

McKinney Independent School District

Local Innovation Plan

Final Version

DISTRICT OF INNOVATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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INTRODUCTION

House Bill (HB) 1842, passed during the 84th Legislative Session, allows Texas school districts to pursue the designation of ‘District of Innovation,’ a provision that enables traditional independent school districts to access many of the flexibilities that are currently available to open-enrollment charter schools. House Bill 1842 was also intended to generate greater flexibility, local control, and innovation to better meet the needs of Texas students. Through the development and approval of a ‘Local Innovation Plan,’ a district may obtain certain exemptions from the Texas Education Code to advance their local strategic priorities.

On November 14, 2017, the McKinney ISD Board of Trustees officially launched the process of becoming a District of Innovation and later appointed a 17-member committee to write a Local Innovation Plan.

TIMELINE

Date	Action
November 14, 2017	McKinney ISD Board of Trustees approve resolution to initiate the process of becoming a District of Innovation.
December 19, 2017	McKinney ISD Board of Trustees hold public hearing to discuss becoming a District of Innovation and appoint District Advisory Committee (DAC) members.
January 16, 2018	District Advisory Committee (DAC) meeting
January 26, 2018	Local Innovation Plan posted online
February 20, 2018	District Advisory Committee (DAC) meeting
February 27, 2018	McKinney ISD Board of Trustees voted to approve Local Innovation Plan.
March 5, 2018	McKinney ISD submits Local Innovation Plan if approved to the Texas Education Agency.

DISTRICT CONTEXT

McKinney Independent School District (MISD) continues to be a premier public school system in Texas and the city itself has received national attention as a residential destination. McKinney consistently ranks among the 'Best Places to Live in America' according to Money Magazine and the school district was once again honored by the Dallas Business Journal as one of the 'Best Places to Work'. This fall, MISD welcomed nearly 25,000 students from early childhood through grade 12, serving them throughout its 32 campuses (an early childhood center, 20 elementary schools, 5 middle schools, 3 high schools, and 3 alternative school sites). To keep pace with demanding student growth, capital improvements are ongoing, with projects funded through a 2011 bond election completed and new projects now underway after voters overwhelmingly approved a 2016 bond referendum. The District is quite diverse, with a student population consisting of 50 percent White, 29 percent Hispanic, 13 percent African American, 4 percent Asian, and 4 percent Other. Nearly one third of the students [30 percent] are eligible for free or reduced lunch and 9 campuses offer Title I schoolwide programs. Within program supports, 11 percent qualify for special education, 11 percent are identified as limited English proficient (LEP), 25 percent participate in career and technical education (CTE), and 8 percent receive gifted and talented services (GT).

DISTRICTWIDE GOALS

Goal #1: McKinney ISD will ensure the faculty, staff, students, parents, and community believe that the school is safe and maximizes collaboration for the enhancement of student learning.

Goal #2: McKinney ISD will engage students in rigorous and relevant experiences that will prepare them for graduation and post-secondary success.

Goal #3: McKinney ISD will have structures and systems in place to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of educational programs to promote the teaching and learning process.

LOCAL INNOVATION PLAN

The term of the Local Innovation Plan will begin on July 1, 2018, and will end on June 30, 2023, unless terminated, amended, and/or renewed in accordance with the law.

The District proposes exemptions in the following areas:

Uniform School Calendar

Texas Education Code Section 25.0811 states that a school district may not begin instruction before the fourth Monday in August and Texas Education Code Section 25.0812 states that a school district may not schedule the last day of school before May 15. To better balance the school year such that the number of days in each semester is more evenly distributed, and each six weeks period is approximately six weeks in length, the District seeks flexibility to begin the school year before the fourth Monday in August. Local control of the instructional calendar affords the District the following advantages:

- More instructional days in advance of standardized assessments, such as Advanced Placement and STAAR exams;
- Additional instructional time after the last official day of school for students retaking a STAAR exam over the summer;
- Completion of fall semester exams before dismissing for Winter Break;
- Opportunity for students to take advantage of the full array of summer dual-credit offerings at institutions of higher education; and
- More balanced distribution of instructional time for one-semester coursework, as students who currently take a one-semester course in the fall have fewer instructional days to master course content than students who take the same one-semester course in the spring.

Teacher Certification

Texas Education Code Section 21.003 states in part that “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...” The current certification requirements prohibit the District from hiring professionals with industry experience to teach Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses if they do not hold the required certificate or permit under statute. Flexibility in teacher certification when high quality, certified teachers are not available in hard-to-fill and high-demand CTE areas offers the following advantages:

- Ability to hire instructors with industry experience that align to career and technical pathways offered to District students in grades 9 through 12; and
- Opportunity to increase the number of career and technical offerings to students in grades 9 through 12.