



NEW CANEY ISD

A SHINING STAR in TEXAS EDUCATION

District of Innovation Plan

2017-2022

I. INTRODUCTION

House Bill 1842, passed during the 84th Legislative Session, allows Texas public schools with sufficient academic ratings to obtain exemptions from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code. The allowable exemptions are for those sections of code that do not apply to charter or private schools in an attempt to reduce the extra administrative or operational burdens placed on public schools.

To obtain exemptions, the District must create a Local Innovation Plan detailing the code requirements that inhibit the goals of the District and the benefits to the District expected from the exemption.

II. Term

The term of the plan will begin with the 2017-2018 school year and terminate at the end of the 2021-2022 school year, unless amended, rescinded or renewed by the Innovation Committee and the Board of Trustees. The Innovation Committee will review the plan annually to confirm consistent alignment with the needs of the District. Any recommended plan changes will be posted to the District website for 30 days and require the approval of the Innovation Committee and the Board of Trustees.

III. Innovation Committee

The Innovation Committee developed this plan. It includes members representing the following:

- Brande Bass – Central Administration
- Matt Calvert – Central Administration
- Scott Castleberry – Central Administration
- Brandy Fain – Central Administration
- Steve Freeman – Central Administration
- Michelle Marable – Central Administration
- Trina Persson – Central Administration
- Karen Smithson – Central Administration
- Laura Sunosky – Central Administration
- Sandra Alanis – ELL Teacher
- Liz Argueta – Teacher
- Michelle Balow – Teacher
- Aldin Bellinfantie – Teacher
- Teresa Brent – Teacher
- Dawn Everton – Music Specialist
- Paul Froman – Asst. Principal
- Joseph Genovese – Teacher
- Lorinda Gonzalez – Site Manager – Lone Star College
- Kanon Gourault – Asst. Principal
- Erika Gutierrez – Asst. Principal
- Jeremy Harris – Principal
- Sarah Hesson – High School Teacher

- Scott Humes – The Learning Center Teacher
- Sybil Ibarra – Teacher
- Kelly Johnson – Parental Involvement Coordinator
- Maria Mather – Secondary Teacher
- Wendy Nash – Teacher
- Gabrielle Orentas – Teacher
- Andy Pearson – Principal
- Robbin Phelps – Coordinator of Special Programs
- Cathy Plymell – Teacher
- Jamie Siel – Teacher
- Megan Stivers – Secondary Teacher
- Kindy Tomhave – Asst. Principal
- Cathy Tooley – Media Specialist
- Sarah Yantis – Elementary Teacher
- John O’Brien – Parent
- Lynet Witty – Parent

IV. Timeline

March 27, 2017- 6:00pm Board Meeting

Board approved Resolution for district to consider designation as a District of Innovation

Posted notice of Public Hearing to consider whether district should develop an Innovation Plan

Public Hearing held at Board Meeting

Board appointed Innovation Committee

April 6, 2017 4:00pm (Annex LGI)

Innovation Committee meetings held with DLAC

May 15, 2017- 6:30pm Board Meeting

District of Innovation Plan approved by Board and sent to TEA

April 26, 2018 4:00pm (Annex LGI)

Innovation Committee meetings held with DLAC

District of Innovation Plan amended by DLAC

May 8, 2018- 6:00pm

District of Innovation Plan posted to NCISD website for 30 days for public comment

June 18, 2018- 6:00pm Board Meeting

District of Innovation Plan amendment presented to Board for approval

October 5, 2018

Innovation Committee email meeting held with DLAC and

District of Innovation Plan amended by DLAC

October 10, 2018

District of Innovation Plan posted to NCISD website for 30 days for public comment

November 12, 2018- 6:30pm Board Meeting

District of Innovation Plan approved by Board and sent to TEA

March 12, 2020 4:15pm (Instruction Hub)

Innovation Committee meetings held with DLAC

District of Innovation Plan amended by DLAC

March 16, 2020

Amended District of Innovation Plan posted to NCISD website for 30 days for public comment

May 18, 2020- 6:00pm Board Meeting

Amended District of Innovation Plan approved by Board and sent to TEA

V. **District Plan**

This Innovation Plan is guided by and aligned with the District's Vision and Mission.

Vision: Preparing our learning community for the REALITY of tomorrow

Mission: Graduate students who are equipped to thrive in the REALITY of their future

Priority Goal 1: Increase the achievement of all students and prepare all students for post-secondary education and the workplace through high quality student-centered programs.

Priority Goal 2: Provide a safe and orderly environment that promotes learning for all students.

Priority Goal 3: Engage in proactive planning and visioning to respond to the changing educational needs of the district and to maximize our resources.

Priority Goal 4: Increase opportunities for parent and community involvement in all educational processes of our district.

Core Values: We believe that our students and staff must be:

Responsible Citizens

- Respects and values individual rights, cultural diversity, and heritage
- Demonstrates self-discipline, honesty, respect, and integrity
- Initiates and accepts personal accountability
- Obeys the law and seeks appropriate and constructive means to affect change
- Maintains employability

Effective Communicators

- Communicates clearly and skillfully, using a variety of techniques and media
- Participates actively in social and political processes
- Listens sensitively and provides and accepts appropriate feedback
- Recognizes the benefits of communicating in more than one language
- Effectively and courageously advocates for self and others

Academically Prepared

- Proficient in reading, writing, math, social studies, and science
- Utilizes technology in personal, scholastic, vocational, and professional contexts
- Prepared to pursue college with competitive ACT/SAT/TSI scores
- Prepared to pursue post high school training and/or certification
- Possesses effective study skills
- Possesses 21st Century knowledge and skills to achieve a positive future

Lifelong Learners

- Takes healthy risks and learns from mistakes
- Recognizes that knowledge and skills must be acquired then applied in order to adapt to inevitable change
- Self-directed learner who continually seeks new avenues for personal and professional growth
- Maintains a balanced, healthy lifestyle

Interpersonal Collaborators

- Contributes to group efforts with ideas, suggestion, and hard work
- Demonstrates effective leadership skills by communicating ideas and motivating others
- Collaborates effectively with others from diverse backgrounds
- Recognizes, appreciates, and respects others' points of view
- Works toward consensus and negotiates appropriate solutions

Thinking with Innovation

- Perceives and assesses problems and challenges
- Demonstrates skills in organization, analysis, interpretation, evaluation, and flexibility
- Identifies alternatives for conflict resolution and problem-solving in a timely manner
- Employs higher order thinking and sound reasoning

Yes Minded!

- Intrinsically motivated and able to set high expectations for self and others
- Self-directed; establishes short and long term goals and perseveres to achieve them
- Leads, delegates, and collaborates in order to achieve a common goal

- Demonstrates wise time management skills

VI. Innovation Plan Items

Class Size Ratio

(TEC 25.112, 25.113 Local EEB)

Currently

Except as otherwise authorized by this section, a school district may not enroll more than 22 students in a kindergarten, first, second, third, or fourth grade class. A campus or district that is granted an exception under Section 25.112(d) from class size limits shall provide written notice of the exception to the parent of or person standing in parental relation to each student affected by the exception.

Proposed

The district would no longer have to submit annual class size waivers that are continuously approved by TEA and do multiple communications to parents each six weeks allowing the district to redirect resources more effectively. The district will strive to maintain established class size thresholds of 22 students to 1 teacher in grades Kindergarten - 4. The district will provide parents class size notifications at the start of the school year.

Uniform School Start Date

(TEC 25.0811) (TEC 25.0812) (EB LEGAL) (EB LOCAL)

Currently

Students may not begin school before the 4th Monday of August. For many years this was the rule, however, districts had the option of applying for a waiver to start earlier. The vast majority of districts applied for the waiver and would begin the 3rd Monday, some even going as early as the 2nd Monday. The Texas tourism groups lobbied to have this stopped because they believed it was hurting their tourism business. Therefore, several years ago the legislature took away all waivers and dictated that districts may not begin until the 4th Monday, with no exceptions

Proposed

This flexibility of start allows the district to determine locally, on an annual basis, what best meets the needs of the students and local community. This empowers the district to personalize learning, increase college and career readiness, and balance the amount of instructional time per semester. In addition, by having the flexibility in the start and end

time of the school year, students will be able to enroll in college courses that start in May and early June, thereby increasing college and career readiness.

Minimum Minutes of Instruction

(TEC 25.081) (EC Legal & EB Legal)

Currently

Starting in the 2018–2019 school year, HB 2442 of the 85th Texas Legislature, 2017, repealed the seven-hour school day requirement from the Texas Education Code (TEC) §25.082. The district is still required to provide at least 75,600 minutes of instruction. The bill also allows school districts to add minutes as necessary to compensate for minutes of instruction due to school closures by disaster, flood and extreme weather conditions. For half-day programs such as PK and PPCD the required minute requirement would be 32,400 minutes for both a morning and afternoon group of students in our 173 day calendar.

Proposed

The flexibility to adjust minutes of instruction will assist with personalizing learning to better meet individual student needs. It also has the added benefit of allowing the possibility of an altered length of a school day, which may include, for example, a later start/early release time which will accommodate additional professional development/collaboration opportunities for faculty and staff. Also, the district is proposing that we be allowed to offer a 195 minute day for half-day programs. This would allow each teacher to have a morning and an afternoon group of students along with their conference period and duty free lunch with the regular school day. This 195 minute exemption will result in the students receiving 32,400 minutes of instruction during their half-day program.

90 Percent Attendance Rule

(TEC 25.092) (FEC LOCAL)

Currently

State law currently requires students attend class 90 percent of the school days in order to earn credit. The law currently requires the District to award class credit to students based on “seat time” rather than content mastery.

Proposed

With innovative ways for students to learn using virtual classroom learning opportunities,

NCISD is proposing an exemption from the 90 “seat time” attendance rule. NCISD will strive to maintain a minimum 90% attendance percentage for traditional classes, while allowing flexibility in students demonstrating mastery of content through an innovative system and a more flexible pace.

Certification Requirements

(TEC 21.003) (DBA LEGAL) (DBA LEGAL, DK, LOCAL, DK EXHIBIT)

Currently

Texas Education Codes state that a person may not be employed as an educator by a school district unless the individual holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued by the appropriate state agency. In the event a school district cannot locate a certified teacher for a position, or a teacher is teaching a subject outside his or her certification, the district must request emergency certification from the Texas Education Agency and/or the State Board of Educator Certification. This system is burdensome and does not take into account the unique and/or instructional needs of the district, especially for areas of high demand where educators with those credentials may not be readily available.

Proposed

When a certified educator is not found for a high demand area, the campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request for a local certification that will allow a non-certified, yet highly qualified professional to teach a subject in a related field for which they are not credentialed by the state. The principal must specify in writing the reason submit to the superintendent a request for local certification that will allow a non-certified, yet submit to the superintendent a request for local certification that will allow a non-certified, yet highly qualified professional to teach a subject in a related field for which they are not credentialed by the state. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what qualifications the individual possesses to teach the proposed subject. Emergency or financial situations creating the need for this assignment should also be noted. In the event an uncertified educator or professional is assigned to a course/classroom, the superintendent will inform the Board of Trustees in accordance with district policy, procedure and practice. In the event an uncertified yet highly qualified educator or professional is assigned to a course/classroom, a Certification Completion Plan will be completed as a result of collaboration between the campus principal, teacher and Human Resources Department. A teacher certification waiver, state permit applications or other paperwork will not be submitted to TEA.

Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator

(TEC 37.0012) (FO LEGAL, FO LOCAL)

Currently

Senate Bill 107 requires the designation of a campus behavior coordinator on each campus. This designee is responsible for maintaining student discipline and the implementation of Chapter 37, Subchapter A.

Proposed

The proposal is for the District to abstain from the state requirement that each school have a designated campus behavior coordinator. NCISD's approach to discipline is more collaborative, with multiple people providing emotional and social support to students rather than just one person. Exemption from this requirement will allow the option of increasing collaboration in regard to student discipline.

Minimum Service Required

(TEC Sec. 21.401) (DC LEGAL and DEA LEGAL)

Currently

Texas Education Code 21.401(b) states an educator under a 10-month contract must provide a minimum of 187 days of service.

Proposed

With the passage of Texas Education Code 25.081 which changed the required days of instruction to minutes, the law did not address contract days for 10-month contract employees subject to TEC 21.401. The determination of how many days are required to fulfill an employee's contract should be a local decision. New Caney ISD will annually evaluate the number of contract days needed for teaching staff in that school year and each successive school year. The number of days will not exceed 187 and will be included in the district's compensation plan.

Group Health Benefits for District Employees

(TEC 22.004(i), 22.004(b), TEC 12A.004, Chapter 1579 of the Texas Insurance Code, Texas Administrative Code Title 19, Chapter 102, subchapter JJ, Section 102.1309, CRD (LEGAL), CRD (LOCAL)

Currently

TEC 22.004(i) states that a school district may not make group health coverage available to its employees pursuant to TEC 22.004(b) after the date a District implements the program of coverages provided under Chapter 1579 of the Texas Insurance Code. The current process allows no flexibility in the design of group health insurance benefits to fit the needs of all District employees. This provision also prohibits the District from procuring group health insurance benefits that may provide better coverages for its employees and at a lower cost.

Proposed

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