

**Approval of Denton ISD District of Innovation Plan Update and Renewal
November 16, 2021**

SUMMARY:

On September 1, 2021, The Denton ISD Education Improvement Council passed a motion to update the current District of Innovation Plan by adding American Sign Language as an exception to the certification requirements of the Texas Education Code Section 21.003 and 21.044. This amendment does not technically add an additional exemption to the District of Innovation Plan, it does add an area excepted under these exemptions which was not previously discussed. Additionally, for Denton ISD to continue to remain a District of Innovation, it is required to renew the plan every five years. Accordingly, it is recommended that the Board move to renew the Districts' DOI current plan with the updated exemption in place.

PREVIOUS BOARD ACTION:

The District of Innovation (DOI) Plan was developed by Denton ISD in a very thorough process beginning in January 2016, and culminated with the adoption of the DOI plan by the Denton ISD Board of Trustees on December 13, 2016.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

New District of Innovation language will include:

Denton ISD believes school district leadership should decide what is best for its students in determining the candidate best suited to teach certain courses, including American Sign Language, and career and technical education (CTE) courses; science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) courses; dual credit coursework; etc. By claiming exemption from Sec. 21.044 the district shall have the right to recruit individuals from certain skill sets including individuals with expert knowledge of sign language, trades, industries, and vocations with industry knowledge and real-world experience and consider qualifications based on experience, industry certification, etc. District leadership including principals, CTE administrators, human resource department members, etc. shall determine whether it is in the best interest of its students to certify individuals based on these factors rather than appeal to the Commissioner of Education as stated in Sec. 21.055. Further, the district shall establish local criteria for training and locally certifying individuals rather than adhere strictly to mandates outlined in Sec. 21.053. In doing so, parental notification of "inappropriately certified or uncertified teachers" under Sec. 21.057 would no longer be necessary. Regardless of whether any adjustments or changes are made to the certification laws, Denton ISD believes this issue to be a local decision as opposed to a state mandate.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

None at this time.

BENEFIT OF ACTION:

The District of Innovation Plan offers flexibility and local control which in turn, benefits students, personnel, and overall instruction. It is important to review and revise this designation as the need arises.

PROCEDURAL AND REPORTING IMPLICATIONS:

Upon approval of this update and renewal of the District of Innovation Plan, Denton ISD will continue to pursue local control as it benefits curriculum, instruction, governance, parent and community involvement, budgeting, and any other areas deemed necessary to maintain our commitment to the success of every child and to preserve flexibility within our District.

ALTERNATIVES:

None proposed at this time.

SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATION:

Superintendent recommends approval of the District of Innovation update and renewal as presented.

STAFF PERSONS RESPONSIBLE:

Deron Robinson, General Counsel

APPROVAL:

Signature of Staff Member Proposing Recommendation: _____

Comments: _____

Signature of Divisional Assistant Superintendent: _____

Comments: _____

Signature of Superintendent: _____

Comments: _____