



# UNITED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT AGENDA ACTION ITEM

**TOPIC** Motion to approve District of Innovation plan and direct Superintendent to send notice to  
Commissioner of Education of the approval of the plan and the listed exemptions.

**SUBMITTED BY:** Gloria S. Rendon **OF:** Superintendent's Office

**APPROVED FOR TRANSMITTAL TO SCHOOL BOARD:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE ASSIGNED FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION:** March 22, 2017

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

The Texas Education Agency offers school districts the opportunity to be designated a District of Innovation. In an effort to maximize the opportunity to accomplish District goals the District Advisory Committee created the Innovation Plan attached, which has been presented to campus staff, and we are proposing the plan be adopted by the Board of Trustees and submitted to the Texas Education Agency (TEA). The attached plan has been posted for 30 days on our District website, at [www.uisd.net/districtofinnovation](http://www.uisd.net/districtofinnovation), for public viewing. The District Advisory Committee met on February 6, 2017, and voted on each exemption:

### **First Day of Instruction Calendar):**

For-61

Against-6

### **Instructional Minutes:**

For-61

Against-6

### **Campus Behavior Coordinator:**

For- 62

Against-5

### **Minimum Attendance:**

For-56

Against-11

### **CTE and Dual Credit/Certification:**

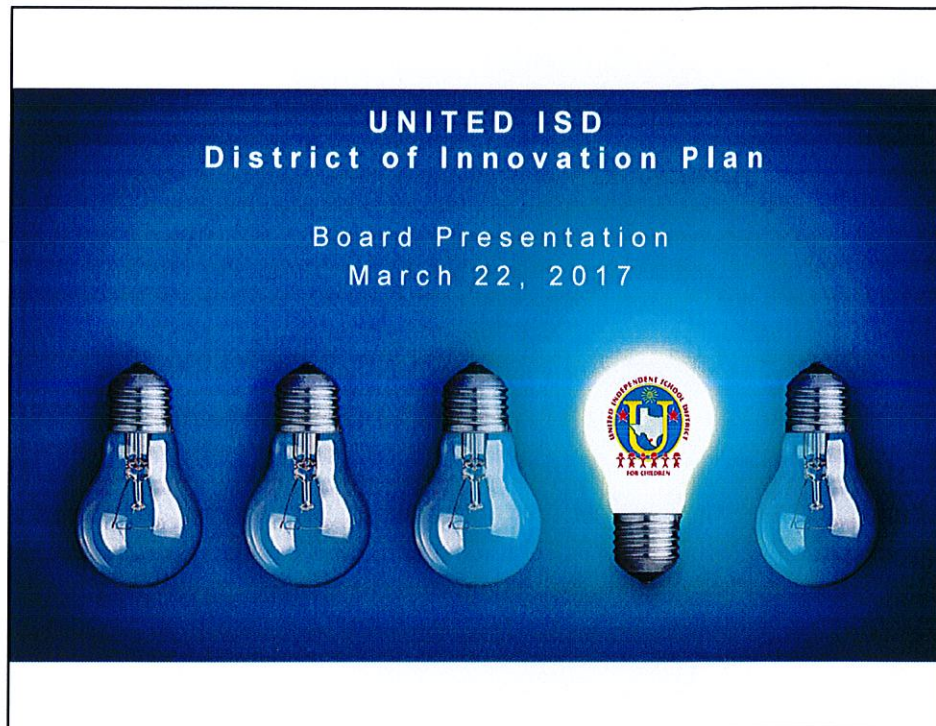
For-56

Against-11

## **RATIONALE:**

## **BUDGETARY INFORMATION**

## **BOARD POLICY REFERENCE AND COMPLIANCE:**



### **Background**

House Bill 1842 (84<sup>th</sup> Session of Texas Legislature) enables districts eligible for designation to become Districts of Innovation TEC Sec.12A.001. The designation provides districts the opportunity to be exempt from certain sections of the Texas Education Code that have been determined by the district to inhibit it from achieving their goals. These goals are outlined in a locally adopted Innovation Plan. The term of this designation is for five years provided the district continue to meet performance requirements in both academics and finance.

As a District of Innovation, United Independent School District, will exercise greater local control, customize learning unique to our student population, as well as provide flexibility in the areas of attendance, instructional minutes, CTE & Dual Credit certification, Behavior Campus Coordinator, in addition to the instructional calendar to better maximize our opportunities of providing a meaningful learning environment for all students.



**District Advisory Committee:**

The District Advisory Committee met on February 6, 2017, and voted on each exemption:

**First Day of Instruction Calendar):**

For-61

Against-6

**Instructional Minutes:**

For-61

Against-6

**Campus Behavior Coordinator:**

For- 62

Against-5



**Minimum Attendance:**

For-56

Against-11

**CTE and Dual Credit/Certification:**

For-56

Against-11





**First Day of Instruction (School Start Date):**

Relief from this statute will allow United to develop a calendar that addresses students' instruction and focused professional development in conjunction with the instructional minutes requirement.

Plan: To meet local and community need, this plan will allow for balanced instructional days prior to the state assessments given in April.

- a. Students will start school no earlier than the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday in August;
- b. Alignment of the district calendar with local universities/colleges and STAAR timelines;
- c. Provide for increased local control of the instructional calendar in order to be responsive to our community's needs.

**Minimum Attendance for Class Credit or Final Grade:**

Plan: The 90 percent rule is an arbitrary percentage, which means school districts award credit based on seat time rather than based on content mastery. Abstaining from the requirement means the district won't have to penalize students who miss class due to extenuating circumstances. District personnel in conjunction with a campus administrations/campus designee and teacher(s) of record, will work together to determine if a student's circumstance merits being considered as an extenuating circumstance. Based on this designation, a campus administrator along with the teacher(s) of record will work together to best identify the most beneficial approach in assisting the student with completed the course(s) at hand. In some cases where the student has mastered state mandated skills the student can be excused from any further assignments and granted credit for the course(s).



**Minimum Attendance for Class Credit or Final Grade:**

*Benefits:* This exemption will allow the District to promote student engagement, as well as social and emotional development, by encouraging more students to participate in such activities. It will also allow UISD administrators and teacher(s) of record to credit a student experiencing extenuating circumstances based on skills mastered rather than because they've attended school a certain number of school days.

Exemption from this requirement will provide educational advantages to students of the District by promoting learning through innovation in the methods, locations, and times instruction may be delivered to students, thereby accommodating students with legitimate scheduling conflicts, reducing dropouts, and increasing the number of (students staying on their graduation track) qualifying graduates.

**Minimum Attendance for Class Credit or Final Grade:**

This exemption supports overarching goals in the Innovation Plan to implement tools, resources, and training that support personalized learning for both students and teachers. Moreover, opting out of Section 25.092 in no way limits or modifies a teacher's right to determine the finality of a grade in accordance with Texas Education Code Section 28.0214, nor does it restrict or alter a teacher's right to assign grades in accordance with Texas Education Code Section 28.0216





**Operation of Schools (Instructional Minutes):**

Plan: The state requires 75, 600 minutes for full day program. For the half-day PK program the required minute requirement is 37,800 (210 minutes a day) for both morning and afternoon groups. We would like to request that the District be allowed to offer a 180 minute school day for half-day programs instead of the 210 minutes. This will allow each teacher to have a morning and an afternoon group of students along with their conference period and duty free lunch within the regular school day. This 180 minute exemption will result in the students receiving 31,680 minutes of instruction during their half day program.



**Operation of Schools (Instructional Minutes):**

*Benefits:*

This exemption accommodates the high need for a PK program in 20 out of the 27 UISD elementary schools.

-Fulfills the teacher duty free lunch and planning period requirements.

-Allows for more children to be taught with current personnel and available facilities.



#### **IV. Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator:**

**Plan:** By eliminating the campus behavior coordinator designation, UISD can focus on building a culture of excellence that fosters the development of social-emotional learning. In addition to exempting the district from the application of TEC 37.0012, any responsibility or duty of parental/guardian notification shall be exercised by appropriate school officials as per UISD Board Policy.

**Benefits:** Increase efficiency and continue with a collaborative approach with students and parents since campus administrators shall notify parents/guardians of disciplinary infractions/actions either a. in person, b. telephone, or c. by providing the student with a hard copy of the disciplinary referral (Student Discipline Action Form).



#### **Teacher Certification for Career and Technical Education and Dual Credit:**

**Plan:** Career and Technical Education:

A. Flexible Hiring - Through an exemption from existing teacher certification requirements set forth by state law for career and technical education, UISD will be granted the flexibility to hire non certified industry professionals in specialized trades and vocations to teach CTE courses if certified teachers are not available. The qualification requirements to teach CTE courses will mirror the qualification requirements set forth by SBEC with the exception of completing an Educator Preparation Program. In lieu of a state teaching certificate, the Superintendent shall issue a local teaching certificate provided that CTE applicants complete district level training in the areas of but not limited to, Classroom Management and Sound Instructional Practices. They will also be assigned a mentor to mirror the same process as new hires for at least one school year. A statement of qualifications must be approved by the Career and Technical Education Department and the Human Resource Department prior to issuing the local teaching certificate.





**Teacher Certification for Career and Technical Education and Dual Credit:**

B. Flexible Scheduling - The campus principal may submit to the superintendent a written request to allow a certified teacher to teach one CTE course/subject out of their certified field. The principal must specify the reason for the request and document what credentials, work experience or content knowledge the certified teacher possess which would qualify this individual to teach this course/subject.

*Benefit:* This plan will provide more flexibility in scheduling and more options for students made available in class offerings.



**Dual Credit:**

**Plan:** The District will have the flexibility to hire credentialed community or university college instructors in specific content areas to afford more students the opportunity to take dual credit courses if certified teachers are not available to teach these courses.

The District will have the flexibility to hire faculty with required higher education credentials to teach High School/ECHS dual credit courses in specific content areas to give more students the opportunity to take dual credit courses. This DOI will waive the requirement that dual-credit faculty be SBEC certified. Once faculty is approved as adjuncts for the institute of higher education (IHE) and recommended for employment by UISD, the Superintendent will issue a local teaching certificate.





**Dual Credit:**

*Benefits:* This plan allows the flexibility to hire recognized professional experts in their fields when certified teacher candidate are not available. This plan allows the flexibility to hire recognized professional experts in their fields when certified CTE teacher or dual credit candidates are not available, and will enable UISD high schools to offer a greater variety of CTE/ECHS/Dual Credit courses to our students.



**Timeline:**

- February 6, 2017: District Advisory Committee will meet (Meeting 3)**
- February 6, 2017: DAC will vote on each individual item (5 exemptions) on the plan**
- February 6, 2017: District will inform TEA of our intent to be District of Innovation;**
- February 6, 2017: Plan will be posted online for 30 days—Only areas approved by the DAC will be included in the Plan**
- February 6, 2017: Post Notice for Public Meeting on District website (scheduled for March 22, 2017)**
- March 22, 2017 Board to take action on DOI Plan**





**United Independent School District**  
**District of Innovation Plan**  
*Date of Board Approval Here*



## **United Independent School District District of Innovation Plan**

### **Background**

House Bill 1842 (84<sup>th</sup> Session of Texas Legislature) enables districts eligible for designation to become Districts of Innovation TEC Sec.12A.001. The designation provides districts the opportunity to be exempt from certain sections of the Texas Education Code that have been determined by the district to inhibit it from achieving their goals. These goals are outlined in a locally adopted Innovation Plan. The term of this designation is for five years provided the district continue to meet performance requirements in both academics and finance.

As a District of Innovation, United Independent School District, will exercise greater local control, customize learning unique to our student population, as well as provide flexibility in the areas of attendance, instructional minutes, CTE & Dual Credit certification, Behavior Campus Coordinator, in addition to the instructional calendar to better maximize our opportunities of providing a meaningful learning environment for all students.

### **Synopsis**

On November 14, 2016, district staff met to discuss District of Innovation and the positive impact it could have at United ISD. It was determined that many of the Texas Education Codes in place restrict the district from achieving the various goals set to better improve the overall education of the students in the district. At the School Board Instructional Meeting held on December 6, 2016, the Superintendent's Cabinet presented data about what becoming a District of Innovation entails and how it could positively impact the district. It was determined that the district should further review and evaluate the various components of District of Innovation to better determine what areas of exemption should be included in the proposed Innovation Plan. On December 13, 2016, a presentation to all UISD Principals and Department Directors was made where various members of the Superintendent's Cabinet presented data on District of Innovation and how it could potentially assist the district in accomplishing the goals set in both Campus and District Improvement Plans. On December 14, 2016, information about District of Innovation, including five exemptions (Instructional Minutes, 90% Minimum Attendance, Campus Behavior Coordinator, Instructional Calendar, and Teacher Certification for Career and Technical as well as Dual Enrollment Courses) was made to the Board of Trustees and the General Public. The process of becoming a DOI was explained, the timeline was presented, and the appointment of the District Advisory Committee Members as well as the DOI Resolution was presented. The Board approved the Resolution and appointed the District Advisory Committee. On this same date the first Public Hearing was held. Soon after these meetings, a website for District of Innovation was activated as a subpage on the district's website. Information regarding the intention, timeline, and FAQ's was posted for easy accessibility for our constituents. On January 5, 2017, the first meeting was held with the District Advisory Committee to

discuss District of Innovation. Committee members voiced concerns, praised the district for their continuous efforts in supporting the students of United ISD, and listed their top three choices for the exemption sub-committees they wanted to serve on. On January 17, 2017 the DAC met (2<sup>nd</sup> meeting) and devised proposed criteria by exemption to add to the United ISD's Innovation Plan. The Innovation Plan was compiled using the information collected from the DAC and shared with committee members on January 31, 2017.

**Board Resolution**

Approved on December 14, 2016



### **Resolution to Initiate the Process of Designation as a District of Innovation**

**WHEREAS**, the United ISD Board of Trustees is committed to our mission of educating all students for success;

**WHEREAS**, Texas Education Code 12A, enacted by HB 1842 of the 84th Legislative Session, provides that a district is eligible for designation as a "District of Innovation" if the district's most recent performance rating under Section 39.054 reflects at least acceptable performance, and that consideration of designation as a District of Innovation may be initiated by a resolution adopted by the Board of Trustees of the District;

**WHEREAS**, the most recent performance rating of United ISD ("the District") under Texas Education Code 39.054 reflects at least acceptable performance;

**WHEREAS**, the United ISD Board of Trustees believes we will be able to achieve our mission more quickly by increasing local control over District operations; and

**WHEREAS**, Texas Education Code 12A requires districts seeking to be designated as Districts of Innovation to develop a local Innovation Plan providing for a comprehensive educational program and identifying the requirements imposed by the Texas Education Code that inhibit the goals of the local Innovation Plan;

**WHEREAS**, the United ISD Board of Trustees will not seek under District of Innovation exemptions from any existing laws relating to teacher contracts including salary or days of employment; teacher schedules, specifically: planning periods, duty free lunches; employee complaint procedures (grievance policies); or any other existing laws except as proposed below:

- (1) the law prohibiting the District from beginning instruction before the fourth Monday in August;
- (2) the law that requires that minimum attendance (90% rule) for students for class credit or final grade;
- (3) the laws that limit 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 (i.e. as Agriculture, Building Trades, etc.) in Career and Technical courses when certified teachers are not available;
- (4) the law that limits each campus to designate only one individual to serve as Campus Behavior Coordinator;

(5) the law that authorizes each school district to provide a minimum of 75,600 minutes of instruction, including intermissions and recesses for students.

**WHEREAS**, Texas Education Code Section 25.0811 prohibits the District from beginning instruction before the fourth Monday in August;

**WHEREAS**, flexibility to begin instruction earlier in the calendar year enabling the District to improve active learning by balancing the amount of instructional time per semester, thus allowing teachers to better pace and deliver instruction before and after the first semester;

**WHEREAS**, flexibility to begin instruction earlier in the calendar year will enable the District to create a calendar that is more student and employee centered;

**WHEREAS**, flexibility to begin instruction earlier in the calendar year will enable teachers and students to have more instructional time prior to state mandated assessments;

**WHEREAS**, flexibility to start and end the school year earlier, will enable students to enroll in college courses that start in early June, thereby increasing college and career readiness;

**WHEREAS**, flexibility to allow a student to receive class credit or final grade in a class the student is enrolled in and has less than 90% attendance due to extreme circumstances, thereby allowing students to meet promotion and graduation requirements;

**WHEREAS**, Texas Education Code Sections 21.003, 21.053, and 21.044 and 19 Texas Administrative Code Chapter 231 limit the District's ability to hire teachers to teach hard-to-fill, Dual Credit and Career and Technical Courses when certified teachers are not available;

**WHEREAS**, by obtaining an exemption from existing teacher certification requirements for Dual Credit and Career and Technical teachers, the District would have the flexibility to hire credentialed community college instructors or university professors in specific content areas in order to afford more students the opportunity to take these courses if certified teachers are not available to teach those courses;

**WHEREAS**, an exemption from existing teacher certification requirements for Dual Credit and Career and Technical teachers would afford the District the flexibility to hire experienced professionals in certain trades and vocations to teach the crafts of those trades and vocations (i.e. Agriculture, Building trades, etc.) in Career and Technical courses if certified teachers are not available to teach those courses;

**WHEREAS**, an exemption from the requirement to only have one individual at each campus designated as the Campus Behavior Coordinator would afford the District and campus more



flexibility in assigning designated campus administrators (more than one) the responsibility of behavior and discipline management;

**WHEREAS**, an exemption from the requirements that a District provide for at least a minimum 75,600 minutes of instruction, including intermissions and recesses for students for students in half day Pre-Kindergarten Programs or students enrolled in Positive Approach to Student Success—PASS Program, would afford the District the flexibility of providing Pre-Kindergarten services to additional students that meet the criteria and would afford high school students in the PASS Program, students with hardships, the opportunity to meet graduation requirements through flexible scheduling;

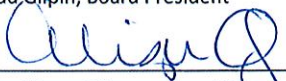
**WHEREAS**, the United ISD Board of Trustees believes that any local Innovation Plan, if adopted, should be developed in collaboration with the community and District stakeholders; and

**WHEREAS**, before considering the creation of a local Innovation Plan, the United ISD Board of Trustees will hold a Public Hearing to receive feedback from the community and District stakeholders.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the United ISD Board of Trustees on December 14, 2016 initiates the process of exploring and considering designation of the District as a District of Innovation under Texas Education Code Section 12A

**Adopted this 14<sup>th</sup> day of December 2016, by the United Independent School District Board of Trustees.**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Judd Gilpin, Board President

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Aliza Flores Oliveros, Board Secretary

### District of Innovation Advisory Committee Members

On December 14, 2016, the Board of Trustees appointed the following members to serve on the District of Innovation Committee:

Campus/Dept. Role	Member Name
AHS Teacher	Beverly Herrera
AHS Teacher	Eduardo Bustos
AHS Teacher	Lamar Ramirez
LBJ Teacher	Kristi Burough
LBJ Asst. Principal	Patricia Hinojosa
LBJ Teacher	Michael Carrillo
UHS Teacher	David Perez
UHS Teacher	Alejandra Lightner
UHS Principal	Albert Aleman
USHS Teacher	Evelyn Avalos
USHS Teacher	Tommy Rodriguez
STEP Teacher	Ramon Trevino Jr.
<b>MIDDLE SCHOOL</b>	
AGMS Teacher	Elizabeth Hallman
CMS Teacher	Randal Fox
LBVMS Teacher	Fabian Garza
LOMS Teacher	Maribel Garcia
SGMS Teacher	Elda Guerra
TMS Teacher	Adriana Sanchez
UMS Teacher	Carlos Ramirez
UMS Principal	Rebecca Morales
USMS Teacher	Sandra Serna
WMS Teacher	Carmen Pena
<b>ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</b>	
ARNDT Teacher	Bernardo Gutierrez
BORCHERS Teacher	Angelica Lerma
CENTENO Teacher	Patricia Martinez
CLARK Teacher	Socorro Reyes
CSBE Teacher	Cynthia Chavez
CSBE Principal	Myrtha Villarreal
CUELLAR Teacher	Sally Garza
DELLANO Teacher	Martha Alcaraz
FASKEN Teacher	Eva Rossell-Rodriguez
FINLEY Teacher	Diego Garcia

<b>Campus/Dept. Role</b>	<b>Member Name</b>
GARCIA Teacher	Cindy Ramirez
GUTIERREZ Teacher	Maria Mendoza
JLE Teacher	Liliana Miranda
KAZEN Teacher	Martha Perales
KILLAM Teacher	Karen Trevino
KZE Teacher	Gabriel Gutierrez
MALAKOFF Teacher	Jose Flores
MULLER Teacher	Tina Padilla
NEWMAN Teacher	Elisa Castillo
NYE Teacher	Kristell Faz
PEREZ Teacher	Noemi Cruz
PRADA Teacher	Blanca Perez
ROOSEVELT Teacher	Aurora Infante
RUIZ Teacher	Deborah Ann Flores
SALINAS Teacher	Adriana Zamora
TRAUTMANN Teacher	Sandra Baker
VETERANS Teacher	Nora Villarreal
ZAFFIRINI Teacher	Julie Mora
	Name
<b>Parent/Community MEMBERS</b>	
LCC Rep	Fred Solis
TAMIU Rep	Alfredo Ramirez Jr.
Chamber of Commerce	Miguel Conchas
PARENT	Ana Varela
PARENT	Letita Villarreal
Parent Member	Ms. De Hoyos
Parent Member	Mirtha Mojica
Parent Member	Nydia Rdz Montemayor
Parent Member	Mirtha Sandoval
<b>DISTRICT LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS</b>	
Campus/Dept.	Name
AA SP	David Gonzalez
AA SP	Gloria Rendon
EX DIR SpEd	Cynthia Ramirez
EX DIR Elem	Cynthia Rodriguez
DIR Grants ADM	Edie Landeck
EX DIR MS	David Canales
EX DIR HS	Dolores Barrera



<b>Campus/Dept. Role</b>	<b>Member Name</b>
EX DIR Instr Acc	Emma Leza
EX DIR Sch Imp	Melissa Cruz
DIR CATE	Angelica Sanchez
DIR Staff Dev	Celia Taboada
CRD.Sdt Assess	Maricela Quintanilla
DIR Guid/Coun	Christina Uribe-Flores
DIR Elem	Elouisa Diaz
DIR Fine Arts	Javier Vera
DIR Instr Tech	Judith Garcia
DIR GT	Mario Rosales
DIR BIL	Carmen Pompa
DIR DISC	Annette Perez
DIR ADMIS.	Joe Almazan
COORD HR	Carla Rivera

**District of Innovation Committee Meetings:**

Date: January 5, 2017  
Time: 1:30 p.m.  
Location: Student Activity Complex Meeting Room

Date: January 17, 2017  
Time: 1:30 p.m.  
Location: Student Activity Complex Meeting Room

Plan sent to Committee and District Administrators through email on January 31, 2017

Date: February 6, 2017  
Time: 1:30 p.m.  
Location: Student Activity Complex Meeting Room

## **District Goals**

### **Mission statement:**

UNITED, we inspire all students to become responsible world citizens by pursuing excellence through life-long learning.

### **Goal 1**

#### **Student Achievement:**

Provide consistent quality instruction for all students, resulting in improved student achievement.

### **Goal 2**

#### **A Safe and Nurturing Environment:**

Provide a safe, nurturing, positive, and secure learning environment for students and staff.

### **Goal 3**

#### **Family and Community Engagement:**

Promote community partnership and parent involvement.

### **Goal 4**

#### **Human Capital:**

To ensure employee recruitment, development, support and retain effective teachers, principals and other instructional staff.

### **Goal 5**

#### **Operational Effectiveness and Efficiency:**

Ensure that the District is fiscally accountable and efficient.

### **Term**

As outlined by the Texas Education Agency, the term of the Innovation Plan is five years. The plan will commence with the adoption of the Plan at the March 22, 2017, Board of Trustees Regular Meeting and conclude March 22, 2022, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The District Educational Improvement Committee comprised of members of the DOI District Advisory Committee will monitor the effectiveness of the Plan and recommend to the Board any suggested modifications as needed.

## **Innovation Plan**

District of Innovation Committee members comprised of District stakeholders, including educators, administrators, parents and community members formed to develop the Local Innovation Plan (Plan). Five Exemptions are included in the Innovation Plan

### **I. First Day of Instruction (School Start Date):**

*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*

United ISD's District Advisory Committee has determined that a school calendar that provides the option to begin the first day of instruction prior to the fourth Monday in August as currently required by the TEC will provide the District the ability to develop a calendar that effectively meets students' instructional needs and allows for focused professional development in conjunction with the instructional minutes requirement.

Plan: To meet local and community needs, this plan will allow for balanced instructional days prior to the state assessments given in April.

- a. Students will start school no earlier than the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday in August:
- b. Alignment of the district calendar with local universities/colleges and state assessment (i.e. STAAR) timelines;
- c. Provide for increased local control of the instructional calendar in order to be responsive to our community's needs.

### **II. Minimum Attendance for Class Credit or Final Grade:**

*Texas Education Code Section 25.092: (a)... 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.*

Plan: The 90 percent rule is an arbitrary percentage, which means school districts award credit based on seat time rather than based on content mastery. Abstaining from the requirement means the district won't have to penalize students who miss class due to extenuating circumstances. District personnel in conjunction with campus administrators/campus designee and teacher(s) of record, will work together to determine if a student's circumstance merits being considered as an extenuating circumstance. Based on this designation, a campus administrator along with the teacher(s) of record will work together to best identify the most beneficial approach in assisting the student with completing the course(s) at hand. In some cases where the student has mastered state mandated skills the student can be excused from any further assignments and granted credit for the course(s).

This exemption will allow the District to promote student engagement, as well as social and emotional development, by encouraging more students to participate in such activities. It will also allow UISD administrators and teacher(s) of record to credit a



student experiencing extenuating circumstances based on skills mastered rather than whether they have attended school a certain number of school days.

Exemption from this requirement will provide educational advantages to students of the District by promoting learning through innovation in the methods, locations, and times instruction may be delivered to students, thereby accommodating students with legitimate scheduling conflicts, reducing dropouts, and increasing the number of (students staying on their graduation track) qualifying graduates.

This exemption supports overarching goals in the Innovation Plan to implement tools, resources, and training that support personalized learning for both students and teachers. Moreover, opting out of Section 25.092 in no way limits or modifies a teacher's right to determine the finality of a grade in accordance with Texas Education Code Section 28.0214, nor does it restrict or alter a teacher's right to assign grades in accordance with Texas Education Code Section 28.0216.

### **III. Operation of Schools (Instructional Minutes):**

*Texas Education Code Section 25.081 (a) .....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.*

Plan: The state requires 75,600 minutes for full day program. For the half-day PK program the required minute requirement is 37,800 (210 minutes a day) for both morning and afternoon groups. We would like to request that the District be allowed to offer a 180 minute school day for half-day programs instead of the 210 minutes. This will allow each teacher to have a morning and an afternoon group of students along with their conference period and duty free lunch within the regular school day. This 180 minute exemption will result in the students receiving 31,680 minutes of instruction during their half day program.

This exemption accommodates the high need for a PK half day program in schools that only offer a half day program .

- a. Fulfills the teacher duty free lunch and planning period requirements;
- b. Allows for more children to be taught with current personnel and available facilities.

### **IV. Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator:**

*Texas Education Code Section 37.0012 (a) A person at each campus must be designated to serve as the campus behavior coordinator. The person designated may be the principal of the campus or any other campus administrator selected by the principal. (b) The campus behavior coordinator is primarily responsible for maintaining student discipline and the implementation of this subchapter. (c) Except as provided by this chapter, the specific duties of the campus behavior coordinator may be established by campus or district policy. Unless otherwise provided by campus or district policy: (1) a duty imposed on a campus principal or other campus administrator under this subchapter shall be performed by the*



*campus behavior coordinator; and (2) a power granted to a campus principal or other campus administrator under this subchapter may be exercised by the campus behavior coordinator. (d) The campus behavior coordinator shall promptly notify a student's parent or guardian as provided by this subsection if under this subchapter the student is placed into in-school or out-of-school suspension, placed in a disciplinary alternative education program, expelled, or placed in a juvenile justice alternative education program or is taken into custody by a law enforcement officer. A campus behavior coordinator must comply with this subsection by: (1) promptly contacting the parent or guardian by telephone or in person; and (2) making a good faith effort to provide written notice of the disciplinary action to the student, on the day the action is taken, for delivery to the student's parent or guardian. (e) If a parent or guardian entitled to notice under Subsection (d) has not been reached by telephone or in person by 5 p.m. of the first business day after the day the disciplinary action is taken, a campus behavior coordinator shall mail written notice of the action to the parent or guardian at the parent's or guardian's last known address. (f) If a campus behavior coordinator is unable or not available to promptly provide notice under Subsection (d), the principal or other designee shall provide the notice.*

Plan: By eliminating the campus behavior coordinator designation, UISD can focus on building a culture of excellence that fosters the development of social-emotional learning. In addition to exempting the district from the application of TEC 37.0012, any responsibility or duty of parental/guardian notification shall be exercised by appropriate school officials as per UISD Board Policy.

This will allow United ISD to increase efficiency and continue with a collaborative approach with students and parents since campus administrators shall notify parents/guardians of disciplinary infractions/actions either

- a. in person;
- b. telephone or;
- c. by providing the student with a hard copy of the disciplinary referral (Student Discipline Action Form).

**V. Teacher Certification for Career and Technical Education and Dual Credit:**  
***Texas Education Code Section 21.003*** *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*

Plan: Career and Technical Education:

A. Flexible Hiring – United ISD often struggles to find certified teachers for business and industry Career and Technical (CTE) courses and foresees continued difficulty in filling positions in this area. Through an exemption from existing teacher certification requirements set forth by state law for career and technical education, UISD will be

granted the flexibility to hire non-certified industry professionals in specialized trades and vocations to teach CTE courses if certified teachers are not available. The qualification requirements to teach CTE courses will mirror the qualification requirements set forth by SBEC with the exception of completing an Educator Preparation Program. In lieu of a state teaching certificate, the Superintendent shall issue a local teaching certificate provided that CTE applicants complete district level training in the areas of but not limited to, Classroom Management and Sound Instructional Practices. They will also be assigned a mentor to mirror the same process as new hires for at least one school year. A statement of qualifications must be approved by the Career and Technical Education Department and the Human Resource Department prior to issuing the local teaching certificate.

B. Flexible Scheduling - The campus principal may submit to the Superintendent a written request to allow a certified teacher to teach one CTE course/subject out of their certified field. The principal must specify the reason for the request and document what credentials, work experience or content knowledge the certified teacher possess which would qualify this individual to teach this course/subject.

This plan will provide more flexibility in scheduling and more options for students will be made available in class offerings.

### **Dual Credit:**

Plan: The District will have the flexibility to hire credentialed community or university college instructors in specific content areas to afford more students the opportunity to take dual credit courses if certified teachers are not available to teach these courses.

The District will have the flexibility to hire faculty with required higher education credentials to teach High School/ECHS dual credit courses in specific content areas to give more students the opportunity to take dual credit courses. This DOI will waive the requirement that dual-credit faculty be SBEC certified. Once faculty is approved as adjuncts for the institute of higher education (IHE) and recommended for employment by UISD, the Superintendent will issue a local teaching certificate.

This plan allows the flexibility to hire recognized professional experts in their fields when certified teacher candidate are not available. This plan allows the flexibility to hire recognized professional experts in their fields when certified CTE teacher or dual credit candidates are not available, and will enable UISD high schools to offer a greater variety of CTE/ECHS/Dual Credit courses to our students.



**Adoption of Innovation Plan –STILL IN process –ALL IN DRAFT FORM**

United ISD has met all of the process requirements outlined by the Texas Education Agency and the Commissioner of Education to receive the designation as a District of Innovation. The local Innovation Plan was developed and approved by the District Advisory Committee. In addition, the plan was posted on the District's website for the required 30 days and a Public Hearing was conducted on March 22, 2017.