

May 8, 2017

Mike Morath, Commissioner of Education
Texas Education Agency
1701 N. Congress Ave
Austin, TX 78701

Re: Notice of Adoption of a "District of Innovation Plan"

Dear Mr. Morath,

Chapter 102 of the Texas Education Code allows for public school districts to develop, consider, and/or approve a District of Innovation Plan. This letter is intended to serve as notification that Elysian Fields ISD recently approved a plan for that purpose.

December 12, 2016 - The board of trustees passed a resolution for the purpose of initiating the first step to develop a District of Innovation Plan.

December 16, 2016 - A special board meeting/hearing was held related to this plan. At that same meeting, the board of trustees also appointed a District of Innovation Committee for the purpose of allowing that committee to draft an innovation plan.

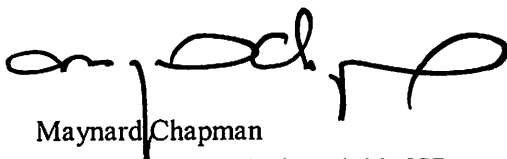
February 8, 2017 - The District Advisory Committee (DAC) met to discuss and consider the tentative plan developed by the District of Innovation Committee. During this meeting, several changes were made to the District of Innovation Plan.

February 13, 2017 - The District of Innovation Plan was posted on the Elysian Fields ISD website, where it resided for at least 30 days.

March 15, 2017 - The DAC and the District of Innovation Committee met again to allow for public comments and unanimously approved the plan, which was submitted to the board of trustees for its consideration.

April 17, 2017 - The board of trustees voted to pass the District of Innovation Plan by a vote of 7-0.

Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Maynard Chapman', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Maynard Chapman
Superintendent, Elysian Fields ISD



INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

P.O. Box 120 • Elysian Fields, Texas 75642
903/633-2420 • FAX 903/633-2498



INNOVATION DISTRICTS

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT A DISTRICT OF INNOVATION

WHEREAS Education Code 12A.001 provides that a district is eligible for designation as a district of innovation if the district's most recent performance rating under Section 39.054 reflects at least acceptable performance, and that consideration of designation as a district of innovation may be initiated by a resolution adopted by the board of trustees of the district; and

WHEREAS the Elysian Fields School District's most recent performance rating under Education Code 39.054 reflects at least acceptable performance.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of trustees of Elysian Fields School District by adoption of this resolution initiates the process under Education Code Chapter 12A to become a district of innovation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that after this resolution is signed by the Board, a public hearing shall be held to consider whether the District should develop a local innovation plan for the designation of the District as a district of innovation and that after the public hearing the Board of Trustees of Elysian Fields School District shall appoint a committee to develop a local innovation plan or decline to pursue designation as a district of innovation.

Adopted this 12 day of December, 2016, by the Board of Trustees.



Board President

Figure: 19 TAC §102.1307(d)

Innovation District

Please submit, on district letterhead, a letter to the commissioner of education stating the date that the board of trustees adopted a resolution to develop a local innovation plan for the designation of the district as an Innovation District.

A local innovation plan must be developed for a school district before the district may be designated as an Innovation District. A local plan must provide for a comprehensive educational program for the district, which may include:

- 1) Innovative Curriculum
- 2) Instructional Methods
- 3) Community Participation
- 4) Governance of Campuses
- 5) Parental Involvement
- 6) Modifications to the school day or year
- 7) Provisions regarding the district budget and sustainable program funding
- 8) Accountability and assessment measures that exceed the requirements of state and federal law; and
- 9) Any other innovations prescribed by the board of trustees.

A local innovation plan must identify requirements imposed by the Education Code that inhibit the goals of the plan from which the district should be exempted on adoption of the plan. The local innovation plan should specify the manner in which a particular statute inhibits one or more goals of the plan. Please use the form below to check the statutes specifically identified in your district's local innovation plan as inhibiting a goal of the plan. Checking a specific statute does not necessarily indicate eligibility for an exemption from all subsections of the statute. The local innovation plan controls with regard to the specific exemptions adopted by a district. The form below provides a reporting mechanism to fulfill the reporting requirements of the statute. Entire sections of code may not be eligible for exemption and each district should consult its legal counsel in developing its innovation plan.

Exemptions claimed for an Innovation District apply only to the specific provision of the Texas Education Code (TEC) cited, which may or may not be governed by a separate legal requirement. The exemption does not relieve the district of any requirement imposed by other state or federal law or a duty imposed under federal regulation, grant compliance, agency rule applicable to a charter school or a local legal requirement. Each district should consult its legal counsel to ensure adoption of necessary local policies to ensure compliance with all applicable legal requirements.

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of exemptions.

Term of Plan: April 17 - January 2022

Plan applies to: ☒ Entire District
☐ Campus (list) _____
☐ Other (please describe) _____

Chapter 11 – School Districts

Subchapter D. Powers and Duties of Board of Trustees of Independent School Districts

- ☐ §11.1511 (b)(5), (14) Specific Powers and Duties of Board
- ☐ §11.162 School Uniforms

Subchapter F. District-Level and Site Based Decision-Making

- ☐ §11.251 Planning and Decision-Making Process
- ☐ §11.252 District-Level Planning and Decision-Making
- ☐ §11.253 Campus Planning and Site-Based Decision-Making
- ☐ §11.255 Dropout Prevention Review

Chapter 21 – Educators

Subchapter A – General Provisions

- ☐ §21.002 Teacher Employment Contracts
- ☒ §21.003 Certification Required
- ☐ §21.0031 Failure to Obtain Certification; Contract Void

Subchapter B – Certification of Educators

§21.051 Rules Regarding Field-Based Experience and Options for Field Experience and Internships.

- ☐ §21.053 Presentation and Recording of Certificates
- ☐ §21.057 Parental Notification

☐ **Subchapter C – Probationary Contracts**

☐ **Subchapter D – Continuing Contracts**

☐ **Subchapter E – Term Contracts**

Subchapter H – Appraisals and Incentives

- ☒ §21.352 Local Role
- ☐ §21.353 Appraisal on Basis of Classroom Teaching Performance
- ☐ §21.354 Appraisal of Certain Administrators
- ☒ §21.3541 Appraisal and Professional Development System for Principals

Subchapter I – Duties and Benefits

- ☒ §21.401 Minimum Service Required
- ☐ §21.402 Minimum Salary Schedule for Certain Professional Staff
- ☐ §21.4021 Furloughs

- ☐ §21.4022 Required Process for Development of Furlough Program or Other Salary Reduction Proposal
- ☐ §21.403 Placement on Minimum Salary Schedule
- ☐ §21.4031 Professional Staff Service Records
- ☐ §21.4032 Reductions in Salaries of Classroom Teachers and Administrators
- ☐ §21.404 Planning and Preparation Time
- ☐ §21.405 Duty-Free Lunch
- ☐ §21.406 Denial of Compensation Based On Absence for Religious Observance Prohibited
- ☐ §21.407 Requiring or Coercing Teachers to Join Groups, Clubs, Committees, or Organizations: Political Affairs
- ☐ §21.408 Right To Join or Not To Join Professional Association
- ☐ §21.409 Leave Of Absence for Temporary Disability
- ☐ §21.415 Employment Contracts
- Subchapter J – Staff Development**
- ☐ §21.451 Staff Development Requirements
- ☐ §21.452 Developmental Leaves of Absence
- ☐ §21.458 Mentors

Chapter 22 – School District Employees and Volunteers

Subchapter A – Rights, Duties, and Benefits

- ☐ §22.001 Salary Deductions for Professional Dues
- ☐ §22.002 Assignment, Transfer, or Pledge of Compensation
- ☐ §22.003 Minimum Personal Leave Program
- ☐ §22.006 Discrimination Based on Jury Service Prohibited
- ☐ §22.007 Incentives for Early Retirement
- ☐ §22.011 Requiring or Coercing Employees to Make Charitable Contributions

Chapter 25 – Admission, Transfer, and Attendance

Subchapter C – Operation of Schools and School Attendance

- ☒ §25.0811 First Day of Instruction
- ☒ §25.0812 Last Day of School
- ☐ §25.083 School Day Interruptions
- ☐ §25.092 Minimum Attendance for Class Credit or Final Grade

Subchapter D – Student/Teacher Ratios; Class Size

- ☒ §25.111 Student/Teacher Ratios
- ☒ §25.112 Class Size
- ☒ §25.113 Notice of Class Size
- ☐ §25.114 Student/Teacher Ratios in Physical Education Classes; Class Size

Chapter 37 – Discipline; Law and Order

Subchapter A – Alternative Setting for Behavior Management

- ☐ §37.0012 Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator
- ☐ §37.002 Removal by Teacher

Chapter 44 –Fiscal Management

Subchapter B – Purchases; Contracts

- ☐ §44.031 Purchasing Contracts
- ☐ §44.0331 Management Fees Under Certain Cooperative Purchasing Contracts
- ☐ §44.0352 Competitive Sealed Proposals
- ☐ §44.042 Preference to Texas and United States Products
- ☐ §44.043 Right To Work
- ☐ §44.047 Purchase or Lease of Automated External Defibrillator

Subchapter Z – Miscellaneous Provisions

- ☐ §44.901 Energy Savings Performance Contracts
- ☐ §44.902 Long-Range Energy Plan to Reduce Consumption of Electric Energy
- ☐ §44.903 Energy-Efficient Light Bulbs in Instructional Facilities
- ☐ §44.908 Expenditure of Local Funds

Chapter 45 – School District Funds

Subchapter G – School District Depositories

- ☐ §45.205 Term of Contract
- ☐ §45.206 Bid Or Request for Proposal Notices; Bid and Proposal Forms
- ☐ §45.207 Award of Contract
- ☐ §45.208 Depository Contract; Bond
- ☐ §45.209 Investment of District Funds

Other

Please list any additional exemption required for your Innovation District Plan:

ELYSIAN FIELDS ISD

Local Innovation Plan

Local Innovation Committee Members:

Maynard Chapman, Superintendent
Martin Cobb, Business Manager
Leslie Parker, Curriculum Director
Jack Parker, High School Principal
Brandon Goswick, Middle School Principal
Linda Marr, Elementary Principal
Martha Lovaasen, Elementary Assistant Principal
Bill Spencer, Technology Director
Danielle Struwe, Middle School Teacher
Debra Kassaw, Elementary School Teacher
Lexi Commander, High School Teacher

Elysian Fields ISD
District of Innovation Plan (HB 1842)

Introduction:

House Bill 1842, passed during the 84th Legislative Session, permits Texas public school districts to become Districts of Innovation and allows them to obtain and utilize the exemptions in educational law that charter schools currently are entitled to. Our school district and community feels that this is a great opportunity for us to create a plan based on the needs of our students and faculty. This plan will remain in effect for 5 years (2017-2022).

1. School Start Date: (EB Legal) Education Code 25.0811 states that a school district may not begin instruction before the fourth Monday in August. The Texas Education Code Section 25.0812 states that a school district may not schedule the last day of school before May 15.

Proposed

To develop a calendar that fits the needs of our community in Elysian Fields.

- a. Students will begin no earlier than the 2nd Monday of August.
- b. This start date will provide more educational development before state assessments.
- c. This will also add more balance to the first and second semesters. Provides equal number of days in each semester.
- d. To improve the overall attendance rate with the change in the calendar.
- e. Students will end the school year the third week in May.

2. Teacher and Principal Evaluation (DNA Legal, DNA Local)
(Education Code 21.352) and (Education Code 21.3541)

The state of Texas has used the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS), a teacher appraisal system, since 1997. The state is issuing a new appraisal system in 2016-2017 that will be called the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS).

Districts currently have the authority to only formally appraise teachers once every five school years. EFISD teachers are evaluation every three years. New teachers to the district are evaluated annually up to two years

Principals are evaluated annually on a locally developed plan.

Proposed

A committee of administrators and the superintendent would have the option to develop a teacher evaluation system that would be a combination of PDAS, T-TESS, and other best practices. This local instrument and/or process would best fit the needs and goals of EFISD.

- a. EFISD will utilize a locally developed teacher and principal evaluation tool.

- b. The instrument will be developed through a collaborative of the central office and campus administrators. We will also accept input from staff and faculty.
 - c. All teachers must be formally evaluated at a minimum of once every three years. Every teacher will receive a minimum of three to six informed walk-throughs per year. Teachers will have an annual summative conference to discuss the year and set classroom goals unless they choose to opt out.
 - d. Probationary teachers will be evaluated every year.
 - e. Principals will continue to be evaluated annually on a locally developed plan.
 - f. All plans will reflect the strengths, areas of concern and goals for EFISD.
3. Teacher Certification (DK Legal, DK Exhibit) (TEC 21.003) 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 request a temporary permit from the Texas Education Agency. TEA then approves or denies this request. In certain circumstances, a district can use a local one-year permit.

Proposed

In order to best serve EFISD students, a decision on certification will be made locally.

- a. The campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request to allow a certified teacher to teach one subject out of his/her certified field. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses which would qualify him/her to teach this subject.
 - b. An individual with experience in a CTE field could be eligible to teach a vocational skill or course 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 or deny the request based on the credentials and whether or not this individual would be an asset to the 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.
 - c. This proposal will provide more flexibility in our scheduling and more options for our students in class offerings.
4. Teaching Contract Days (DCB Legal, DCB Local) (TEC 21.401) Current education laws located in Chapter 21 define a teacher contract as a ten month contract equivalent to 187 days.

Proposed

This proposal reduces teacher's contract days from 187 to 182 with no effect on teacher salaries. This makes an attempt to align the teacher days to the 75,600 minutes required of students.

- a. This proposal will increase the daily rate the district pays teachers.
 - b. This plan should enhance teacher recruitment, therefore putting the district on a more level playing field with larger districts.
 - c. Overall morale will improve.
 - d. This should also provide teachers more opportunities during the summer months to seek better staff development that relates to their teaching area.
5. Class size ratio (EEB Legal) (TEC 25.111) (TEC 25.112) (TEC 25.113)

Texas Education code section 25.112 addresses the number of students that may be in a single kindergarten, first, second, third, fourth or fifth grade class and limits that number to 22. The intent of this statute was to ensure that classrooms maintained a small teacher/student ratio under the belief that smaller classes led to improved achievement for students who benefitted from more individual teacher attention. While the maximum number of students in K-5 classrooms may be addressed by a state waiver, waivers must be applied for by each district annually.

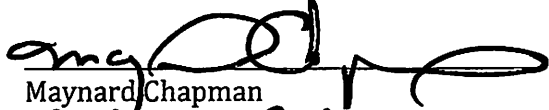
Proposed

By seeking an exception from TEC section 25.112, the district would have flexibility for all campuses and classrooms for the duration of the District of Innovation and would not be required to seek waivers annually. The district does not traditionally seek waivers in this area and will strive to maintain a ratio of 22-1 or less. We also are seeking exemptions from TEC 25.111 (student/teacher ratio) and TEC 25.113 (parental notification requirements).

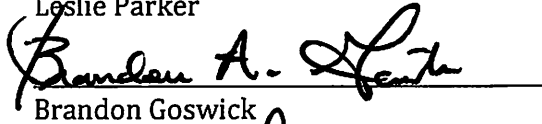
Implementation

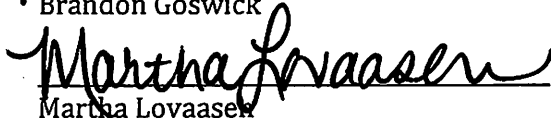
In order to offer students additional opportunities, this innovation plan has been created with guidelines in which the district will operate. Campuses and departments in the district will develop specific implementation plans. Adjustments to Board Policy will be adopted when appropriate.

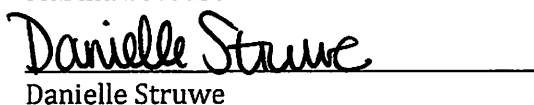
Local Innovation Committee Members:

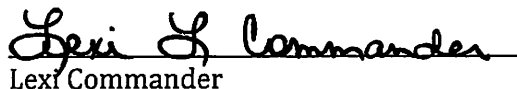

Maynard Chapman


Leslie Parker

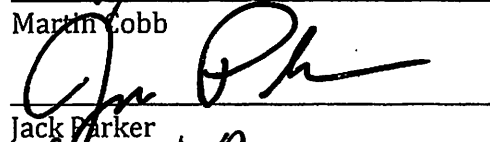

Brandon Goswick


Martha Lovaasen

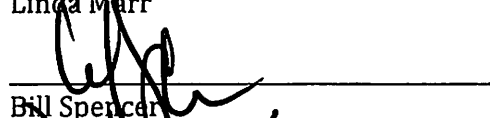

Danielle Struwe


Lexi Commander


Martin Cobb


Jack Parker


Linda Marr


Bill Spencer


Debra Kassaw