

**Dallas Independent School District**  
**Local Innovation Plan**  
*Final Version*

**DISTRICT OF INNOVATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Appointment</b>
Patricia Arvanitis	Superintendent Hinojosa
Karry Chapman	Superintendent Hinojosa
Thom Chesney	Superintendent Hinojosa
Ivonne Durant	Trustee Flores
Michael Gagne	Trustee Micciche
Nicole Gipson-King	Trustee Blackburn
Mita Havlick	Trustee Marshall
Stacey Hodge	Superintendent Hinojosa
Rena Honea	Superintendent Hinojosa
Daisy Jamaica	Trustee Solis
Michael MacNaughton	Trustee Foreman
Rene Martinez	Superintendent Hinojosa
Alba Ramirez	Trustee Resendez
Dr. Kristie Vowels	Trustee Pinkerton
Bob Weiss	Trustee Nutall

**DISTRICT CONTEXT**

The Dallas Independent School District serves 157,000 students across 384 square miles and is proud of our hardworking students, award-winning schools, outstanding teachers and staff, and engaged and committed families and communities. The District has realized exciting gains in the four-year graduation rate (up from 80.3% in 2011 to 87.9% in 2015), a decrease in the dropout rate (down from 11.3% in 2011 to 8% in 2015), and an increase in the number of schools meeting state accountability standards (up from 190 in 2015 to 210 in 2016). Dallas ISD is also home to the largest dual-language program in the nation and two of the top schools, according to *Newsweek*, *U.S. News and World Report*, and *The Washington Post* (2015).

The Local Innovation Plan that follows will help advance efforts aligned to the following:

### ***Vision Statement***

Dallas ISD seeks to be a premier urban school district.

### ***Mission Statement***

Educating all students for success.

### ***Student Achievement Goals***

1. All students will exhibit satisfactory or above performance on state assessments. Students below satisfactory performance will demonstrate more than one year of academic growth.
2. Dallas ISD schools will be the primary choice for families in the District.
3. The achievement gap by race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status will be no greater than ten percentage points on all academic measures.
4. Ninety-five percent of students will graduate. Ninety percent of the graduates will qualify for community college, college, military, or industry certification.
5. Ninety-five percent of students entering kindergarten will be school-ready based on a multidimensional assessment.
6. All students will participate in at least one extracurricular or co-curricular activity each year.

### ***Strategic Initiatives***

- **Early Learning:** Ninety percent of human brain development happens before age five, and studies show that kids who attend Pre-K are more likely to succeed in school, more likely to graduate, and more likely to go to college. To support our earliest learners, the District is working to increase Kindergarten readiness, expand Pre-K enrollment and facilities, increase Pre-K program quality and rigor, and improve Pre-K teacher effectiveness.
- **Collegiate Academies:** Dallas ISD launched eight new collegiate academies in August 2016 and is on-track to launch an additional ten in August 2017 to serve first-generation college students who have been historically underrepresented in higher education. Students in the collegiate academies will have an opportunity to earn an associate's degree and up to 60 hours of tuition-free college credit in high school. The rapid expansion of the collegiate academies has been made possible through a partnership with the Dallas County Community College District as well as an unprecedented number of industry partners.
- **Public School Choice:** As Dallas ISD seeks to ensure that all students graduate from high school ready for college and career, Public School Choice will help grow the range of options so that all students can attend a best-fit school. A best-fit school taps into

students’ interests, aspirations, and preferred learning styles so that they may realize their full academic potential. The District is working towards a goal of launching 35 new Choice schools by 2020.

- **Teacher Excellence Initiative:** Teachers are the most important school-based factor in improving student achievement. The Teacher Excellence Initiative (TEI) measures the impact teachers have on their students through student experience surveys, student achievement, and classroom performance. TEI serves to define, support, and reward excellence in Dallas ISD and has also informed critical District initiatives such as Accelerating Campus Excellence (ACE).

## **HOUSE BILL 1842**

Passed during the 84th Legislative Session, House Bill 1842 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 December 14th, the Dallas ISD Board of Trustees officially launched the process of becoming a District of Innovation and later appointed a 15-member committee to write a Local Innovation Plan within a particular set of parameters (established in the approved Board Resolution).

### ***Local Innovation Plan Timeline***

<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>
Thursday, December 1st, 2016	Dallas ISD Board of Trustees Discussion of District of Innovation Resolution
Thursday, December 14th, 2016	Dallas ISD Board of Trustees Approval of Resolution to Initiate the Process of Designation as a District of Innovation
Thursday, January 12th, 2017	Dallas ISD Board of Trustees Discussion of Process for Appointing Members to the District of Innovation Committee and Charge to the Committee
Thursday, January 26th, 2017	District of Innovation Public Hearing Dallas ISD Board of Trustees Appointment of District of

	Innovation Committee
Wednesday, February 1st, 2017	District of Innovation Committee Meeting #1
Wednesday, February 15th, 2017	District of Innovation Committee Meeting #2
Wednesday, February 22nd, 2017	District of Innovation Committee Meeting #3
Wednesday, March 1st, 2017	District of Innovation Committee Meeting #4

## **LOCAL INNOVATION PLAN**

### **Term**

The term of the Local Innovation Plan will begin on July 1st, 2017 and will end on July 1st 2022, unless terminated, amended, and/or renewed in accordance with the law.

### **School Start Date**

#### ***Exemption***

Texas Education Code Section 25.0811 specifies that “a school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.”

#### ***Benefits of Exemption***

To better balance the school year such that the number of days in each semester is relatively equal 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. Beginning the school year earlier may also incur 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.

#### ***Implementation Guidance***

When planning the student and staff calendars, the District shall ensure the following:

- Changes to the student and staff calendars specified in this proposal must not go into effect until the 2018-19 school year.

- Upon adoption of the Local Innovation Plan, the public must be notified that the school year may start earlier than the fourth Monday in August in the following school year.
- Winter Break should serve as the midpoint of the school year.
- Adjustments to the student and staff calendars must be budget-neutral.

## **Teacher Certification**

### ***Exemptions***

Texas Education Code Sections 21.003, 21.053, and 21.044 and 19 Texas Administrative Code Chapter 231 limit the District’s ability to hire instructors for hard-to-fill and high-demand courses when high quality, certified teachers are not available in:

- Career and technical education<sup>1</sup> (CTE) and
- Dual-credit<sup>2</sup>.

### ***Benefits of Exemptions***

To staff hard-to-fill and high-demand positions in the areas of career and technical education and dual-credit coursework in grades 9 through 12 only, the District seeks flexibility to recruit, select, and place instructors who do not hold a certificate or permit required by these statutes when high quality, certified teachers are not available. Flexibility on teacher certification in these areas may also incur the following advantages:

- Ability to hire credentialed postsecondary instructors to teach dual-credit courses to students in grade 9 through 12;
- 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 and dual-credit course offerings to students in grades 9 through 12.

### ***Implementation Guidance***

When developing parameters for hiring instructors in career and technical education and dual-credit coursework who do not have the requisite certificate or permit, the District shall ensure the following:

- The District must first consider high quality, certified teachers.
- The District must establish criteria for selection of high quality, non-certified candidates.
- The District must implement a rigorous on-boarding and training program for newly-hired, non-certified instructors. The program must emphasize support in classroom management and effective instructional practice.

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<sup>1</sup> Career and technical education “prepares youth and adults for a wide range of high-wage, high-skill, high-demand careers.” (*Association for Career & Technical Education*)

<sup>2</sup> Dual-credit courses award credit for college and high school simultaneously.

- Non-certified instructors hired under this provision must be evaluated under the Teacher Excellence Initiative (TEI).
- The District must establish metrics to assess the effectiveness and efficacy of non-certified instructors hired under the Local Innovation Plan.
- Under the Local Innovation Plan, the District must not hire non-certified instructors outside of grades 9 through 12.