

2022
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PROMOTING EXCELLENCE • CREATING THE FUTURE

Calallen ISD as a District of Innovation

Districts of Innovation and Exemptions from Provisions of the Texas Education Code under House Bill 1842

This plan is specific to the exemptions as outlined. The district intends to follow the Texas Education Code in all other areas. If at some point it is decided that changes or additional exemptions should be considered, as per the Districts of Innovation process, the district will reconvene the District of Innovation Planning committee to explore the request.

House Bill 1842, passed in the 84th Texas Legislative Session, provides an opportunity for Texas public school districts to modify state requirements at the local level to better meet the needs of their unique student populations, in order to prepare them for success and lifelong learning. As a District of Innovation, Calallen ISD will be able to implement our Strategic Plan with the increased flexibility and freedom necessary to personalize learning experiences. An essential tenet of personalization is that every child experiences school differently. In a way, personalization provides a unique “school” for every child. Thus, we must have the ability to make important educational decisions for our students at the local level.

We must also be able to maximize our responsiveness to our district’s vision for the future. As we developed our Strategic Plan our community has been involved throughout the process, giving ongoing feedback on what they want for their children in order to prepare them to be positive contributors to the world, a world which is constantly changing. The same process will be followed as we prepare to be a District of Innovation. As we begin to transform our community’s dreams for their children into reality, we must be positioned to maximize the opportunities and minimize the barriers that could otherwise preclude us from doing our best work on their behalf.

Our Strategic Plan requires CISD to evolve and think radically differently about such critical systemic components as how we are organized, how we deliver instruction, how we recruit and retain top talent, how we engage and support our families, what experiences we provide, and how we grow continually as a learning organization. To think differently, we must be able to respond differently. Leveraging the limited freedom and flexibility afforded by the Districts of Innovation designation will assure we are empowered to do so.

Under HB 1842, districts may identify certain requirements imposed by the Texas Education Code (TEC) “that inhibit the goals of the plan and from which the district should be exempted on adoption of the plan. . .” Because CISD’s Strategic Plan and its local Innovation Plan are comprehensive and touch numerous areas in the TEC, and because CISD seeks to maximize local control of educational decisions for students, CISD seeks exemption from the following permissible provisions of the TEC as allowed in the statute.

- **90 Percent Attendance Rule**
- **Class Size Ratio**
- **Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator**
- **Discipline; Law and Order**
- **Inter-District Student Transfers**
- **Long Range Energy Plan to Reduce Consumption**
- **Minimum Minutes of Instruction and School Day Length**
- **Probationary Contracts**
- **School District Depositories and Contracts**
- **Site-based Decision-making**
- **Teacher Certification**
- **Unauthorized Persons**
- **Uniform Group Coverage Program (expiring as of September 1, 2022)**
- **Uniform School Start Date**

District of Innovation Renewal Committee 2021

1	Dr. Arturo Almendarez	Superintendent
2	Melissa Cardona	West Principal
3	Dr. Anita Danaher	District Administrator
4	Larissa Duke	CHS Counselor
5	Dr. Sonya Durrwachter	Special Education Director
6	Dr. Marcos Flores	HR Director
7	Lesleigh Lynes	CHS Librarian
8	Jenise Babcock	CMS Teacher
9	Melinda Barron	Wood River Principal
10	Emily Lorenz	Assistant Superintendent
11	Amy McClellan	CMS Instructional Dean
12	Stephanie Martinez	CHS Instructional Dean
13	Candy Morris	Data Analyst and Testing Coordinator
14	Dr. Roseanne Meyer	Curriculum Specialist; ESL/Bilingual
15	Jerry Pavelka	DEIC - Community
16	Dr. Rey Saenz	CMS Principal
17	Dr. Melana Silva	Curriculum Specialist; GT Coordinator
18	Jennifer Vincent	CHS Teacher
19	Lori Jo Walker	Strategic Planning - School Board
20	Charlyne Williams	DEIC - Parent

DOI Master Timeline

ORIGINAL DOI	
Board voted to pursue	December 12, 2016
DOI notice of intent sent to commissioner	January 10, 2017
Post on district website 30 days	January 10, 2017
DEIC approval	February 13, 2017
DOI Board approved	February 13, 2017
Final submission to commissioner	February 14, 2017
AMENDMENT 1 - Uniform Group Coverage Program	
Board voted to pursue	November 11, 2019
DEIC approval	November 12, 2019
DOI notice of intent sent to commissioner	November 13, 2019
Post on district website 30 days	November 13, 2019
DOI Board approved amendment	January 21, 2020
Final submission to commissioner	January 22, 2020
AMENDMENT 2 - Unauthorized Persons	
Board voted to pursue	February 10, 2020
DEIC approval	February 10, 2020
DOI notice of intent sent to commissioner	February 11, 2020
Post on district website 30 days	February 11, 2020
DOI Board approved amendment	April 13, 2020
Final submission to commissioner	April 14, 2020
AMENDMENT 3 - Inter-District Student Transfers	
Board voted to pursue	May 10, 2021
DEIC approval	May 10, 2021
DOI notice of intent sent to commissioner	May 11, 2021
Post on district website 30 days	May 11, 2021
DOI Board approved amendment	June 14, 2021
Final submission to commissioner	June 15, 2021
DOI 5-Year Renewal	
Public meeting notice posted	November 5, 2021
DEIC public meeting and plan approval	November 8, 2021
Board notifies commissioner of intent to adopt renewed plan	November 19, 2021
Post on district website 30 days	November 19, 2021
Board approved renewal of plan	January 10, 2022
Final submission to commissioner	January 11, 2022
Final version of DOI is posted to district website	January 12, 2022
DOI link is sent to TEA for posting on website	January 12, 2022

District of Innovation

The District of Innovation (DOI) concept was passed into law by the 84th Legislative Session in House Bill 1842, which created Texas Education Code chapter 12A.

Calallen ISD is pursuing the DOI designation due to the following benefits:

- **Flexibility:** Districts will have the flexibility to implement practices similar to open enrollment charter schools, including exemptions from certain mandates including the uniform school start date and required minutes of instruction.
- **Local control:** Districts decide which flexibilities best suit their local needs.

Autonomy: Districts must submit a district of innovation plan to the Texas Education Agency, but approval is not required.

What is a “District of Innovation”?

An exciting opportunity! A District of Innovation (DOI) is a concept passed by the 84th Texas Legislative that gives traditional independent school districts most of the flexibilities available to open enrollment charter schools, including exemption from many requirements mandated in the Texas Education Code. To create a DOI, a school district must adopt an innovation plan for its district.

Why choose a District of Innovation?

Freedom to make decisions about Calallen ISD at the local level. A local school district may want to pursue specific innovations in curriculum, instruction, governance, parent or community involvement, school calendar, budgeting, or other ideas. Essentially, innovation plans are about local control. Calallen ISD’s innovation plan will be unique to the school district and the community.

What impact could designation as a District of Innovation have on district policy?

Policy changes will correlate with innovation plan changes. As a DOI, revisions to local policies may be required as well as adjustments to legal policies to reflect that some legal provisions may be affected by the District’s innovation plan. As the innovation plan is sculpted by the committee, the District will evaluate necessary changes to Calallen ISD policies.

How long does an innovation plan stay in effect?

Hopefully as long as it benefits the District! Under current law, the plan may have a term of up to five years, and it may be amended, rescinded, or renewed during that time period.

Exemption from Laws?

What areas of flexibility can CISD consider in its District of Innovation journey?

A District of Innovation may adopt a plan that includes exemptions from most of the same state laws that are not applicable to open enrollment charter schools. These laws could include:

- Uniform school start date
- Class size ratio
- Minimum minutes of instruction
- The 90 percent attendance rule (but compulsory attendance still applies)

- Student discipline provisions (with some key exceptions, like the requirement to have a code of conduct and restrictions on restraint and seclusion)
- Teacher appraisal system
- Teacher certification (except as required by federal law)
- Teacher contracts
- Teacher benefits
- Site-based decision making processes (to the extent required by state law)

Not all of these possibilities will be right for Calallen ISD. It us up to the DOI committee to determine what laws to exempt ourselves from and which to leave in place.

Committee meetings will be open to the public, and we invite all members of our community to be part of this process.

Term

In accordance with TEC §12A.006, this Comprehensive Local Innovation Plan shall remain in effect for a period of five years (2022 through 2027 school years) unless terminated by the commissioner pursuant to TEC §12.A.008. Following adoption by the Board of Trustees, the Calallen ISD Comprehensive Local Innovation Plan for District of Innovation designation will be reported to the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

EXEMPTIONS REQUESTED

90 Percent Attendance Rule

(FEC LOCAL) (Ed. Code 25.092)

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 based on content mastery.

Proposed

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 extra/co-curricular activities, academic activities, or other extenuating circumstances. 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 CISD administrators to award credit to students because they can show they understand the concepts, rather than because they've attended a certain number of school days.

The proposal would allow counselors and administrators to refocus efforts on students who are truly at risk, while simultaneously providing rigor and relevance in the curriculum. 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 qualifying graduates. CISD will also explore other innovative ways to demonstrate mastery, given this exemption.

This exemption supports overarching goals in the strategic plan to implement tools, resources, and training that support personalized learning for both students and teachers.

Relief from Section 25.092 does not in any way impact or alter existing compulsory attendance requirements or University Interscholastic League ("UIL") rules. Moreover, opting out of Section 25.92 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.

Class Size Ratio

(EEB LEGAL) (Ed. Code 25.111, 25.112, and 25.113)

Currently

Kindergarten – 4th Grade classes are to be kept at a 22 student to 1 teacher ratio according to state law. When a class exceeds this limit, the district must complete a waiver with the Texas Education Agency. These waivers are never rejected by TEA. This is a bureaucratic step that serves no purpose. Along with the waiver, it is required that a letter is sent home to each parent in the section that exceeds the 22:1 ratio, informing them the waiver has been submitted. Many times soon after the waiver is submitted, students move out of the district and we are below the 22:1 ratio.

Proposed

While we certainly believe that small class size plays a positive role in the classroom, this must be balanced with the logistics of the timing of adding staff, and the best teacher-to-student ratio that can be achieved given the total number of students. We do not believe it has a negative effect when a district adds only one or two more students. Many times it is not the number of the students but the makeup and chemistry of the classroom which influence the learning environment. Most importantly, research clearly shows it is the teacher in the classroom that has the greatest impact on student learning, not absolute class size. In the event the class size exceeds the 22:1 ratio for Kindergarten – 4th grade classes, a TEA waiver will not be necessary, but the superintendent will report to the Board of Trustees for approval. In the event a K-4 core classroom reaches 25:1, the campus will notify the parents of the students in the classroom and inform them of the situation. This exemption only allows CISD the local control over class size ratios, not a disregard for the intent of the ratio requirements.

This plan also emphasizes the importance of flexible learning environments and student learning based upon student driven passions and needs. This grants flexibility in class size at all times-regrouping for success, small groups, large groups, etc. It also works to minimize paperwork requirements in order to free up time to place additional focus on student success. An exemption in meeting Texas Education Code (TEC), §25.112, will allow the ability to group students based academic, social, and emotional needs without adding ongoing filings of waivers when the need arises.

Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator

(FO LEGAL& LOCAL) (Ed. Code 37.0012)

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 seek exemption from the statute requiring each school to have a designated campus behavior coordinator. The relationships that are established between the campus administrator, counselor, student, and parent are the foundation for promoting and maintaining positive behavior. Utilizing a local district process allows the administrator who currently has a relationship with the parent and student to be the person to make parental contact. The administrator notifies the parent of discipline or behavior concerns, rather than having contact by a campus behavior coordinator, who may not know all the students, providing a much more individual and personal approach.

Discipline; Law and Order

(FOCA LEGAL) (Ed. Code 37.008)

Currently

TEC currently states “a DAEP shall be provided in a setting other than the students’ regular classroom. It may be located on or off a regular school campus.” Students occasionally need to stay connected to their courses such as a dual credit course, CTE course, or AP course.

There are barriers to learners always being able to take the course at the DAEP building. Relief from this law would look at rewording the location section of the policy to provide some exceptions for learners to be able to continue in specific courses in their regular classroom while assigned to DAEP.

Proposed

Exemption from this requirement will provide campus staff freedom in terms of choosing discipline techniques that best suit the situation and the student. This change will provide greater opportunities for academics (access to special education classes, some CTE courses, dual credit, and Advance Placement courses on campus). It is the district’s desire to allow students to maintain rigorous coursework while in a disciplinary placement and this exemption will allow the district to think about academics in a disciplinary placement in new ways.

Inter-District Student Transfers

(TEC §25.036) (FDA LEGAL, FDA LOCAL)

Currently

Under Texas Education Code 25.001, a district may choose to accept, as transfers, students who are not entitled to enroll in the district. Under TEC 25.036, a transfer is interpreted to be for a period of one school year and mid-year revocation is not permitted based on student discipline, attendance, or academic performance. Being granted a transfer to the district is a privilege and not a right; however, the district currently cannot remove transfer students based on failure to meet expected standards.

Proposed

Nonresident students who have been accepted as inter-district transfers may have such transfer status revoked by the Superintendent at any time during the school year if the student is assigned discipline consequences of suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion. Students that fail to meet the districts academic performance standards as well as meet the state's 90% attendance standard for a course may also be subject to immediate revocation of the transfer status.

Long Range Energy Plan to Reduce Consumption

(CL LEGAL) (Ed. Code 44.902)

Currently

The board of trustees is required to establish a long-range energy plan to reduce the district's annual electric consumption by five percent beginning with the 2008 state fiscal year and consume electricity in subsequent fiscal years in accordance with the district's energy plan.

Proposed

5% is an arbitrary number. It is a "one size fits all" law in an unrealistic situation. Energy consumption and savings are a building by building, district by district calculation. CISD actively and constantly seeks ways to decrease electric consumption. Therefore, the requirements to develop plans and other bureaucratic steps to meet this arbitrary goal are unnecessary.

Minimum Minutes of Instruction and School Day Length

(EC LEGAL & EB LEGAL) (Ed. Code 25.081, and 25.082)

Currently

House Bill (HB) 2610, passed by the 84th Texas Legislature, amends the Texas Education Code (TEC), §25.081, by striking language requiring 180 days of instruction and replacing this language with language requiring districts and charter schools to provide at least 75,600 minutes of instruction or 7 hours each day (including intermissions and recess). The bill also allows school districts and charter schools to add minutes as necessary to compensate for minutes of instruction lost due to school closures caused by disaster, flood, extreme weather conditions, fuel curtailment, or another calamity.

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 teachers to perfect their craft, deepen their content knowledge and analyze student data.

Probationary Contracts

(DCA LEGAL) (Ed. Code Chapter 21, Subchapter C)

Currently

For experienced teachers new to the district, the probationary period may not exceed one year if the person has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the previous eight years. A one-year probationary period is not sufficient to evaluate the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom since teacher contract renewal timelines demand that employment decisions be made prior to District receipt of state assessment results.

Proposed

Considering the initiatives and processes in CISD, this period of time may not be sufficient to evaluate the employee's effectiveness in the classroom since teacher contract timelines demand that employment decisions must be made prior to the availability of end-of-year classroom and student data. Upon exemption from TEC §21.102(b), all contract employees (including experienced teachers, counselors, or nurses new to the district) will be subject to the probationary period set out in TEC §21.102(c), in order to allow more time for the district to fairly and thoroughly assess an employee's performance.

School District Depositories Contract

(TEC §45.205, §45.206) (BDAE LEGAL, CDA LEGAL and CDA LOCAL)

Currently

Currently, the District must renew its depository contract every two years. The two-year contract term begins and ends in odd-numbered years. In accordance with the Texas Education Code, the District must use a uniform bid or proposal blank in the form prescribed by the State Board of Education.

Proposed

The District is seeking an exemption from TEC 45.205 and 45.206. By gaining exemption from these statutes, CISD would be able to allow the district's existing bank contract to be extended beyond the total 6-year allowable contract term if the district determines contract pricing remains competitive and there is no operational or financial reason to send the district's banking services out to bid. This exemption would lessen the administrative burden related to preparing and reviewing a Request for Proposal (RFP). In addition, this would further mitigate any impact to employees that would have to alter their direct deposit instructions and afford district flexibility with respect to local banking relationships. At the end of each two year term, the District and the depository bank may agree to extend the contract for an additional two year period. The District must review the contract to ensure the best value and support for the District and obtain Board approval for each extension and contract renewal. This exemption does not hinder the District's ability to release a formal procurement for depository contract services, in lieu of negotiating an extension to the existing bank contract, if deemed necessary based on operational or financial reasons.

Site-based Decision-Making

(BQ LEGAL& LOCAL, BQA LEGAL& LOCAL, BQB LEGAL& LOCAL) Ed.
Code 11.251, 11.252, 11.253, 11.255)

Currently

According to the [Site-based Decision Making Update 14: A Module of the Texas Education Agency \(TEA\) Financial Accountability System Resource Guide \(FASRG\)](#),

“Site-based decision making is a process for decentralizing decisions to improve the educational outcomes at every school campus through a collaborative effort by which principals, teachers, campus staff, district staff, parents, and community representatives assess educational outcomes of all students, determine goals and strategies, and ensure that strategies are implemented and adjusted to improve student achievement. The basic premise of site-based decision making is that the most effective decisions are made by those who will actually implement the decisions.” The implementation process for site-based decision making occurs at two levels – district and campus. From a district standpoint, perhaps the guide says it best, *“The belief is that people involved at the campus level have a greater opportunity to identify problems, develop problem resolution and change strategy than people located off-campus. Site-based decision making concepts also recognize that people at the campus level are more likely to internalize change and to support its implementation if they are involved in the decision making than if they are not.”*

And research would show this to be the case, but most notably and noticeably at the “campus level” and particularly with the principal and teacher leadership working collaboratively. According to the FASRG, “To implement the process at the district level, administration should consider the following critical success factors [which include, but are not limited to]:

- *Extensive and continuous training prior to and during implementation within the school district. Training should include, but not be limited to, developing skills on consensus building, brainstorming, problem solving, managing change and interpersonal communication skills such as conflict resolution, value clarification, and negotiation.*
- *An extensive amount of time will be spent changing role definitions, training school district staff, educating the community, establishing objectives, developing and implementing programs and monitoring program success.”*

*“Extensive and continuous training” and “an extensive amount of time” would indeed be necessary for all stakeholders, but is it practical? According to Sec. 11.252, (e), “The district-level committee established under Section 11.251 shall hold **at least one public meeting per year.**” Calallen ISD board policy BQA (LOCAL) further states, “The chairperson of the council shall set its agenda and shall schedule **at least four meetings per year**; additional meetings may be held at the call of the chairperson.” Currently, Calallen ISD holds six meetings yearly. However, considering the education code and board policy require members to address, at a minimum, the areas of planning, budgeting, curriculum, staffing patterns, staff development, school organization as well as a host of other responsibilities identified in additional sections of the education code; one (or even six) meetings is insufficient to discuss the required topics much less have sufficient (or “extensive”) training to equip members to have meaningful dialogue and input. Consider the amount of “extensive training” it would require a classroom teacher representative to endure to have the knowledge to offer constructive feedback on the district budget. Frankly, not only is it unfathomable, it isn’t reasonable to expect such a far-reaching viewpoint. **If trained to address all the areas listed in law, “extensive training” would become “excessive training.”** If a district went so far as to provide this level of training, it could be rendered pointless. Board policy BQA (LOCAL), states, “The council shall serve exclusively in an advisory role except that the council shall approve staff development of a Districtwide nature.” Therefore, any recommendation made by a well-informed committee could be deemed unusable and the investment of time for naught.*

While all stakeholders are represented, it is often a difficult task for parent, community, and business reps to offer a voice in a broad sense. Although each offers perspective, feedback is typically more representative of individual perspective than as an advocate for those in similar roles (i.e. a business rep should ideally speak on behalf of local businesses based on feedback from other business members). Over time, both district- and campus-level parents of students enrolled in the district, community members, and business and industry representatives have expressed concerns feeling they had little to contribute to the overall conversation in the traditional format of these committees. Because so much is to be considered as a part of the district and campus improvement plan (including federal and state law), leaders (both principals and teacher leaders) must have deep conversation prior to the site-based management committee meetings. As a result, the committee is merely a rubber-stamp committee with considerable de jure power but little de facto power.

In addition a comprehensive needs assessment, measurable performance objectives, strategies, resources (including staff), and evaluative measures, the number of strategies mandated in Sec. 11.252 are excessive and bring to mind the exhaustive list of the ever increasing burden on America's public schools (<http://www.jamievollmer.com/pdf/the-list.pdf>) crafted by author Jamie Vollmer. Mandates include, but are not limited to,

- *instructional methods for addressing the needs of student groups not achieving their full potential;*
- *methods for addressing the needs of students for special programs, such as*
 - *suicide prevention,*
 - *conflict resolution,*
 - *violence prevention, or*
 - *dyslexia treatment programs;*
 - *dropout reduction;*
 - *integration of technology in instructional and administrative programs;*
 - *discipline management;*
 - *staff development for professional staff of the district;*
 - *career education to assist students in developing the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for a broad range of career opportunities; and*
 - *accelerated education;*
- *strategies for providing to middle school, junior high school, and high school students, those students' teachers and counselors, and those students' parents information about:*
 - *higher education admissions and financial aid opportunities;*
 - *the TEXAS grant program and the Teach for Texas grant program established under Chapter 56;*
 - *the need for students to make informed curriculum choices to be prepared for success beyond high school;*
 - *and sources of information on higher education admissions and financial aid;*
- *goals and objectives for the coordinated health program at the campus based on:*
 - *student fitness assessment data, including any data from research-based assessments such as the school health index assessment and planning tool created by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;*
 - *student academic performance data;*
 - *student attendance rates;*

- *the percentage of students who are educationally disadvantaged;*
- *the use and success of any method to ensure that students participate in moderate to vigorous physical activity as required by Section 28.002(1); and*
- *any other indicator recommended by the local school advisory council.*

While the components to be addressed are critical, the district has other means to address these matters.

*Research demonstrates “great leaders realize they can execute only two or three goals with excellence at one time. There will always be more good ideas than the capacity to execute.” Jim Collins, author of **Good to Great** said, “The enemy of the great is the good. Organizations have to say no to good ideas. The law of diminishing return shows when an organization has two to three goals, it is likely to achieve the goals. With four to ten goals, the organization is likely to only achieve one to two; and it is unlikely to achieve any of the goals when there are more than ten goals.” Therefore, these mandates are antithetical.*

Proposed

Calallen ISD is claiming exemption from the specific provisions of Sec. 11.251 – 11.255 and shall determine the processes and memberships of its site-based management committees. While Calallen ISD will continue to develop district and campus improvement plans based upon a comprehensive needs assessment, the district is claiming exemption from the specific mandates of these sections and shall determine the contents of its plans while honoring federal mandates that cannot be excluded. Regardless of whether any adjustments or changes are made to site-based decision-making rules and laws, Calallen ISD believes this issue to be a local decision as opposed to a state mandate.

Teacher Certification

(DBA LEGAL, DBA LOCAL, DK LEGAL, DK LOCAL, DK EXHIBIT) (Ed. Code 21.003, 21.053, 21.057, and 19 TAC Chapter 231)

Currently

In the event a district cannot locate a certified teacher for a position or a teacher is teaching a subject outside of their certification, the district must submit a request to the Texas Education Agency. TEA then approves or denies this request. In certain circumstances, a district can use a local one-year permit.

Proposed

Calallen ISD is committed to placing the right teacher in every classroom. In order to best serve CISD students, decisions on certification will be handled locally. With the current teacher shortage, this exemption from teacher certification requirements will enable greater flexibility in staffing, and will enrich applicant pools in specific areas of need. The district’s exemption from TEC Section 21.003 would allow the district to consider part-time professionals to teach courses, allow industry expert professional to transition into the teacher profession in Career and Technology, and also assist in staffing high need STEAM and dual credit course offerings. Often there are experienced certified teachers in our district that could teach a course outside of their certification area due to their education, background, and/or experience. Local decisions outside of state certification requirements would allow innovation and flexibility in scheduling to meet student needs. This proposal will provide more flexibility in our scheduling and more options for our student in class offerings. The district shall establish local criteria for training and locally certifying individuals rather than adhere strictly to mandates outlined in TEC Section 21.053. In doing so, parental notification of “inappropriately certified or uncertified teachers” under TEC Section 21.057 would no longer be necessary.

Unauthorized Persons: Refusal of Entry, Ejection, Identification

Texas Education Code: §37.105; Related Board Policies: GKA (LEGAL) and GKA (LOCAL)

Currently

A district must maintain a record of each verbal warning issued under §37.105 (a) (2) (A), including the name of the person to whom the warning was issued and the date of issuance. At the time a person is refused entry to or ejected from a school district's property under Section 37.105, the district must provide the person a written information explaining how to appeal. Each school board must adopt a policy that uses the district's existing grievance process to permit a person ejected or denied entry to address the Board of Trustees in person within 90 days of the commencement of the appeal, unless the appeal is granted sooner.

Proposed

Texas Education Code §37.105 includes a process for ejecting or denying entry to a visitor who presents a substantial risk of harm or behaves in a manner inappropriate for the school setting. To better ensure the safety and security of students and staff in Calallen ISD, we propose that the District not be required to maintain a record of each verbal warning of potential removal from district property/facilities, nor be required to provide written information explaining the appeal process to those who have been refused entry to district property/facilities or removed from district property/facilities. The District currently attempts to provide written notice to persons who are subject to potential refusal for entry or for removal from district property/facilities. Should an exemption from TEC §37.105 be granted, the District shall continue to provide written notice to persons who are subject to potential refusal for entry or for removal from district property/facilities in situations where the administrator on site feels it is reasonable and safe to do so. Campus and District administrators, as well as school resource officers and District police officers if applicable, may refuse to allow a person to enter or may eject a person from property under the District's control in accordance with law. An appeal notice must be filed with the Superintendent, in writing, and submitted to the Administration Office for review.

Uniform Group Coverage Program

Texas Education Code: §22.004(i); Related Board Policies: CRD (LEGAL) and CRD (LOCAL)

The Uniform Group Coverage Program portion of Calallen ISD's DOI will expire on September 1, 2022, per the provisions included in the 87th Texas Legislative Session Senate Bill 1444.

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 Calallen ISD 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. This provision is in direct contradiction to the wishes of the Calallen ISD Board of Trustees who represent community interests in this matter.

Texas Education Code 22.004 is not in any of the prohibited exemptions that can be included in a District's local innovation plan pursuant to Texas Education Code 12A.004 and the list of the Commissioner's prohibited exemptions in Texas Administrative Code Title 19, Chapter 102, subchapter JJ, Section 102.1309.

Proposed

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

Uniform School Start Date

(EB LEGAL) (Ed. Code 25.0811)

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 detrimental to the 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 date allows the district to determine locally, on an annual basis, what best meets the needs of the students and local community. This empowers us 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 of the school year, students will be able to enroll in college courses that start in early June, thereby increasing college and career readiness. Removing the uniform start date could also let the CISD start classes as a short week, easing the transition for students entering kindergarten, middle school, and high school. This will also allow for more flexible professional development opportunities for our staff.

Summary:

The direction provided by this District of Innovation Plan is an important step forward to ensure CISD develops and supports our students, employees and families in a more personalized, more effective, and strategically aligned way. Moving our system toward the more personalized environment our students deserve will enable us to better prepare them according to their individualized needs and their unique passions, gifts, and talents. Through HB 1842, CISD will be positioned to leverage increased flexibility to make the best decisions for our children because we will be able to make them locally.

In most cases, activation of exemptions from the TEC will require the revision of CISD policies. CISD will implement an enhanced local policy development process that is rigorous, transparent, and inclusive of stakeholder input through the District Education Improvement Committee (DEIC). The district has developed and communicated a detailed implementation plan for the current Strategic Plan; a similar process will occur with the District of Innovation Plan and it will be seamlessly implemented as part of the Strategic Plan.

We are grateful to the legislators who championed Districts of Innovation through HB 1842 and to Commissioner Morath and his team for expediting rules to help implementation. We are committed to the children of our community and pledge to implement this plan with their best interests at heart.