

Regular Board Meeting
The State of Texas
United Independent School District
The County of Webb

December 14, 2016

In Attendance

Roberto J. Santos, Superintendent of Schools

Board of Trustees

Judd Gilpin - President – PRESENT
Juan Roberto Ramirez – Vice President –PRESENT
Aliza Flores Oliveros – Secretary – PRESENT
Ricardo Molina, Sr. – Parliamentarian –PRESENT
Javier Montemayor, Jr. – Member –ABSENT
Ricardo "Rick" Rodriguez – Member – PRESENT
Ramiro Veliz, III – Member – PRESENT

A Regular Board Meeting of the Board of Trustees of United I.S.D. was held on Tuesday, December 14, 2016 in the United ISD – Student Activity Complex, Fine Arts Building, 5208 Santa Claudia Lane, Laredo, TX 78043.

Mr. Judd Gilpin asked Mr. Santos if it would be best that we start with board recognitions.

Mr. Roberto J. Santos stated that recognitions will be done first then proceed with the board meeting.

- I. **An announcement was made by the Board President, calling the meeting of the United Independent School District to order at 7:26 p.m. The record showed that a quorum of Board members was present, that the meeting had been duly called, and that notice of the meeting had been posted in accordance with the Texas Open Meeting Act, Texas Government Code Chapter 551.**

- II. **Board Announcements**

Ms. Aliza Flores Oliveros thanked the teachers from Alexander High School who took time out of their lunch hour to talk to her about some of the items that are on the agenda.

Mr. Juan Roberto Ramirez wished everyone in the district a great and wonderful holiday and a merry christmas.

- III. **Public Comments: Comments are limited to three minutes per speaker. The Board Parliamentarian will be the timekeeper and will inform the speaker when they have one (1) remaining minute. No more than three (3) persons will be allowed to speak on any side of an issue. Should there be more than three (3) people who wish to speak on a particular issue they need to select not more than three (3)**

representatives to speak for them. Comments must address items listed on the agenda. The presiding officer or designee shall determine whether a person who wishes to address the Board has attempted to solve a matter administratively. If not, the person shall be directed to the appropriate policy, as noted in BED (LOCAL), to seek resolution before bringing the matter to the Board at a subsequent meeting. Pursuant to 551.042 of the Texas Government Code, no Board Member or Administrator may respond to a member of the public, unless such response is a recitation of District policy or a statement of specific factual information. When a speaker comes to the podium, please indicate what agenda item you will be addressing. Furthermore, please refrain from mentioning any employee's name and any complaint about any employee's duties or responsibilities should be channeled through the appropriate grievance policy. Additionally, pursuant to board policies BED (LEGAL) and BED (LOCAL), drifting from the stated topic or becoming disruptive shall result in a warning from the board president. A second violation will result in forfeiture of your allotted time and removal from the board meeting. Disruptions include speaking on behalf of or against a person running for political office, promotion of a for-profit organization, or advertisement of products or services to the Board.

Mr. Gilpin noted that the public comments forms that have been submitted are in reference to an item we have in the Public Hearing which will be covered in Agenda Item VII-D so public comments will be taken at that time as part of the Public Hearing.

IV. Pledge of Allegiance

- A. Honor the Texas Flag; I pledge allegiance to thee, Texas, one state under God, on and indivisible.**

V. Recognitions

- A. UISD 3RD ANNUAL READING FAIR WINNERS
- B. USATF JUNIOR OLYMPIC NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP QUALIFIER
- C. ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY HALL OF FAME
- D. BILINGUAL EDUCATION SCHOLAR AWARD
- E. RIO GRANDE INTERNATIONAL STUDY CENTER – RIO RESEARCH ROUNDUP WATER QUALITY TESTING EVENT
- F. UNITED MIDDLE SCHOOL ORCHESTRA – TMEA REGION ORCHESTRA QUALIFIER
- G. 2016 AP SCHOLARS – ALEXANDER HIGH SCHOOL
- H. ALEXANDER HIGH SCHOOL ORCHESTRA – TMEA REGION ORCHESTRA QUALIFIER
- I. ALEXANDER HIGH SCHOOL BAND – ADVANCED AREA G 2016 UIL MARCHING CONTEST
- J. ALEXANDER HIGH SCHOOL – VOLLEYBALL TEAM – 29-6A DISTRICT – BI-DISTRICT & AREA CHAMPIONS – REGIONAL QUARTER FINALIST

- K. ALEXANDER HIGH SCHOOL – TENNIS TEAM – AREA CHAMPIONS
- L. 2016 AP SCHOLARS – LYNDON B. JOHNSON HIGH SCHOOL
- M. LYNDON B. JOHNSON HIGH SCHOOL BAND – ADVANCED TO AREA G 2016 UIL MARCHING CONTEST
- N. 2016 AP SCHOLARS – UNITED HIGH SCHOOL
- O. UNITED HIGH SCHOOL BAND – ADVANCED AREA G 2016 UIL MARCHING CONTEST
- P. UNITED HIGH SCHOOL BAND – QUALIFIED FOR 2016 UIL STATE MARCHING COMPETITION
- Q. UNITED HIGH SCHOOL – VOLLEYBALL TEAM – BI-DISTRICT & AREA CHAMPIONS – REGIONAL QUARTER-FINALIST
- R. UNITED HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM – BI-DISTRICT & AREA CHAMPIONS – REGIONAL SEMI-FINALIST
- S. UNITED HIGH SCHOOL – BOYS CROSS COUNTRY – REGIONAL QUALIFIERS
- T. UNITED HIGH SCHOOL – GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY – INDIVIDUAL REGIONAL QUALIFIERS
- U. 2016 AP SCHOLARS – UNITED SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL
- V. UNITED SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL BAND – ADVANCED AREA G 2016 UIL MARCHING CONTEST
- W. UNITED SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL – GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY – REGIONAL QUALIFIER
- X. UNITED SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL – GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY – STATE QUALIFIER
- Y. UNITED SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL – BOYS CROSS COUNTRY – INDIVIDUAL REGIONAL QUALIFIER
- Z. UNITED SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL – FOOTBALL TEAM – 29-6A CO-DISTRICT CHAMPIONS – BI-DISTRICT & AREA CHAMPIONS – REGIONAL SEMI-FINALIST

VI. Consent Agenda Items

- A. Approval of Monthly Disbursements
- B. Approval of Sale of Existing Interactive Whiteboard Devices
- C. Approval of Awarding Bids, Proposals and Qualifications
- D. Approval of Members for the Textbook Adoption Committee for Middle and High School
- E. Approval of Requests from Board Members in re: Use of Board of Trustees Discretionary Funds for Various Projects/Campuses

Ms. Aliza Flores Oliveros made a motion to approve Items VI-A thru VI-E

Motion: So Move

Moved by: Aliza Flores Oliveros

Seconded by: Juan Roberto Ramirez

Discussion: None

In Favor: Unanimous

MOTION PASSES

VII. Items for Individual Consideration

A. Approval of Board Minutes for the Month of November 2016

Motion: So Move

Moved by: Ramiro Veliz

Seconded by: Ricardo Molina

Discussion: None

In Favor: Unanimous

MOTION PASSES

B. Approval of Donations

Mr. Roberto Santos read the donations into the minutes for a total of \$4,007.00

Motion: So Move

Moved by: Ricardo Molina

Seconded by: Aliza Flores Oliveros

Discussion: None

In Favor: Unanimous

MOTION PASSES

C. Discuss and Take Appropriate Action on Resolution to Initiate the Process of Designation as a District of Innovation as Defined by the 84th Legislative Session in House Bill 1842

Ms. Gloria Rendon addressed the board and presented a revised Resolution to initiate the process of designation as a District of Innovation.

She stated that revisions were made to this resolution after receiving input from teachers and parents during the public comments section at last week's instructional committee meeting.

She stressed that the assurances noted by the individuals present as recommended have been included in this revised resolution. Specifically, that the board will not seek exemptions under district of innovation from the following existing laws which relate to teacher contracts, including salary or days of employment. Ms. Rendon stated that was never on the table at all for discussion by administration or presented to the board of trustees. Teachers' schedules, specifically planning periods, duty free lunches or lengthening a school day for any teacher was never on the table and is not on the table to be exempt from this act, employee complaint procedures or the grievance policies or any other existing laws, except the ones noted in our resolution at last week's meeting, and these include the following five items:

- *The law prohibiting the district from beginning instruction before the fourth Monday in August*
- *The law that requires the minimum attendance which is a 90% rule for students for class credit or final grade*
- *The law that limits the ability of the district to hire professionals in dual credit programs and certain trades and vocations to teach the crafts of those trades and vocations in career and technical courses when certified teachers are not available*
- *The law that limits each campus to designate only one individual to serve as campus behavior coordinator*
- *The law that authorizes each school district to provide a minimum of 75,600 minutes of instruction including intermission and recess for students for pre-kinder and for those individuals in the Pass Program*

Ms. Rendon stated those are the five items that we are looking at exemptions and they are stated in the resolution. She asked the board if they had any questions.

Mr. Judd Gilpin replied asked for clarification on the agenda items as they are laid out. He said we have item VII-C which requires action then we have the Public Hearing and asked if they need to take action on both Items VII-C and VII-D or is there action only on one or the other.

Mr. Juan Cruz stated they would need to take action on the Resolution and the Public Hearing would come after. He said the most important item for the night is Agenda Item VII-E because that is whether or not the district is going to move forward with forming the committee to come up with a plan for the District of Innovation.

Mr. Gilpin asked if it was three different motions. Mr. Juan Cruz replied that it's two different motions for Items VII-C and E and Item D does not require action from the board, it is basically to take comments from the people that are here to speak on the District of Innovation.

Mr. Judd Gilpin stated he will curtail his questions until after the Public Hearing.

Mr. Judd Gilpin clarified that for Item VII-C they will be approving the Resolution to initiate the process.

Mr. Gloria Rendon replied yes.

Mr. Judd Gilpin asked for a motion to initiate the process for the District of Innovation.

Motion: So Move

Moved by: Ricardo Molina

Seconded by: Juan Roberto Ramirez

Discussion: Ms. Aliza Flores Oliveros stated that she is going to vote for it with an honest desire to hear from the public regarding this item.

In Favor: Unanimous

MOTION PASSES

D. PUBLIC HEARING to Consider Whether the District Should Develop a Local Innovation Plan Under House Bill 1842

Mr. Gilpin stated they would proceed with the comments.

Ms. Gloria Rendon asked if they want to do the public comments first or a short overview of the information.

Mr. Gilpin asked if the information was different from what they just got.

Ms. Gloria Rendon stated she just wanted to give them an overview of the information.

Mr. Gilpin stated if she had something in addition to what they just got to go ahead and present it.

Ms. Gloria Rendon stated she was here to present the district's proposal for United ISD to become a District of Innovation as per House Bill 1842. She stated that in 2015 a Texas Law was passed which is known as House Bill 1842. This bill allows certain acceptably rated school districts to become districts of innovation. She stated we meet the criteria to become a district of innovation and to claim exemptions from any state laws from the Texas Education Code that affect public education. Ms. Rendon said some benefits of becoming a district of innovation are that it provides opportunity for more local control, flexibility and autonomy as districts seek to meet the needs of students and the community served. Among the areas where other districts have chosen to innovate is the first day of school, before the fourth Monday; the minimum minutes of instruction, particularly as it relates to pre-kinder and alternative education programs such as the PASS Program at LBJ High School; class size (these are other districts, our district is not proposing that); designation of campus behavior coordinators; local certification for hard to hire dual credit and career and technical education teachers.

Ms. Rendon continued by explaining some background information about how DOI commenced in United ISD. She commented that the idea for United ISD to pursue the District of Innovation was first presented to the Management Team headed by our Superintendent. Then it was presented to our Instructional Cabinet headed by our Associate Superintendent, Mr. David Gonzalez, which assisted in narrowing down which areas were focused on for exemptions. She said that again they came up with five areas. Then UISD administrators reached out to Laredo ISD and the main reason for contacting Laredo ISD was to share our idea and to come to a consensus regarding a uniform calendar in our community. Ms. Rendon commented they felt that, of all of them, that is probably the most important exemption they would like to seek because that would assure that we would have enough days in our calendar to provide our teachers and our students with a calendar that is not crammed from September thru May and is not so compressed for our teachers and it would allow them a little bit more holidays throughout the calendar. She further stated that if we do not move in this direction we will lose our week in Thanksgiving which is something

we've had since 2011 and we would have to cut back on our teacher holidays during the week of Christmas. Ms. Rendon commented that when you look at it, for anybody else, five days does not seem like a major dilemma but in a school setting in a school system, it does because we will have to compress our 176 days of instruction probably from September to May because we will have to finish by June 4th or actually May 31st.

Ms. Aliza Flores Oliveros asked, in regards to starting a week early, if this also assists with the ending of the semester for students where they wouldn't have to take a Christmas break and then come back and take finals.

Ms. Gloria Rendon replied yes and stated they have looked at that and our semesters would not be balanced day per day but if you look at instructional days we would have to have that week before to start earlier so that we can close that semester before the holiday break.

Ms. Aliza Flores Oliveros asked if this would be in line with a lot of other school districts in the State of Texas and with students that are transferring to other school districts, this would help them with ending their semester by not having to wait or some students having to stay behind with their parents or having to move out of town and just complicates matters. Ms. Oliveros commented that she thinks its best and most, or all, universities do take their semester finals before they take their Christmas break.

Ms. Gloria Rendon replied that this also affects the students that are doing dual credit. They are finishing right now with LCC yet when they come back in January they'll still be in that particular course.

Ms. Oliveros commented that is one of the things she really likes about the calendar. Not so much the holidays because everyone is going to say we can do without them but for her the interest is in the students.

Ms. Rendon stated that people do say that but when you are a classroom teacher and your class load is 100 to 150 students or even the 22 students that they would have, that staff development day is, not to take away from professional development, but when you're not in the classroom setting and you're getting the training that you need that you can come back and use with your students, that is necessary to keep our district moving in the right direction.

Ms. Oliveros stated she agreed.

Mr. Judd Gilpin stated he is also interested in not only being certain that kids can complete the semester before the break but also the work to close out the semester by staff members will be completed before the break as well. He said what he really wouldn't want to do is inadvertently not realize the detail here that would not allow for that and then we would end up with a little bit of work two or three days after people come back from the holidays to straighten all of it out and meet whatever requirements have to be met. He continued by saying that if they don't have that captured at this time then he would expect a committee to look at this, a committee of staff members could ensure that when it's presented to the board. He stated all members would like to at least consider that so they don't want to eliminate that possibility inadvertently and asked if that is allowed for here the way it is written up because that is a key thing.

Ms. Gloria Rendon replied yes.

Ms. Oliveros stated that for those board members who were not present during the committee meeting it is also important and necessary that we end in May because there were some research laws that colleges and universities have to start their summer session on June 4th so there's no flexibility there so it's a

condensed calendar. She said she thinks this would be a very stressful calendar not only for staff but for students most importantly.

Ms. Rendon stated that affects attendance for our teachers, our employees and our students. She continued by saying that UISD did make the attempt to reach LISD and felt that the calendar was the biggest item there and then they reached out to our local employee organization representatives to discuss in detail the district's plan to complete the process for district of innovation. She stated they heard their concerns and made assurances as noted in the resolution.

Ms. Rendon presented the only exemptions that they would like for the board to consider and said this is what the committee is going to hear as well. If the committee at that point does not feel that they want to bring forth these recommendations they will not be included in the plan. Ms. Rendon stated the committee would be comprised of individual teachers and so forth and repeated the five areas which are start date for the calendar, teacher certification, minimum attendance for students, campus behavior coordinator to have more than one individual at each campus and the instructional minutes for the pre-kinder and the PASS Program.

Ms. Rendon presented the timeline as proposed for the board and said today is December 14th, the resolution is presented to the board for approval and will hold a public hearing. She said they would like to have their first meeting with the DAC, which is comprised of 47 teachers from all of our campuses, so that we can identify those exemptions and see if they are in agreement with bringing those exemptions to the board.

Mr. Gilpin asked if they could take some out or modify them. Ms. Rendon replied yes and start developing our plan.

Mr. Gilpin asked if what they have before them right now is to consider whether or not to allow you to look into it and bring this back to the board. Ms. Rendon replied yes.

Mr. Gilpin asked what the timeline is or the board meeting where it would be brought back to the board.

Ms. Rendon replied they would bring it back in March.

Mr. Gilpin asked if that would include any input they would get from the committee.

Ms. Rendon replied yes and said they would have the opportunity to vote for it at that point, they will develop the plan, present the plan at each campus and receive input back from them, then they would revise and make those recommendations as noted if any recommendations are made. They would then come back to the committee and they would in turn vote for it, post on-line for 30 days and that would bring them to March 22nd.

Ms. Oliveros said not to fail to mention the power of this committee. She said this committee has the power to kill every single proposal and all they are approving today is to initiate the process.

Mr. Gilpin asked if today they could add anything into it.

Ms. Rendon said no because the resolution is very clear and limits them only to those five.

Ms. Oliveros stated all they can do is shoot down one of those five. Mr. Gilpin asked if it's five or less.

Ms. Rendon replied yes and said they are going to stick to the resolution.

Ms. Oliveros stated that a lot of the teachers that she spoke to are not fully informed as to what is being proposed here. There was a lot of misinformation that was given to them and they didn't realize there were so many advantages to it and this was actually going to benefit them and more than anything they liked the calendar. Ms. Oliveros said a lot of the teachers she spoke to didn't know these five proposals could be shot down.

Mr. Gilpin stated he has gotten a lot of calls about this and his impression is that people thought they were considering things that were not. He stated for example eliminating the planning period or lengthening work days or changing the format of the contracts. He continued that the second part of what seemed to be a misunderstanding is the belief that somehow to do what is it that we're looking to do, would somehow grant authority specifically to do all kinds of other stuff that is not specifically talked about in this. He said he wants to make sure that he understands the process and that people in the audience understand. Mr. Gilpin commented that the process that's allowed for by house bill 1842 specifically requires you to initiate the process with the board to say these are the things we're looking at, nothing more than what is presented will ever be looked at by the committee.

Ms. Rendon said yes because our resolution ties us to that.

Mr. Gilpin stated that process also defined by House Bill 1842 requires it to be sent to the committee that is comprised in the manner that we put the committee together and then it requires that whatever they come up with, whatever they eliminate or agree to keep on there has to come back to the board and at that time take action and implement it.

Ms. Rendon agreed and said the board would vote and approve it.

Mr. Gilpin continued by saying that it is not implemented even at that time unless it's sent out to TEA and then TEA reviews the whole process and decides all the T's were crossed and the I's were dotted.

Ms. Rendon clarified that TEA does not approve. She said the board would approve it. TEA would check to make sure we are eligible to be on this plan.

Mr. Gilpin stated TEA would just be looking for administrative completeness. He commented that there is a lot of misunderstanding and asked if there is no way to modify this short of redoing the whole thing even if you want to delete something.

Ms. Rendon replied yes and explained you can have an amendment, you can add, but you would still have to have the whole process. She said they would have to have a resolution allowing them to amend. Mr. Gilpin asked if they would have to go thru the whole process to add one. Mr. Gilpin asked if you wanted to delete one you would have to go thru the whole process. Ms. Rendon replied yes.

Ms. Oliveros stated that the power is in the hands of the committee because if the committee votes against any proposal, they it's not going to go through. She said she didn't think any teacher would vote to do away with contracts or to do away with work days or holidays or the grievance procedure.

Ms. Rendon stated that as an administrator, she would never make that recommendation. Ms. Oliveros stated that as a board member she would never approve it.

Mr. Gilpin asked Ms. Rendon to read the exclusions in the resolution.

Ms. Rendon stated they revised them after hearing from the committee and the individuals who spoke there.

Ms. Rendon stated that if this goes through, it is good for five years provided that we maintain our accountability ratings.

Mr. Gilpin asked if after five years they would have to go through the whole process.

Ms. Rendon replied yes unless there are changes in the Legislative Session.

Mr. Ricardo Rodriguez stated there was a lot of misconception but with the clarifications that Mr. Gilpin and Ms. Oliveros presented the teachers will understand what is being put on the table for them.

Ms. Rendon stated a letter was sent out to all employees and posted an article in the employee newsletter with information on the proposal for this. She stated that in addition to that, they met with the principals yesterday to present the same information that was presented to the committee yesterday, gave them the PowerPoint so that they can go back and present at their campuses. She said she also shared the links to TASB and TEA noting how many districts are going this route, what plans are already on there. She said there are about 47 to 51 school districts that have already submitted their plans to the state and have already gone through the process and have had board approval and there are over 100 in the pipeline to continue that.

Ms. Rendon commented that this is something that is taking off because as districts are developing their calendars they are looking at the loss of those five days that we had for the future and that is going to happen till 2020.

Ms. Oliveros stated another concern she had from staff was that if we were to hire someone for a hard to fill slot, they were worried that a non-certified teacher would come in making more than a certified teacher because it was a hard to fill slot.

Mr. Roberto Santos commented that we follow the pay plan that we have based on years of experience so that wouldn't have an effect. He said the only time we would look for a non-certified teacher is if we don't have one in the district which is also part of the resolution.

Ms. Oliveros stated that is specific in the resolution and as mentioned before we are not going to hire an English teacher who is not certified because we have a pool of English teachers that are certified.

Mr. Santos continued by saying that if we can't find one and stated as an example a building trades which is difficult to find even home and family living which is the old homemaking and said no one is going back to that.

Mr. Gilpin commented that basically what it would do is it would allow you to fill a position if you didn't have another applicant that met the requirements so that you wouldn't end up with an empty position and basically end up with an incomplete program to offer to students

Mr. Santos replied yes.

Mr. Juan Roberto Ramirez stated for the record that a lot of questions have come up to him, different personnel that are afraid that the district will become a charter school to which he said the district will not become a charter school and will continue to be a public school as it always has been.

Ms. Oliveros asked Ms. Rendon what kind of feedback she got from staff after she met with them.

Ms. Rendon replied that for principals their main concern and number one priority as a district was the calendar and the next concern was the behavior coordinator at each campus and the process that we use in that because you have to have that certified letter or that letter that needs to go to the parents and so they want to use other methods such as a telephone call, designate first of all, more than one individual per campus as a behavior coordinator because it is unrealistic to have one administrator on each campus be responsible for signing off, calling an individual parent when there is an ISS or OSS placement and that person cannot be in charge when you have a campus of 2 to 3 thousand students and 4,000 students in some cases. In addition they looked at the 90% rule and this is not a guarantee or an automatic for any student. We know how hard our teachers work with the particular students and it's not for the individuals to take advantage of not meeting the 90% rule but there are extreme, sometimes hardship cases where our students don't qualify for homebound services because they do not meet the timeline requirements and so forth, yet they will be retained or lose credit because they do not meet the 90% attendance rule. Ms. Rendon stated for example, you have a student who had a broken arm, had surgery and had to be out for 3 or 4 weeks, that child would not qualify for homebound services because they do not meet that specific timeline to receive services at home but they've already lost 15 days and if they miss 3 more days they've lost credit and at a high school it's only nine days. She stated those are the hardship cases they are looking at and those teachers would be instrumental when we develop that committee to look at that and establish some parameters and some guidelines for our administrators.

Ms. Oliveros stated again the control belongs to the committee.

Mr. Gilpin stated that have some public comments and called up Ms. Beverly Herrera.

Ms. Beverly Herrera stated she is the local president of the Association of Texas Professional Educators. She stated she had some of the concerns with House Bill 1842. Ms. Herrera said it was designed to improve the student's educational outcomes and as a means for district schools to be competitive with charter schools. Ms. Herrera stated that Spring Branch voted with the committee with teachers to basically seek exemption of all possible provisions that TEC is allowed by the statute which means they asked for every single exemption and said teachers can be persuaded or talked into voting against their own interest. She stated she is concerned that when you have a committee and there's a lot of administrators on the committee, teachers can be intimidated and they tend to say yes to some things they wouldn't normally say yes to. Ms. Herrera commented that it is very intimidating when you have people there that control when you get a promotion or an evaluation watching what you say and how you vote. There are possible rights protections that might be compromised by this. There's no set start time for the school year, there's no set length for the school year, there's no set instructional day so it's likely that DOI can make exemptions at any time during the year, it may include any other innovations prescribed by the board of trustees.

Mr. Gilpin asked if she's talking about the legislation itself allowing for all of that or just the proposal.

Ms. Herrera said she's talking about the legislation and the proposal that once it gets started then it can be brought back anytime and it can be changed.

Mr. Gilpin asked if there are any items on this particular proposal specifically that she thinks are acceptable or if she disagrees with all five items.

Ms. Herrera responded that the people that she has been talking to do not want to open the door.

Mr. Gilpin clarified that his question is on the items and said as an example finding a way to change the schedule to allow for the semester to end before the end of the year.

Ms. Herrera said she didn't see that changing to a district of innovation, in order to change a schedule, is that beneficial to students and stated when they have students that graduate early, they deal with them on a one to one basis and they are able to start college on time.

Mr. Gilpin said that the point is she does not agree with any of the items.

Ms. Herrera stated she has not found any items that are worth starting this and she's still researching. She said the letter from the superintendent stated they would not ask for anything else other than the five items yet when they met as a group he did bring up that they want to bring up another item later dealing with teacher evaluations and that is a contradiction that will cause problems.

Mr. Gilpin called up the next person for Public Comments, Tony Garcia

Mr. Tony Garcia stated he was here as a TSTA AR at his campus, as a teacher, a concerned citizen and, most importantly as a parent. Mr. Garcia stated this honorable body has seen fit to introduce this District of Innovation as an innovative way of solving three problems. He respectfully proposed to the board that this DOI is far from innovative and far from a solution to the problems that ail our schools. He assured them that the answers they seek should never be found in solutions that lower the standards of education and much less lower the professional standards of our teachers. He commented that UISD students have always reached greater heights year after year through the selfless and unrewarded heroic efforts of our professional teachers and the amazing support staff. Mr. Garcia said we cannot and must not pass this DOI that only serves to threaten the quality of the education our students receive by lowering the standards of attendance for students and lowering the educational certification requirements for incoming teachers.

Mr. Garcia stated he is a proud Laredo and UISD resident and just as proud, if not more, to be a teacher. However the most important role he has had in life is being a parent to his 8 year old twins who attend a UISD school and as a parent he wants his children to attend a school in which they will be taught by the most highly trained and highly qualified professional teachers and not by someone who was recruited out of expediency or desperation. He stated that while they claim that the scope of the DOI is limited, he doesn't believe that it limits the dangers to the rights of teachers. Past experiences have taught that proposals such as DOI are just the beginning of what will only serve to further oppress teachers by taking away more and more of their rights and dignity as professionals and lower the standard of education for what UISD has always been known. He continued by saying that salaries for teachers have been frozen so many times and they are told that we have to do this because it is for the good of the children as if this were a concept that is foreign to us. He stated that they have added minutes to the beginning and added minutes to the end of the day and again they are told that it is for the good of the children and now they want them to happily accept that what you propose to force upon them and pretend that it is good for the children. He stated that it is time that they do something that is good for the students and uphold the validity and the honor of being called a teacher. Mr. Garcia respectfully and emphatically encouraged this honorable body to do the right thing for our students, our teachers, our staff, our parents and our community as a whole and categorically reject this far from innovative DOI proposal. Vote No on moving forward with this regressive

proposal and send a message to the community that UISD genuinely cares for students and teachers by continuing to support high standards for our students and for our teachers.

Mr. Gilpin asked if there is any part of this that he would support.

Mr. Garcia responded that there is nothing that he likes because it threatens the genuine validity of a teacher and stated he is honored to be a teacher because it comes with certain value because of all the effort that they put in their education and training and genuine concern for the students and it's not just somebody that is pulled out of the professional world. Mr. Garcia said if they want to do that it's fine but demand that they get certified, demand that they get the training.

Mr. Rene de la Vina, TSTA full time president stated that the reason they are all against this is that this innovation process can be abused. All the associations ATPE, TCTA, AFT and TSTA are against this because it can be abused. He said it probably won't be abused right now because they have a good school board and an excellent superintendent but it can happen in the future. He stated that if you must vote for this then he would like to see, in writing, voted on by the committee and by the board to include everything that Ms. Rendon said. Mr. De la Vina stated they left out paid leave under state law, the right to temporary disability, and also chapter 37, to remove a disruptive student by a teacher. He stated he has a list that was left out that he will give to Mr. Cruz, and said he would like to at least put it there and vote on it and make sure that everything that Ms. Rendon added in there will be voted on. The policy that states that they can never go back and take that away from our teachers. He asked the board not to go for District of Innovation but if they must vote on it that they include this and make it a policy where you cannot touch what he just mentioned.

Edna Olmeda, TSTA AR representative, stated that she's a 52 year UISD resident, grandparent and advocate of children attending UISD schools and is here to express her concern and opposition to the district's intention to become a district of innovation. She stated she did some research and there are 47 districts and nationwide that is nothing.

Ms. Olmeda stated the following for reason #1: the current school calendar although not perfect, has functioned. She has not heard any complaints from parents, teachers, staff or students nor has anyone expressed any concern over the setup of the school calendar.

Reason #2 – exempting students from the 90% attendance rule – for class credit or final grade this exemption goes against our goals to improve attendance. This may encourage students to be absent regularly affecting our state funding and our students learning. There are currently programs in place where students can make up classes and assure they get the instruction and credit they need to be successful.

Reason #3 – Just because someone is experienced in a field, does not mean they are experienced in the field of teaching. You may be brilliant in math but that does not mean you can teach someone who struggles in that area. Experience in a field does not come with a guarantee to be a teacher. Teachers are effective in dealing with students that are responsible and irresponsible, empathetic to those who may not be independent and work hard to get them to where they should be.

Reason #4 – Although she is empathetic that only one individual serves as a campus behavior coordinator, she is also empathetic to the concerns that many have expressed to the possible implementation of a DOI. She is further skeptical of what lies ahead should their assurances of not seeking other exemptions be rescinded. And although they have been assured that other exemptions will not be sought, they cannot

help but be skeptical due to several attempts at taking away their planning periods and their constant battle with excessive paper work.

Ms. Olmeda further stated she provided them with a form that states that they require them to waive and it is a form of intimidation when they are presented with that form in front of their colleagues and are obligated to just sign it right then and there whether they agree with it or not.

Ms. Olmeda quoted district goals number two and number four and said that if they do want to meet their district goals, then let's work on goal #5. She said let's assure the district is accountable and efficient by working united to find a solution to fix the problems and issues at hand without the implementation of DOI. Ms. Olmeda commented that these things can be fixed without DOI.

Mr. Gilpin asked for a motion to close the Public Hearing.

Motion: So Move

Moved by: Ricardo Molina
Seconded by: Aliza Flores Oliveros
Discussion: None
In Favor: Unanimous

MOTION PASSES

- E. Discuss and Take Appropriate Action to Appoint a Local Innovation Committee to Draft a Local Innovation Plan as Defined by the 84th Legislative Session in House Bill 1842

Motion: So Move

Moved by: Ricardo Molina
Seconded by: Juan Roberto Ramirez
Discussion:

Ms. Gloria Rendon stated they will begin to look at drafting that proposal and that plan for them. She stated they will come before them to present the members of the district advisory committee which is the DAC who are members of the District Educational Improvement Committee and are already an established committee. These individuals have been meeting since the start of the school year and in addition to that they have added additional members who represent different teacher organizations such as ATPE. She stated she did some changes on some of the administrators.

Ms. Oliveros asked what is the percentage of administrators to teachers.

Ms. Rendon responded 23 to 47.

Ms. Oliveros asked majority vote wins.

Ms. Rendon responded yes and commented they are going to stick to the 2/3. Ms. Rendon clarified to Ms. Herrera who stated that the committee would have to raise their hand and vote in front of individuals who supervise them and said there are only three campus administrators on this committee and stated they will

have a ballot for these individuals so they will not raise their hand and will take each item on an individual basis.

Ms. Oliveros stated that technically the teachers are pretty much the 2/3.

Ms. Rendon replied yes.

Ms. Oliveros asked who they added to the committee. Ms. Rendon stated that she added three principals who are Mr. Aleman, at the high school level, Ms. Rebecca Morales, who represents the middle school level and Dr. Myrtha Villarreal from Col. Santos. In the administrative component they added Ms. Annette Perez, Mr. Joe Almazan, who is the director of admissions and oversees attendance, Ms. Perez because of the behavior coordinators, and made some changes to the student assessment. They removed Ms. Casanova and added Ms. Maricela Quintanilla and added the Director of Grants Administration, Dr. Edith Landeck.

Ms. Oliveros asked if any members of the groups present were added to the committee.

Ms. Rendon replied yes and stated they have Ms. Alejandra Lightner at United High School and Mr. David Perez and they also have Beverly Herrera.

Ms. Oliveros once again stated that if they were to approve this item it is simply to give us a chance. Everything can be shot down by the committee and go nowhere. She asked Mr. Cruz if that is correct.

Mr. Cruz replied yes.

Ms. Rendon stated January 5th will be their only meeting and they are pulling these individual teachers off the campuses and will start the committee meeting at 1:30 and they will meet three times as per the time line but they may just have one meeting on January 5th.

Mr. Juan Cruz stated the meeting has to be posted on the district web site for thirty days and anybody from the public can go and review it and offer comments.

Ms. Oliveros stated she felt comfortable putting it on the table for the committee to decide.

In Favor: Unanimous

MOTION PASSES

Ms. Rendon stated they were asking to show the resolution.

Ms. Oliveros excused herself from the meeting.

Mr. Gilpin stated the Resolution was already voted on and passed.

F. Discussion/Action to Approve the Annual Report Regarding Board Member's Continuing Education

Mr. Juan Cruz stated the recommendation is to approve the Annual Report Regarding Board Member's Continuing Education which is found on page 91 through 98 in the board packet.

Motion: So Move

Moved by: Ricardo Molina
Seconded by: Juan Roberto Ramirez
Discussion: None
In Favor: Unanimous

MOTION PASSES

VIII. Closed Session: Board will adjourn into closed session pursuant to the following sessions of the Texas Open Meetings Act

The Board adjourned into closed session at 8:24 p.m.

A. 551.071 Consultation with Board's Attorney

1. Discussion re: Superintendent's Duties and Responsibilities
2. Discussion re: USD Police Department Climate Survey

B. 551.071 Consultation with Board's Attorney
551.074 Discussion of Personnel or to Hear Complaints against Personnel

1. Discussion, Including Consultation with Legal Counsel, Regarding Proposed Termination of Term Contract of Classroom Teacher

C. 551.074 Discussion of Personnel or to Hear Complaints against Personnel
551.076 Considering the deployment, specific occasions for, or implementation of, security personnel or devices

1. Student Activity Funds for Elementary Schools – Clark Elem., Juarez Lincoln Elem., Newman Elem., Zaffirini Elem.
2. Student Activity Funds for Middle and High Schools – Washington Middle, Trautmann Middle, Trautmann 6th Grade, Salvador Garcia Middle, Lamar Bruni Vergara Middle, LB Johnson High School
3. Health Services Department Medical Related Supplies Inventory
4. Status of on-going Audits

IX. Reconvened from Closed Session, the Board will take appropriate action on items, if necessary, as discussed in Closed Session

The Board reconvened from Closed Session at 9:18 p.m.

A. Action Regarding Proposed Termination of Term Contract of Classroom Teacher and Authorization to Superintendent to Send Notice

Mr. Juan Cruz stated that the recommendation from administration is to post the term contract termination of Melissa Lerma for the reasons discussed in closed session and authorize the superintendent to send notice of the same.

Motion: So Move

Moved by: Ricardo Molina
Seconded by: Juan Roberto Ramirez
Discussion: None
In Favor: Unanimous

MOTION PASSES

B. Adjournment


There being no further business before the Board of Trustees, the Regular Meeting of October 18, 2016 was adjourned at 9:19 p.m.





Motion: So Move

Moved by: Ricardo Molina
Seconded by: Juan Roberto Ramirez
Discussion: None
In Favor: Unanimous

Judd Gilpin, President

Aliza Flores Oliveros, Secretary



-  DISTRICT OF INNOVATION OVERVIEW
-  REQUIREMENTS
-  PROPOSED EXEMPTIONS
-  BENEFITS

WHAT IS A DISTRICT OF INNOVATION?



House Bill 1842 allows Texas public schools who have continuously maintained an acceptable academic rating as defined by the Texas Education Agency to receive **exemptions (flexibilities)** typically reserved for open enrollment charter schools in curriculum, instruction, governance, parent/community involvement, calendar, and budget by becoming a District of Innovation.



A DISTRICT OF INNOVATION ELIGIBILITY



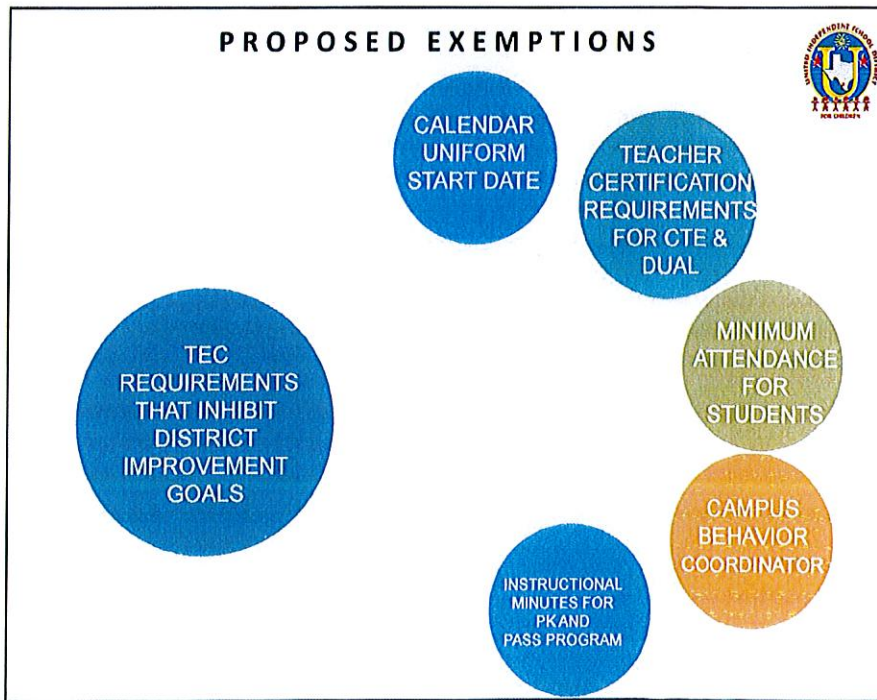
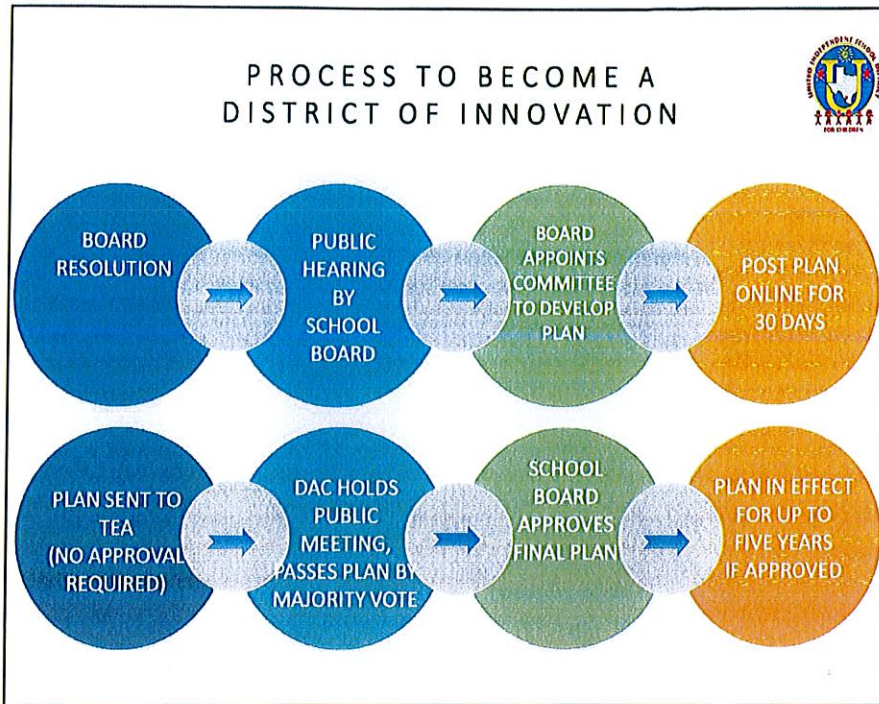
MOST RECENT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE RATING OF ACCEPTABLE



TO CONTINUE DESIGNATION AS DISTRICT OF INNOVATION:

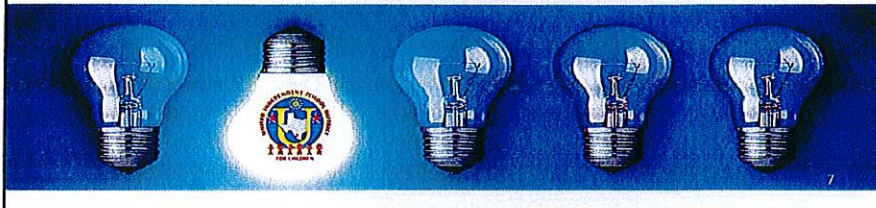
- ACADEMIC ACCEPTABLE RATING NEEDED TO CONTINUE
- ACCEPTABLE FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY RATING

When a Texas public school district becomes a District of Innovation they obtain exemptions from provisions of the Texas Education Code Chapter 12A requirements to allow **more flexibility and local control** for innovative programming for **FIVE years** provided they continue to meet the qualifications.



DISTRICT OF INNOVATION TIMELINE

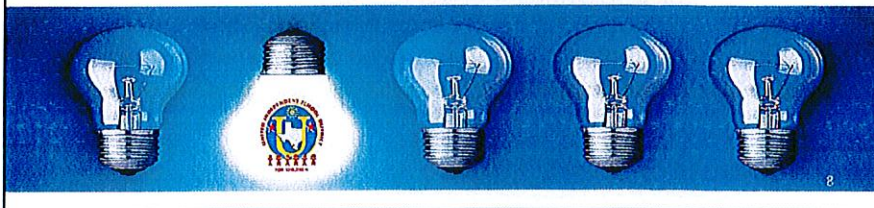
- 11/14/2016 Discuss process of proposing to become a District of Innovation by identifying provisions currently in place that could be exempted on this plan-Review with Leadership Team.
- 12/6/2016 Present information to School Board Instructional Committee regarding the intention to become District of Innovation, present resolution, and announce Public Hearing.
- 12/13/2016 Present District's intent of becoming a District of Innovation to campus and district administrators.
- 12/14/2016 At Regular Board Meeting: Resolution is presented for approval.



DISTRICT OF INNOVATION TIMELINE

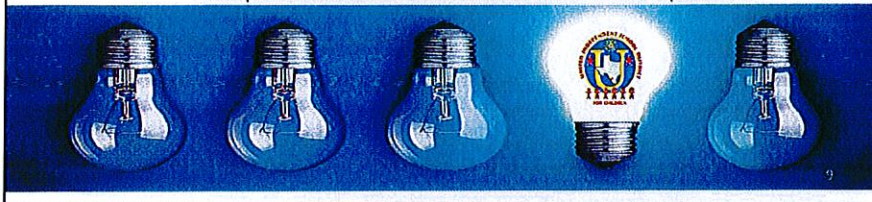
**** Should the board approve the resolution, the following timeline will ensue ****

- 12/14/2016 Hold Public Hearing to determine whether the district should develop an innovation plan. Board appoints District Advisory Committee (DAC) to develop plan with:
 - 1. Comprehensive educational program with innovations, and
 - 2. List of Education Code provisions to be exempt
- 1/5/2017 First Meeting with DAC. DAC identifies exemptions to include, reviews local district policies affected, and drafts Innovation Plan to present to the Board of Trustees.
- 1/17/2017 Second Meeting with DAC. DAC continues to identify exemptions to include, reviews local district policies affected, and continues to draft Innovation Plan to present to the Board of Trustees.

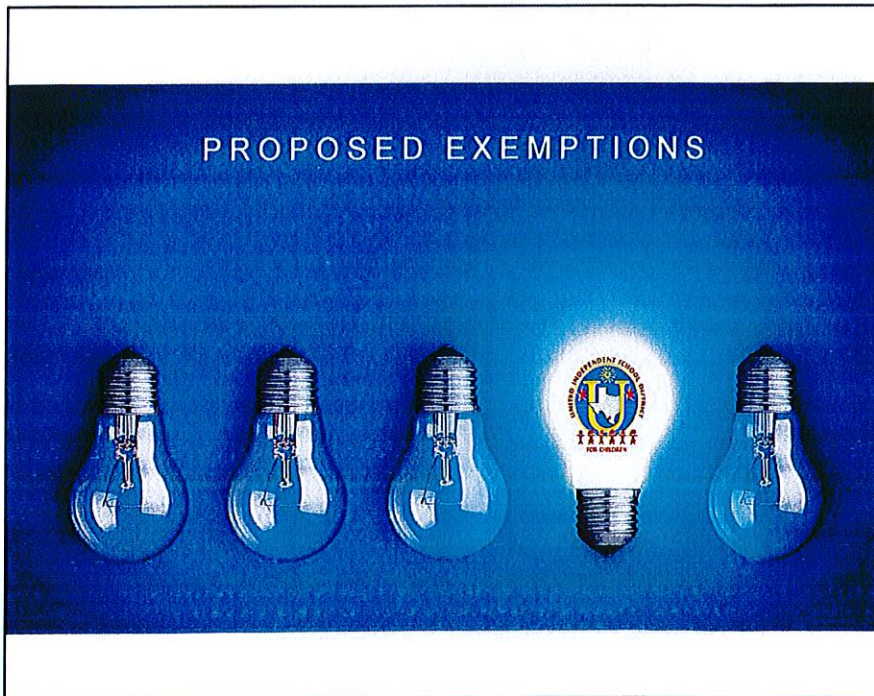


DISTRICT OF INNOVATION TIMELINE

- 1/24/2017 Send DAC the finalized plan for review.
- 1/25/2017 -1/30/2017 DAC Members will present final plan to campus personnel.
- 1/31/2017 Third Meeting with DAC. Present final Innovation Plan to DAC. DAC must vote for plan approval (majority vote needed to pass).
- 2/1/2017 Post Innovation Plan on district website for at least 30 days and notify TEA Commissioner. Post notice for Public Meeting.
- 03/22/2017 Hold Public Hearing & Present to Board for approval.
- 3/23/2017 If approved, District functions in accordance with plan and will be exempt from the Texas Education Code mandates noted in plan.



PROPOSED EXEMPTIONS



DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE



The District Advisory Committee (DAC) is comprised of:

- 50 Campus Personnel**
- 22 District Level Personnel**
- 6 Parents**
- 3 Community Members**

The DAC will be responsible for the creation, modification, presentation, and submission of the innovation plan for United ISD.

The DAC is responsible for writing a comprehensive plan aligned with district improvement plans and is to include the following elements:

- a) A Comprehensive Education Program**
- b) Texas Education Code provisions from which the district should be exempted from.**

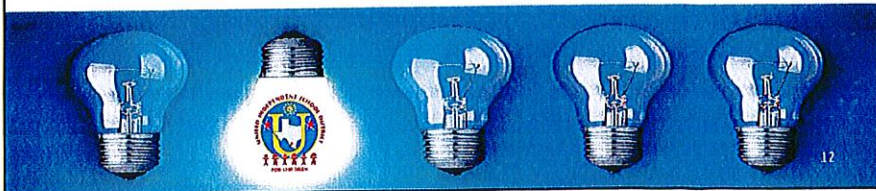
EXEMPTION 1- CALENDAR

TEXAS EDUCATION CODE SECTION 25.0811

A school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.

BENEFIT:

The earlier start date allows campus personnel and the district the much needed time to to prepare for various state mandated events. Allows semesters to be balanced and the semester to conclude prior to Winter Break. In addition, spring semester will end prior to first day of summer school for institutions of higher education.



EXEMPTION 2- MINIMUM ATTENDANCE FOR STUDENTS

TEXAS EDUCATION CODE SECTION 25.092 MINIMUM ATTENDANCE FOR CLASS CREDIT OR FINAL GRADE

(a) Except as provided by this section, a student in any grade level from kindergarten through grade 12 may not be given credit or a final grade for a class unless the student is in attendance for at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered.

BENEFIT:

This would allow the district flexibility in focusing efforts towards District/Campus Improvement Plans (i.e. facilitating ample resources to provide our students opportunities to meet graduation requirements).



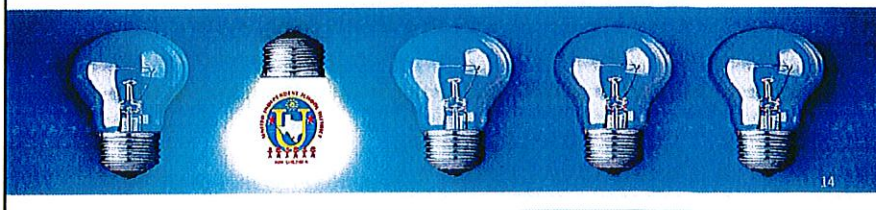
EXEMPTION 3- TEACHER CERTIFICATION FOR CTE & DUAL CREDIT PROGRAMS

TEXAS EDUCATION CODE SECTION 25.003 TEACHER CERTIFICATIONS FOR CTE/DUAL CREDIT

House Bill 5 has added significant support for the need to expand college and career opportunities for students. However, this call for increased opportunities does not adequately accommodate the special challenges faced by school districts as they seek to find individuals with the education or work-related experience needed to teach students in specialized areas of instruction. (i.e. Agriculture, Engineering, Medical & Law Enforcement)

BENEFIT:

This will give us the flexibility of assigning highly qualified and trained personnel to positions that are difficult to staff or to provide additional dual enrollment courses.



EXEMPTION 4- CAMPUS BEHAVIOR COORDINATOR

TEXAS EDUCATION CODE SECTION 37.0012

A person at each campus must be designated to serve as the Campus Behavior Coordinator.

BENEFIT:

Campuses need the flexibility to have more than one person serving in this capacity. Assistant Principals at our campuses take on specific grade levels enabling them to develop a rapport with their students. They also assume the responsibility of behavior management.



EXEMPTION 5- INSTRUCTIONAL MINUTES for PK & PASS PROGRAM

TEXAS EDUCATION CODE SECTION 25.081

OPERATION OF SCHOOLS.

(a) Except as authorized under Subsection (b) of this section, Section 25.084, or Section 29.0821, for each school year each school district must operate so that the district provides for at least 75,600 minutes of instruction, including intermissions and recesses, for students.

(e) For purposes of this code, a reference to a day of instruction means 420 minutes of instruction.

BENEFIT:

Allows the District the flexibility to provide PK services to additional students that meet criteria in three hour classroom settings. As for the PASS Program, high school students with hardships will have the opportunity to meet graduation requirements through flexible schedule.



OVERALL BENEFITS FOR THE DISTRICT



Local Control: District determines which exemptions best suit local needs.



Flexibility: District has the flexibility to implement practices similar to charter schools.



Customization: District plan can be developed for a specific level school (i.e. only high schools).



Possible Funding Impact: Savings to District in the area of Dual Credit tuition.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



Once Innovative Plan is approved, any future amendments to the plan must follow the same adoption process.



Currently, over 100 districts have become Districts of Innovation (source TASB).



Additional Information may be found at:
<https://www.tasb.org/Home.aspx>