

Industrial ISD

Final Proposed Local Innovation Plan for 2022-2023 through 2026-2027

Introduction

House Bill 1842, passed during the 84th Legislative Session, permits Texas public school districts the opportunity to become Districts of Innovation and to obtain exemption from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code. In an effort to transform systemic improvement to better serve and accommodate the diverse needs of all stakeholders, including students, staff, parents, and community members, Industrial ISD seeks to renew our District of Innovation status. This distinction allows the district to continue to function with increased local control over operations to improve the quality of services benefiting all stakeholders.

A resolution to start the initial process of the Industrial ISD becoming a District of Innovation was adopted by the Board of Trustees on December 12, 2016 during their regular board meeting. On October 18, 2021 the IISD School Board approved the continuing our District of Innovation status and appointed a District of Innovation Team (DIT) charged with updating our cohesive local innovative plan to improve the outcomes of all stakeholders. The DIT met on November 2, 2021 to discuss and draft the plan, and a public meeting to approve the final proposed plan was held on 11/11/2021.

The Industrial ISD Local Innovation Plan is for five years, beginning in the 2022-2023 school year and ending in the 2026-2027 school year. This plan may be terminated or amended by the Board of Trustees at any time in accordance with the law. The DIT will monitor the effectiveness of the plan and provide updates and/or necessary modifications to the Board of Trustees on a regular basis.

Plan

With regard to each area of innovation, the District declares exemption from the listed statutory provisions, as well as any implementing rules or regulations promulgated pursuant to those statutory provisions by state agency or entity, including but not limited to the Commissioner of Education, Texas Education Agency, State Board for Educator Certification, and the State Board of Education.

I. Teacher Certification

Exemption from: TEC21.003; TEC 21.053; TEC 21.057

Relevant Board Policies: DBA Legal/Local; DK Legal/Local, DK Exhibit

This exemption from the state teacher certification requirements that inhibit the IISD's ability to hire teachers for hard-to-fill teaching positions will allow the district to establish local qualifications and training requirements. This exemption directly supports the move from "highly qualified" requirements in the Every Student Succeeds ACT (ESSA). (Special Education and Bilingual/ESL teachers must continue to be SBEC certified)

Current guidance:

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 an emergency certification request to the Texas Education Agency and/or State Board for Educator Certification. TEA then approves or denies this request.

There is a lot of bureaucracy and unnecessary paperwork involved in the process and does not consider the unique financial and/or instructional needs of the district.

Innovation Strategies:

- IISD will have the flexibility to hire external or internal applicants that do not have the traditional state certifications. The District will make every attempt to hire individuals with the appropriate certification for the position in question; however, where that is not reasonably possible, the District will have the flexibility to hire individuals who are knowledgeable in the area and are equipped to effectively perform the duties of the position in question. This will enrich applicant pools in specific content areas if certified teachers are not available to teach those courses.
- The campus principal may submit a request to the superintendent for a local certification that will allow an already certified teacher to teach a course or grade level for which he/she is not certified. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document the credentials or life experience the teacher possesses that would qualify this individual to teach the proposed subject.
- An individual with experience in the content of an elective course could be eligible to teach a vocational skill or elective course through a local teaching certificate. This exemption will afford the District the flexibility to hire a professional in certain trades or vocations to teach the crafts of those trades or vocations (such as welding, fine arts, health services, law, etc.) if certified teachers are not available to teach those courses.

II. Probationary Contracts

Exemption from: TEC 21.102(b)

Relevant Board Policies: DCA Legal

This exemption will allow the district more time to assess the effectiveness of a teacher before having to make decisions on their contract. The district will be able to focus more on building teacher capacity with the knowledge that decisions don't have to be made within one year. They can be made using more appropriate timelines to ensure the highest quality educator in Industrial.

Current Guidance:

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 contract 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.

Innovation Strategies:

- For experienced teachers, counselors, or nurses new to the district that have been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight previous years, a probationary contract may be issued for up to two years. All other teachers hired in the District may remain on probationary status for three years, and may be issued a fourth year of probation in accordance with TEC 21.102(c).

III. School Start and End Date

Exemption from: TEC 25.0811; TEC 25.0812

Relevant Board Policies: EB Legal

This exemption allows IISD to be more intentional with our calendar in order to meet the needs of our students, and our community. This flexibility allows us to adjust as needed for staff development, actual school days, and teacher start and end dates.

Current Guidance:

TEC25.0811 states that a school district may not begin student instruction before the 4th Monday of August. TEC 25.0812 states that a school district may not schedule the last day of school before May 15th. The current process allows no flexibility in the design of annual calendars to fit the needs of the community or the wishes of the local Board of Trustees who represent the community interests in this matter.

Previously, districts had the option of applying to TEA for a waiver to start earlier, even as early as the 2nd Monday in August. The Texas tourism groups lobbied to have this stopped because they believed it was hurting the tourism business. Therefore, several years ago the legislature took away all waivers and dictated that districts may not begin until the 4th Monday of August, with no exceptions.

Innovative Strategies:

- Relief from the statute will allow IISD to develop a calendar that best meets the needs of the students and local community and addresses student instruction and focused professional development in conjunction with the new instructional minute's requirement, rather than days.
- Empowers IISD to personalize learning, increase college and career readiness, and balance the amount of instructional time per semester.
- Provide increased local control of the instructional calendar in order to be responsive to the community needs.

IV. Class Size Ratio

Exemption from: TEC 25.112; TEC 25.113

Relevant Board Policies: EEB Legal/Local

This exemption allows us to avoid communications that can create confusion. When class sizes fluctuate, there are times when our numbers are back down before the required parental notification has even reached the homes. With this exception we are able to choose when it's appropriate to communicate these changes with our community, rather than being required to every time numbers fluctuate.

Current Guidance:

TEC 25.112 requires districts to maintain a class size of 22 students or less per teacher for Kindergarten-4th Grade classes. When any class exceeds this limit, the district must complete and file a waiver with TEA.

While these waivers are never rejected by TEA, this is a bureaucratic step that serves no purpose.

TEC 25.113 requires school districts to notify parents of waivers or exemptions to class size limits. In many cases, the class has returned to a smaller student to teacher ratio before the waiver is even approved, negating the need for this notice.

Innovative Strategies:

- Industrial ISD believes in a low student to teacher ratio in all of its classrooms. Small class sizes enable effective teachers to provide more individualized attention to each student.
- IISD will begin each school year with enough teachers to establish a student to teacher ratio of at least 22:1 or less in each K-4 homeroom class. In the event that any class size exceeds this ratio during the year, the superintendent will report this information to the Board of Trustees. Decisions regarding appropriate student to teacher ratios, and the notification of parents will be made at the local level, taking into consideration the age and grade level of the students, the subject matter of the class, the needs of the individual teachers and student groups, and the availability of additional instructional staff members.
- A TEA waiver request will not be filed when a K-4 classroom exceeds the 22:1 ratio.

V. Minimum Service Required - Teacher Contract Days

Exemption from: TEC 21.401

Relevant Board Policies: DEA (LEGAL)

This exemption allows IISD the option to decrease teacher contract days from 187 to as low as 184 in order to match the current school calendar and district needs.

Current Guidance:

TEC 21.0401 Requires districts to have; (a) a contract between a school district and an educator must be for a minimum of 10 months' service, and (b) An educator employed under a 10-month contract must provide a minimum of 187 days of service.

Innovative Strategy:

- Industrial ISD proposes to have the flexibility to decrease contract days from 187 days to 184 days, and will maintain the flexibility to further decrease or increase the teacher contract days prior to each school year dependent upon each academic school calendar and district needs.
- Any decrease is not intended to have any effect on teacher annual compensation, though may result in an increase to a teacher's daily rate of pay.
- This added flexibility allows the district to better align teacher contract days to the minutes calendar (as opposed to the previous days calendar). Teacher contract days for each school year will be determined upon approval of the academic calendar by the school board.

VI. Transfer Students

Exemption from: TEC 25.036

Relevant Board Policies: FDA(LOCAL)

This exemption allows IISD to revoke a student transfer prior to the completion of the school year based on certain criteria in the areas of academics, attendance, and/or discipline.

Current Guidance:

TEC 25.036 requires a student transfer to be for a period of one school year regardless of any issues that may come up with the student as far as academic, attendance, or behavioral concerns.

Innovative Strategy:

- Industrial ISD is pleased with the fact that at times, out of district families wish to have their children attend the schools in our district. It is our belief that high standards in all areas are part of why these transfers occur. In order to maintain our high standards, it is proposed that we allow for the revocation of student transfers at any time in the year after 1 warning in the areas of academics, attendance, and/or discipline.
- The warning does not have to be for the same infraction as the action that may result in the transfer being revoked.
- A transfer may be revoked with no warning for any discipline infraction that results in a mandatory DAEP or expulsion placement.

VII. DAEP Requirement of a Certified Teacher

Exemption from: TEC 37.008

Relevant Board Policies:

This exemption allows IISD to manage our DAEP program with a Paraprofessional in the event that we are unable to staff it with a full-time certified teacher, as well as allowing us to utilize the DAEP in conjunction with our In-School Suspension program for both the High School and Jr. High.

Current Guidance:

TEC 37.008 requires students who are placed in a Disciplinary Alternative Educational Program (DAEP) to be separate from their regular instructional setting, be under the supervision of a certified teacher and not be allowed to be with other students who are not in the program.

Innovative Strategy:

- Industrial ISD seeks the flexibility that would come from utilizing non-certified para-professionals to provide continuous supervision to DAEP students. If this should happen, the non-certified paraprofessional will be trained in behavior management techniques and a certified teacher will assist the DAEP instructor for at least 60 minutes per day for classroom instruction.
- This exemption will also allow students who are in other disciplinary instructional arrangements such as In School Suspension or Time-Out to be housed with DAEP students and supervised by the same DAEP personnel.

DISTRICT INNOVATION TEAM (DIT)

1. Ross Aschenbeck, Superintendent
2. Clark Motley, Director of Finance
3. Heather Nairn, High School Principal
4. Brandon Karl, Junior High School Principal
5. Lisa Baughman, East Elementary Principal
6. Stacey Bain, West Elementary Principal

TIMELINE

Month	Activity/Task	Completion Date
October 2021	Board Meeting - Move to proceed with DOI plan in place and approve committee for renewal process	10/18/2021
November/21	DIC meets to review/revise DOI plan fo renewal	11/2/2021
November/December 2021	Public Meeting - DIC hosts a public meeting to present the final proposed plan.	11/11/2021 11 AM
November/December 2021	Board Meeting – IISD Board of Trustees discusses the process for moving forward. Final proposed plan posted to website. Notification sent to the commissioner of intent to renew our plan. (Plan posted for 30 days) Via e-mail: (Commissioner@tea.texas.gov) cc: (Accred@tea.texas.gov) or Letter: Texas Education Agency Attn: Accreditation 1701 N. Congress Ave. Austin, Texas 78701	11/8/2021
December/January 2021/2022	Board Meeting – Board approves plan by $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote.	1/10/2022
January, 2022	District notifies Commissioner of approval of the plan and lists our TEC exemptions, Post and maintain renewed plan online, Send plan to TEA within 15 days of adoption of renewal.	1/13/2022

Relevant education code for DOI Amendment:

§102.1313. Amendment, Rescission, or Renewal.

(a) A district innovation plan may be amended, rescinded, or renewed if the action is approved by a majority vote of the district-level committee established under the Texas Education Code (TEC), §11.251, or a comparable committee if the district is exempt from that section, and a two-thirds majority vote of the board of trustees.

(1) Amendment. An amendment to an approved plan does not change the date of the term of designation as an innovation district. Exemptions that were already formally approved are not required to be reviewed.

(2) Rescission. A district must notify the Texas Education Agency within five business days of rescission and provide a date at which time it will be in compliance with all sections of the TEC, but no later than the start of the following school year.

(3) Renewal. During renewal, all sections of the plan and exemptions shall be reviewed and the district must follow all components outlined in §102.1307 of this title (relating to Adoption of Local Innovation Plan).

(b) The district shall notify the commissioner of education of any actions taken pursuant to subsection (a) of this section along with the associated TEC exemptions and local approval dates.

Statutory Authority: The provisions of this §102.1313 issued under the Texas Education Code, §§12A.001-12A.009.

Source: The provisions of this §102.1313 adopted to be effective September 13, 2016, 41 TexReg 7089.

Notification on your DOI process is required at two points:

1) Prior to the board of trustees' vote on the adoption of a proposed innovation plan (TEC §12A.005 (a)(2), TAC §102.1307(a)(2)) the board must notify the commissioner of education on their intent to vote; and

2) the district shall notify the commissioner of board of trustee's approval of the plan along with list of approved exemptions by completing the agency form in TAC §102.1307(d).

What forms are necessary for my DOI?

- Resolution – the agency has no defined form for the resolution. Please consult with your legal counsel regarding your local policies. In addition, TASB has a sample resolution available on their website for reference.
- DOI Plan – As each district's local innovation plan should be developed specifically for their local needs and provide exemptions that inhibit the goals of their plan, there is no standard template. Please note the requirements of a local innovation plan per TEC 12A.003, which must provide for a comprehensive educational program for the district and identify the specific TEC exemptions that inhibit the goals of the plan.
- Notice of Intent to Vote - the agency has no defined form for the notice of intent to vote. Please note per TEC §12A.005 and TAC §102.1307, the Board of Trustees may not vote on the adoption of the proposed plan unless they have provided notice of intent to vote to the commissioner.
- Notice of Approval of Plan – the district must notify the commissioner of their plan adoption and provide the list of approved exemptions by completing the agency form in TAC §102.1037(d). This list must match the exemptions claimed within your plan. For additional exemptions that do not appear on the agency form, please be sure to include the allowable TEC section and subsection as appropriate in the "Other" section at the end of the form. o In addition, please provide a link to your final plan available on your website as plans are linked to on the Agency DOI website. o Confer with your local counsel on other records or documents to maintain according to your local policies.

How do we provide DOI notices to the Commissioner? A district may send notices by email to commissioner@tea.texas.gov and cc accred@tea.texas.gov. Alternatively, you may mail your notices to the commissioner's office at 1701 N. Congress, Austin, Texas 78701. 5. D