

Meyersville Independent School District

District of Innovation Plan

Introduction

HB 1842 was passed during the 84th Texas Legislative Session and provides Texas public school districts the opportunity to be designated as Districts of Innovation. To access these flexibilities, a school district must adopt an innovation plan, as set forth in the Texas Education Code Chapter 12A.

Districts of Innovation may be exempted from a number of state statutes and will have:

- Great local control as the decision makers over the educational and instructional model for students;
- Increased freedom and flexibility, with accountability, relative to state mandates that govern educational programming; and
- Empower to innovate.

Districts are not exempt from statutes including curriculum and graduation requirements, and academic and financial accountability.

PROCESS

On February 14, 2017, the Meyersville ISD Board of Trustees initiated the process by passing a Resolution to Adopt a District of Innovation in order to support innovation and local initiatives to improve student learning.

On February 14, 2017, the Meyersville ISD Board of Trustees held a public hearing for public discussion on whether the District should develop a local innovation plan for the designation of the District of Innovation. With there being no objections, the Board of Trustees appointed the District of Innovation committee to discuss and draft this local innovation plan. The District of Innovation plan committee met on February 16, 2017 to discuss and develop the plan. A follow up meeting to finalize the plan was deemed unnecessary.

The plan is posted on the website for 30 days before being presented to the SBDM/DAC on March 20, 2017. The plan must be submitted to the Board of Trustees for final approval at the March 2017 Board Meeting on March 21, 2017.

TERM

The District of Innovation Plan will become effective in 2017-2018 school year and will remain in effect for five years, through the 2021-2022, unless terminated or amended by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The DAC will monitor the effectiveness of the Plan and recommend to the Board of Trustees any suggested modifications to the Plan.

TIMELINE/ ACTIVITY

February 14, 2017

Board of Trustees passed Resolution to initiate District of Innovation Plan

February 14, 2017

Board of Trustees held public hearing and appointed committee to draft Plan

February 16, 2017

Initial meeting of DOI Committee to discuss and draft District of Innovation Plan

February 17, 2017

Meeting to finalize District of Innovation Plan

February 17, 2017

Post District of Innovation Plan on Meyersville ISD website

March 20, 2017

District Site Based Committee Meeting /DAC

March 21, 2017

Board of Trustees vote on District of Innovation Plan

March 22, 2017

Approved District of Innovation Plan submitted to Commissioner of Education

District of Innovation Committee Members

Kelly Dunn – Superintendent Meyersville ISD

Gay Davis – Campus Technology/ Secondary Teacher

Frances Vaughn – Meyersville ISD Business Manager

Amber Kahlich – Meyersville Elementary Teacher

Kelly Weischwill – Parent Representative

Monica Carson – MISD School Board Representative

Glynn Schultz – MISD School Board Representative

INNOVATIONS

The district proposes flexibility in the following areas.

- Uniform School Start Date
- Submitting Waivers for Kindergarten through Grade 4 Class Size
- Teacher Contracts

Uniform School Start Date (TEC 25.0811)

Texas Education Code Section 25.0811 states that a school district may not begin instruction before the fourth Monday in August.

Proposed

This flexibility of a start date allows the district to determine locally, on an annual basis, what best meets the needs of the students and community. This flexibility of the start date offers:

- The first and second semesters to be more equal in the number of days of instruction.
- An early start date permits students additional time prior to state assessments.

Local guidelines

The district will determine, on an annual basis, when each school year will begin.

Submitting Waivers for Kindergarten-Grade 4 Class Size (TEC 25.112, 25.113)

Kindergarten-Grade 4 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. Along with the waiver, it is required that a letter is sent home to each parent in the class that exceeds the 22:1 ratio, informing them that the waiver has been submitted.

Proposed

While Meyersville ISD believes that a small class size plays a positive role in the classroom, we do not believe that it has a negative effect when one or two students are added. It may not be the number of the students in the class but the makeup and chemistry of the classroom which influences the learning environment. Being exempt from the 22:1 ratio requirement will allow students to remain with the teacher and classmates that they began the year with, enabling continuity and stability that will support increased student achievement.

Local Guidelines

- a. Meyersville ISD will attempt to keep Kindergarten through fourth grade classrooms to the 22:1 ratio. In the event the class size exceeds this ratio, the superintendent will report to the Board of Trustees.
- b. A TEA waiver will not be necessary when a K-4 classroom exceeds the 22:1 ratio

Teacher Contracts (TEC 21.401)

Texas Education Code requires educators employed on a 10-month contract to provide a minimum of 187 days of service.

Proposed

Meyersville ISD seeks flexibility in the minimum 187 days of service requirement.

Local Guidelines

Teacher contracts will more closely align with the 75,600 instructional minutes required for students and also include staff development/work days. This flexibility will enable Meyersville ISD to create a climate that values the individual's time and empowers the ability to leverage that time in what will be a focus on student outcomes. **Professional employees will not receive a reduction in pay for any reduction in their workload due to this change.** This proposal may enhance teacher recruitment and also impact and improve teacher morale.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Meyersville ISD Innovation Plan is designed to create parameters within which the District will operate, in order to provide additional student opportunities. Adjustments to Board Policy will be researched and adopted where appropriate.