantages:

- Industry certified and/or trade professionals to teach specialized certification courses;
- Greater number of CATE course offerings resulting in more opportunities for students;
- Realistic requirements for professionals transitioning from industry to teaching; and
- Ability to employ part-time professionals to teach specialty courses.

B. Uniform School Calendar

Applicable Provisions from the Texas Education Code: TEC 25.0811 and TEC 25.0812

Policies that may be affected: EB (LEGAL) and EB (LOCAL)

TEC 25.0811 states that a school district may not begin instruction before the fourth Monday in August. TEC Section 25.0812 states that a school district may not schedule the last day of school before May 15.

Local control of the instructional calendar affords the District the following advantages:

- Elimination of imbalanced 9 weeks and semester schedules while still ending the first semester prior to the holiday break.
- Alignment of calendar with Collin College, Advanced Placement Exams, and STAAR/EOC timelines.
- Ensure hour/seat time requirements are met for Certification courses.

C. Probationary Contracts

Applicable Provisions from the Texas Education Code: TEC 21.102(b)

Policies that may be affected: DCA (LEGAL)

Texas Education Code Section 21.102(b) states that “a probationary contract may not exceed one year for a person who has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment with the district.” Many times this period of time is not sufficient to evaluate the teacher’s effectiveness in the classroom since teacher contract timelines demand employment decision must be made prior to the availability of end of the year classroom and student data.

By providing an additional year of probationary status, the campus and district administration can:

- Better evaluate a teacher’s effectiveness;
- Ensure fit for the district and campus culture; and
- Provide an opportunity for teacher growth.

D. Class Size Requirements for Elementary grades

Applicable Provisions from the Texas Education Code: TEC 25.111, TEC 25.112, and TEC 25.113

Policies that may be affected: EEB (LEGAL), BF (LEGAL), and EHAA (LEGAL)

TEC 25.111 requires districts “employ a sufficient number of teachers certified to maintain an average ratio of not less than one teacher for each 20 students in average daily attendance except as provided by section 25.112.” TEC 25.112 prohibits a school district from enrolling more than 22 students for Kindergarten - fourth grade classes, unless a school district receives an exemption through the TEA waiver process. TEC 25.113 requires a district to notify parents of waiver or exceptions to class size limits as stated within the Code. According to these statutes, districts are required to maintain a 22:1 student to teacher ratio for Kindergarten through fourth grade. When any class exceeds this limit, the district must complete and file a waiver with the Texas Education Agency.

Historically, these waivers are never rejected by the TEA. This proves to represent an unnecessary step for the education of our students. Additionally, a letter must be sent home to the parents of each student in the class exceeding the limit to inform them that a waiver

has been filed. This statute does not take into consideration the impact of student being transferred to new classrooms in the middle of the school year. The desire is to provide for lower class sizes, but realize the growth curve experienced by the district.

By providing for local control, the district seeks to:

- Locally monitor and maintain appropriate class size without the necessity of waivers;
- Maintain a class student to teacher ratio of 22:1; and
- Allow for flexibility for hiring personnel as we face exponential growth.

E. Group Health Benefits for School Employees

Applicable Provisions from the Texas Education Code: TEC 22.004(i)

Policies that may be affected: CRD (LEGAL) and CRD (LOCAL).

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 Celina 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 Celina ISD Board of Trustees who represent community interests in this matter. 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. By providing for local control, the district seeks to:

- Increased local control of the group health benefits plan to allow the District to be responsive to employee and community needs.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION

This Innovation Plan is designed to create parameters within which the District will operate, in order to provide additional student opportunities. Specific implementation plans will be developed by the appropriate campuses and departments. Adjustments to Board Policy will be researched and adopted where appropriate.

V. DISTRICT OF INNOVATION COMMITTEE

Tom Maglisceau	Superintendent
Lori Sitzes	Assistant Superintendent of Instruction and Technology
Russell McDaniel	Assistant Superintendent of Student Services
John Mathews	Assistant Superintendent of Administrative Services
Marilyn Chamberlin	Director of Technology
Jill Roza	District Community Liaison
David Wilson	High School Principal
Jamey Briscoe	Middle School Principal
Stacy Ceci	Donny O'Dell Elementary School Principal
Starla Martin	Lykins Elementary School Principal
Andrew Stamper	Intermediate School Teacher
	High School Parent
	Junior High School Parent
	Middle School Parent
	Intermediate School Parent
	Elementary School Parent

VI. PROPOSED TIMELINE

Wednesday, October 6, 2021 - 8:30 a.m., Administration Conference Room.

- Meeting with the Cabinet to review the district's innovation plan, renewal process, and consider additions.

Wednesday, October 13, 2021 - 8:30 a.m., Administration Conference Room.

- Meeting with the Cabinet to review the district's innovation plan and consider additions.

Wednesday, October 20, 2021 - 5:00 p.m., Athletic Facility Banquet Room.

- Meeting with the District Site Based Committee (Bobcat Counsel) to review the district's innovation plan, renewal process, and consider additions. No new additions or changes were recommended to the Local Innovation Plan.
- Explanation provided for requirements and ramifications of District of Innovation.
- Discuss possible exemptions.
- Decide which exemptions to pursue and include in our plan.

Monday, November 1, 2021 - Post Proposed District of Innovation Plan on District Website.

Monday, November 15, 2021 - 7:00 p.m., Athletic Facility Banquet Room (Board Room).

- Presentation to Celina ISD Board of Trustees to renew the current innovation plan for Board consideration.

Tuesday, November 16, 2021

- Notification sent to the Texas Commissioner of Education that the Board intends to vote on the renewal of the Local Innovation Plan.

Wednesday, November 17, 2021, - 5:00 p.m., Athletic Facility Banquet Room.

- Public Hearing to explain and discuss the possibility of renewing the Local Innovation Plan as required by TEC §12.002 (b) (2), and §12.003.
- Committee to vote on the proposed Local Innovation Plan.

Monday, December 13, 2021, - 6:00 p.m., Board Room.

- Present plan to the Board of Trustees.
- Board votes on District of Innovation Plan – Must approve by a 2/3 majority vote.
- Update all policy changes with TASB.
- Send notification to Commissioner of Education of Board's approval of District of Innovation Plan.

Tuesday, December 14, 2021

- Notification sent to the Texas Education Commissioner of the approval of the plan, along with a list of the approved TEC exemptions by completing the TEA form.