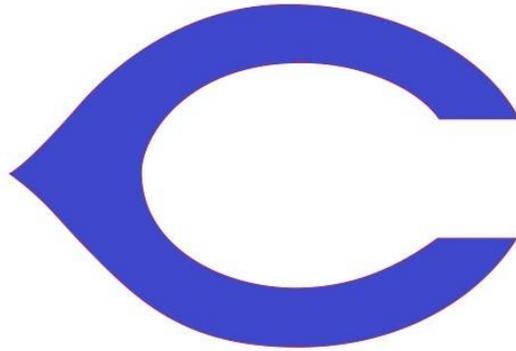


Clarksville ISD



District of Innovation Plan July 2021 – June 2026 proposed

Dr. Kermit D. Ward – 1500 West Main Street – Clarksville, Texas 75426 – 903-427-3891 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.

Potential benefits of becoming a District of Innovation include:

- **Flexibility:** Districts will have the flexibility to implement practices similar to 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 commissioner of education, but approval is not required.

[District of Innovation Timeline](#)

December 15, 2016	CISD Board of Trustees (Board) passed a Resolution to explore the development of a District of Innovation Plan
December 15, 2016	The Board of Trustees appointed a District Improvement Committee to act as DOI Committee comprised of diverse leaders representing a cross-section of the District's stakeholders including teachers, principals, parents, community members and administrators.
January 12, 2017	The District Improvement Committee met to discuss and draft the Local Innovation Plan.
January 19, 2017	The Committee representative and the Board of Trustees met to conduct a public forum and accept input on the proposed District of Innovation Plan.
January 19, 2017	The Board of Trustees approved the District's Innovation Plan with effective date of July 1, 2017.
January 20, 2017	The Innovation Plan was posted on the school webpage.
April 20, 2021	The Committee met to discuss the current plan and approved recommendations to the renewal of the plan.
June 24, 2021	The Board of Trustees holds public meeting with the intent to renew proposed plan.
June 24, 2021	The Board of Trustees plans to renew proposed plan.
June 25, 2021	Renewed Innovation Plan will be posted to the school webpage.

TERM

**The renewed District of Innovation Plan will become effective in July 2021 and will remain in effect for five years, through June 2026, 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 appoint a new committee to consider and propose additional exemptions in the form of an amendment to the Plan. Any amendment adopted by the Board will not extend the term of this Plan. The District may not implement two separate plans at any one time.

District of Innovation

I. First Day of Instruction

Exemption from: TEC Section 25.0811

Under the current regulations, CISD may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.

Proposed:

Determine a school district calendar that best meets the needs of students, families, and teachers. Annually, members of the District Improvement Committee (DIC) will develop draft calendars, gather feedback from each school community, and conduct a school community vote.

Reasoning:

Exemption from the first day of instruction mandate may enable CISD to begin the school year on an abbreviated week, easing the transition for students entering kindergarten, intermediate school, and high school.

As part of the CISD Local Innovation Plan, draft calendars will continue to be developed, shared, and feedback gathered from members of the CISD school communities. Additionally, the District Education Improvement Committee will fully examine all input before making a final recommendation to the Superintendent.

II. Teacher Certification

Exemption from: TEC 21.003/21.056

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:

The campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request to allow a certified teacher to teach one subject out of their certified field. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses which qualify this individual to teach this subject.

An individual with experience in a CTE field or demonstrated competency in the subject area could be eligible to teach a vocational skill or any course (where the district has been unable to find a qualified, certified individual), through a local teaching certificate. The principal will submit the request to the superintendent with all the individual's credentials.

The superintendent will then approve the request based on the following qualifications to include but not limited to:

1. College Degree – courses taken
2. Professional work experience
3. Formal training and education
4. Combination of work experience, training, and education
5. Demonstration of successful experience working with students
6. How can individual best fit needs of our students

The superintendent will then report this action to the Board of Trustees prior to the individual beginning any employment. Local teaching certificates will be for one year. The employee will be at-will yet paid on the teacher pay scale.

Reasoning:

In order to best serve CISD students, decisions on certification will be handled locally. Districts in rural areas have difficulty attracting and retaining certified staff while trying to provide a curriculum that offers students with a variety of courses. There is a lot of bureaucracy and unnecessary paperwork involved in the process which hinders the Districts ability to plan effectively. This change will allow more flexibility in our scheduling and more options for our students in classes offered.

III. Teacher Contract Days

Exemption from: TEC 21.401

Education Code Chapter 21 Teacher Contracts defines a teacher contract as a ten month contract equivalent to 187 days.

Proposed

All 187 day contracts will allow for 5 Flex days that will be designated by the District Improvement Committee School Calendar committee.

Reasoning:

Clarksville ISD would have the freedom to consider the reduction in contract days to better align with the 75,600 minutes required of students. The District would reduce all 187 day employee contracts to 182 days. Compensation would still be figured on original the original 187 contract days.

A recent change in school law has converted required student instructional and attendance days to 75,600 minutes. This change has resulted in the possibility of decreasing the number of days students must attend school, but does not address a similar need to decrease the number of days required for teachers *if* a district deems it appropriate to do so.

REASONING

- The proposal would better align the number of teacher days to the 75,600 minutes required of students
 - Reduces teacher contract days from 187 to a decreased length with no effect on teacher salaries
- The proposal would increase the daily rate the district pays teachers.
- Enhances teacher recruitment
- Improves teacher morale

IV. Teacher and Principal Evaluation

TEC Section 21.352 / 21.3541

The commissioner by rule shall establish and shall administer a comprehensive appraisal and professional development system for principals and appraisals of teachers. Each school district shall use the appraisal process and performance criteria developed by the commissioner. (T-TESS and T- PESS)

Proposed:

CISD will use the T-TESS and T-PESS appraisal system to appraise teachers and principals. The district will utilize the T-TESS component in DMAC, a web-based tool that will allow it to meet all appraisal system requirements mandated by the state.

CISD will utilize the DMAC T-TESS component to do document walkthroughs and to meet the mandated teacher appraisal requirements.

All eligible teachers would be evaluated a minimal of once every three years.

Probationary teachers would be evaluated every year.

Principals will continue to be evaluated annually.

Reasoning:

The Texas Principal Evaluation and Support System (T-PESS) was recommended for Principal evaluations starting in the 2016-2017 school year. CISD will continue to use T-PESS as the principal appraisal system.

Due to the documentation requirements for the T-TESS system this was changed to new Teachers annually and the remaining Teachers on a rotation schedule.

V. Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator

TEC Section 37.0012

A person at each campus must be designated to serve as the campus behavior coordinator. The person designated may be the principal of the campus or any other campus administrator selected by the principal. The campus behavior coordinator is primarily responsible for maintaining student discipline and the implementation of discipline procedures for all students.

Proposed:

Exempt CISD from the requirement to designate a campus behavior coordinator.

Reasoning:

Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator Embedded in multiple strategies within the Clarksville ISD Strategic Plan is to help students become socially and emotionally intelligent individuals. Social and emotional learning is inhibited by Texas Education Code Section 37.0012, which constrains campus governance by requiring one person at each campus to be designated to serve as the campus behavior coordinator. This requirement inhibits social and emotional learning because it restricts the District's ability to promote a more collaborative discipline program in which the schools, along with the community provide social and emotional supports to students.

By obtaining exemption from Section 37.0012, the District will be better able to focus on establishing classroom protocols and utilizing school culture to foster the development of individual responsibility, positive behavioral interventions and supports while encouraging the social and emotional development of each student and his or her responsibility toward the community.

VI. Probationary Contract Period

Under existing law, a probationary contract may not be for a term exceeding one school year. The Education Code generally allows such probationary contracts to be renewed for two additional one-year periods (for a maximum permissible probationary contract period of three years) and even provides the Board with the authority to make a probationary contract for a fourth consecutive school year if it determines that it is doubtful whether the teacher should be given a continuing or term contract. However, the probationary contract period for newly hired teachers who have been in public education for at least five of the previous eight years is limited to a single year. This limited period of time is insufficient in some cases to fully determine the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom. Relief from TEC 21.102(b) will permit the District to

adopt local rules allowing for probationary contracts to be issued in a consistent manner to all newly hired teachers, counselors or nurses regardless of past employment history. This consistency will ensure that the District has sufficient time to evaluate whether it is in the District's best interest to continue the employment relationship before offering a continuing or term contract.

TEC Codes Requiring Exemption:

- a. TEC 21.102(b): The probationary contract period 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 by the district.

Innovation: A teacher with five or more years of teaching experience who is hired to teach in Clarksville ISD could receive a probationary contract for three years.