

# Celina ISD

## District of Innovation Plan

### **District of Innovation:**

#### **I. INTRODUCTION**

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

#### **II. TERM**

The term of the Plan is for no more than five years, beginning February 21, 2017 and ending February 21, 2022, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. If, within the term of this Plan, other areas of operations are to be considered for flexibility as part of HB 1842, the Board will nominate a new committee to consider and propose additional exemptions in the form of an amendment. Any amendment adopted by the Board will adhere to the same term as the original plan. The District may not implement two separate plans at any one time.

#### **III. INNOVATIONS**

The District proposes flexibility in the following areas:

##### **A. Certification Required**

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

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

TEC 21.003 states "a person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern or teacher trainee, librarian, educational aide, administrator, educational diagnostician, or school counselor by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued as provided by Subchapter B." TEC 21.057 requires that a

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

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

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

#### **B. Uniform School Calendar**

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

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

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

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

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

### **C. Probationary Contracts**

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

Policies that may be affected: DCA (LEGAL)

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

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

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

### **D. Class Size Requirements for Elementary grades**

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

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

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

Historically, these waivers are never rejected by the TEA. This proves to represent an unnecessary step for the education of our students. Additionally, a letter must be sent home to the parents of each student in the class exceeding the limit to inform them that a waiver has been filed. This statute does not take into consideration the impact of student being transferred to new classrooms in the middle of the school year. The desire is to provide for lower class sizes, but realize the growth curve experienced by the district.

By providing for local control, the district seeks to:

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

#### **IV. IMPLEMENTATION**

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

## V. DISTRICT OF INNOVATION COMMITTEE

Rick DeMasters	Superintendent
Lori Sitzes	Assistant Superintendent of Instruction and Technology
Bill Hemby	Assistant Superintendent of Maintenance and Operations
John Mathews	Assistant Superintendent of Administrative Services
Bill Elliott	Athletic Director
Starlynn Wells	Director of Elementary Curriculum and Instruction
Marilyn Chamberlin	Director of Technology
Jill Roza	District Community Liaison
David Wilson	High School Principal
Russell McDaniel	Junior High and Middle School Principal
Stacy Ceci	Intermediate School Principal
Starla Martin	Elementary School Principal
Cynthia Baker	High School Teacher
Candra Lemberg	Junior High School Teacher
Shana Kriechbaum	Middle School Teacher
Andrew Stamper	Intermediate School Teacher
Tamara Hoover	Elementary School Teacher
Kelley Mathews	High School Parent
Stephanie Fay	Junior High School Parent
Cissy McMillan	Middle School Parent
Aubrey Miller	Intermediate School Parent
Ted Fay	Elementary School Parent

## VI. PROPOSED TIMELINE

Monday, November 7, 2016 - 7:30 a.m., Administration Conference Room.

- Meeting with Administrative cabinet to explain district of innovation.

Monday, November 14, 2016 - 7:00 p.m., Board Room

- Board executes resolution to seek District of Innovation status.

Monday, December 12, 2016, - 7:00 p.m., Board Room.

- Public Hearing to explain and discuss the possibility of becoming a District of Innovation as required by TEC §12.002 (b) (2), and §12.003.
- Board approval of members of the District of Innovation Committee (TEC 12.002 (b)(2) and 12.003).

Tuesday, December 13, 2016, - 8:00 a.m., Administration Conference room.

- Initial meeting of the District of Innovation Committee.
- Explanation provided for requirements and ramifications of District of Innovation.
- Discuss possible exemptions.
- Decide which exemptions to pursue and include in our plan.
- Committee vote on plan.

Tuesday, January 3, 2017

- Notification sent to the Texas Commissioner of Education that the Board intends to vote on the adoption of the proposed plan.

Thursday, January 12, 2017

- Meet with District Committee established under the Texas Education Code§ 11.251, Board Policy BQA (LEGAL), and BQA (LOCAL), to explain District of Innovation and review the plan proposed by the Board appointed DOI committee.

Monday, January 16, 2017

- Post District of Innovation Plan on the District Website.

Thursday, January 26, 2017

- Public meeting to allow explanation of the DOI plan and answer community questions.

Monday, February 20, 2017 - 5:30 p.m., Board Room

- Public meeting with District Committee established under the Texas Education Code§ 11.251, Board Policy BQA (LEGAL), and BQA (LOCAL), to hold a public hearing

regarding the final proposed plan and will vote to approve the plan by a majority of the committee members.

Monday, February 20, 2017 - 7:00 p.m., Board Room

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

Tuesday, February 21, 2017

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

## VII. DISTRICT COMMITTEE

Rick DeMasters	Superintendent
Sara McCarter	Business Office Director
Emily Andrejack	Classroom Teacher
Chelsea Ashworth	Classroom Teacher
Melessa Barbknecht	Classroom Teacher
Kimberly Brinkerhoff	Classroom Teacher
April Covington	Classroom Teacher
Carol Hansen	Classroom Teacher
Tami Hoover	Classroom Teacher
Marcy Lykins	Classroom Teacher
Dollye Plagge	Classroom Teacher
Tammi Renfro	Classroom Teacher
Jennafer Smullin	Classroom Teacher
Vernique Stansberry	Classroom Teacher
Kelly Babb	Non-Classroom Professional
Tammy Bailey	Non-Classroom Professional
Melanie Starr	Non-Classroom Professional
Lauri Welch	Non-Classroom Professional
Chad Anderson	Parent
Jill McDonald	Parent
Kristi McCormick	Parent
Cleve Rasor	Community Representative
Lori Vaden	Business Representative