



Keller Independent School District Local Innovation Plan

District of Innovation Committee Approved: November 3, 2016

Board of Trustees Adopted: January 19, 2017

I. INTRODUCTION

The District of Innovation (DOI) is a concept passed by the 84th Texas Legislature through House Bill (HB) 1842 that gives traditional independent school districts most of the flexibilities available to open enrollment charter schools, including exemption from many requirements mandated in the Texas Education Code.

As a District of Innovation, Keller ISD will have:

- greater 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
- power to innovate and think differently.

HB 1842 does not allow for exemptions from statutes including curriculum and graduation requirements or academic and financial accountability.

II. OUR PROCESS

On March 8, 2016, the Keller ISD Board of Trustees (“Board”) passed a Resolution to Initiate the Process of Designation of a District of Innovation Under HB 1842 to increase local control over KISD operations and to support innovation and local initiatives. A public hearing to consider whether the District should develop a local innovation plan for the designation of the district as a district of innovation was held on April 14, 2016.

On September 8, 2016, the Board appointed a District of Innovation District Advisory Committee (“Committee”) comprised of diverse leaders representing a cross-section of the KISD’s stakeholders including teachers, principals, parents, community members, college and university representatives, administrators, and others. KISD’s District of Innovation Advisory Committee Members are as follows:

Name	Connection to KISD
Brad Schofield	Board of Trustees
Cindy Lotton	Board of Trustees
Craig Allen	Board of Trustees
Jim Stitt	Board of Trustees
Karina Davis	Board of Trustees
Ruthie Keyes	Board of Trustees
Carrie Jackson	Campus Administrator
Ed Fellows	Campus Administrator
Kenneth Anderson	Campus Administrator
Sandy Troutt	Campus Administrator
Jana Prock	Civic Organization
Jason Sandlin	Civic Organization
Joan Manning	Civic Organization
Jennifer Fox	Community/Business
Chrissy Greeling	Educational Support
Cory Wilson	Educational Support
David Wright	Educational Support
Dr. Kevin Hood	Educational Support
Dr. Leanne Shivers	Educational Support
Dr. Robert Wright	Educational Support
Dustin Blank	Educational Support
Elaine Plybon	Educational Support
Jeff Bradley	Educational Support
Jennifer Price	Educational Support
Katie Wawak	Educational Support
Kim Blann	Educational Support
Laura Lockhart	Educational Support
Leigh Cook	Educational Support
Leslee Shepherd	Educational Support
Lindsay Anderson	Educational Support
Sara Koprowski	Educational Support
Suzanne McGahey	Educational Support
Cecil McDaniel	Administrative Cabinet
Hudson Huff	Administrative Cabinet
Joe Griffin	Administrative Cabinet
Mark Youngs	Administrative Cabinet
Penny Benz	Administrative Cabinet
Shellie Johnson	Administrative Cabinet
Amanda Calongne	Local Civic Official
Dr. Jo Beth Jimerson	Local College / University
Dr. Neil Dugger	Local College / University
Dr. Noelle Paufler	Local College / University
Richard Vela	Local College / University
Joan Weber	Parent
Becky Scott	Parent
Beth Eaves	Parent
Brian Murnahan	Parent
Brittney Brost	Parent
Daniel Vance	Parent
Elizabeth Marsh	Parent

Georgia Altom	Parent
Holly Hufferd	Parent
Karen Evans	Parent
Kimberly Dawson	Parent
Larry Madore	Parent
Maria Foord	Parent
Sheila Clemmons	Parent
Julie Daneman	Parent
Vanessa Coleman	Parent
Amanda Steelman	Teacher
Donna Hodge	Teacher
Heather Baldwin	Teacher
Jennifer John	Teacher
Gary Chipman	Teacher
Jamie Fieldhouse	Teacher
Taylor Boston Romero	Teacher
Jamie Bird	Teacher
Jeanne Vrij	Teacher
Laura Pittillo	Teacher
Laura Slay	Teacher
Rhonda Tharp	Teacher
Kellie Owens	Teacher
David Williams	Teacher Professional Organization
Glenda Kemmerling-Wilson	Teacher Professional Organization
Dr. Kris Kittle	Trustee Recommendation
Kristen Mangus	Trustee Recommendation
Johjania Najera	Workforce
Ad Hoc	
Dr. Randy Reid	Superintendent (Non-Voting)
Leah Beard	Director of Organizational Improvement and Strategic Planning (Non-Voting)
Amanda Bigbee	General Counsel (Non-Voting)

The Committee met on September 15, 2016, for an introduction and overview and were broken into four subcommittees. The subcommittees then met independently as follows:

Subcommittee	Dates of Meetings
Classroom Standards and Interventions	September 20 September 29
Calendar and Mandatory Class Size	September 26 October 11
Student Discipline	September 21 September 29
Employee Focused Areas	September 26 October 3 October 10

On October 19, 2016, the entire Committee came together again to consider the recommendations of two of the three subcommittees and vote on those components of the Plan. On November 3, 2016, the entire Committee reconvened to finish discussing subcommittee work and to vote on all remaining components of the Plan.

III. TERM

The term of the plan is for five years, beginning January 1, 2017, and ending January 1, 2022, 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 of Trustees will appoint a committee to consider and propose additional exemptions in the form of an amendment. Any amendment adopted by the Board will adhere to the same term as the original plan. The KISD may not implement two separate plans at any one time.

IV. INNOVATIONS

The KISD proposes flexibility and seeks an exemption in the following areas:

"Ninety Percent Rule" for class attendance	
Texas Education Code §25.092	FEC (Legal)
<p>Rationale:</p> <p>This would provide flexibility for students who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are unable to attend class in the traditional brick and mortar building because of illness or family concerns • would benefit from a different time structure to the school day • would benefit from virtual and online classes in addition to or in place of the traditional classroom setting • are pursuing an accelerated program (i.e. music, swimming) and will be traveling extensively 	
<p>Innovation: TEC Ch. 12A.003(b)(1)(A) innovative curriculum, instructional methods, and provisions regarding community participation, campus governance, and parental involvement</p> <p>Exemption from this requirement will provide educational advantages to students by promoting engaged learning through innovative methods, locations, and times for instruction, thereby accommodating students with legitimate scheduling conflicts, reducing dropouts, and increasing the number of qualifying graduates. To ensure that students are placed appropriately in the new options and receiving the optimal experience, we will implement a process through which counselors and administrators are able to evaluate a student’s potential success in these new program options. Students taking traditional courses not impacted by this exemption would still be required to meet the 90% attendance requirement as it currently exists.</p>	

Length of school day	
Texas Education Code §25.082	EC (Legal)
<p>Rationale: Relief from this statute could potentially allow the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual campus flexibility, independence and creativity • Additional opportunities for teacher professional development and collaboration. • Reduced number of minutes for Early Learning Center students without the need for a TEA waiver. • Individualized, flexible opportunities for Alternative High School students <p>While the District seeks freedom from this law, the following should be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limiting the number of shortened school days to no more than two per year. • There should be guidelines to establish minimum/maximum school day lengths 	
<p>Innovation: TEC Ch. 12A.003(b)(1)(B) Modifications to the school day or year</p> <p>Exemption from this requirement will provide campuses with the ability to make creative decisions regarding professional development and teacher collaboration time. Flexibility in this area will also give the district the ability to consider options for individualized plans for students who have life circumstances that prevent them from attending traditional high schools (e.g. full time work, pregnancy/parenting, etc.).</p>	

Earliest possible school start date	
Texas Education Code §25.0811 and 25.0812	EB (Legal)
<p>Rationale: Relief from this statute could potentially allow the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First semester complete before Winter Break; instructional pacing is more beneficial • More instructional days before State Assessments; flexibility for different types of learners and learning needs • More professional development opportunities during the school year for teachers • Full days for professional development opportunities as opposed to half days • Flexibility the first week of school – Students would not have a full week • The calendar could be more aligned with college schedules, providing our students with additional opportunities <p>While the District seeks freedom from this law, the following should be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of starting early (e.g. cooling cost in August) should be considered • All Administrative Regulations and policies would be followed in relation to extreme heat during recess. • Adjustments to professional development calendar will need to be addressed. • Start date should be no earlier than August 15th and preferably no earlier than the third week of August. • Prefer that students not have a full week the first week of school 	
<p>Innovation: TEC Ch. 12A.003(b)(1)(B) Modifications to the school day or year</p> <p>The current law that prohibits the district from starting school before the third Monday of August forces the district into a calendar that has minimal opportunity for teacher professional development, requires the semester to end after the winter break, and provides negligible time for summer school before state mandated assessment re-takes in the summer. Starting school even one week earlier can help minimize the negative impacts the district sees in these area. Starting early will allow for creative scheduling that allows for more intentional teacher professional development throughout the school year and also allows students to have a schedule that is more conducive to their learning.</p>	

Minimum days of attendance	
Texas Education Code §25.081	EB (Legal)
<p>Rationale: Relief from this statute could potentially allow the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate credit denial, 90% rule, and Saturday school • Additional credit options for Alternative Campus • Additional credit options for working students and students who are parents • Flexibility for different learners – ADHD, GT, etc. • Elimination of TEA waivers • Potential options for half day kinder <p>While the District seeks freedom from this law, the following should be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible scheduling could be a challenge, especially for working parents • Any potential cost to the district, especially relating to pre-K. 	
<p>Innovation: TEC Ch. 12A.003(b)(1)(A) innovative curriculum, instructional methods, and provisions regarding community participation, campus governance, and parental involvement</p> <p>Exemption from this requirement will provide the district with the flexibility it needs to consider instructions and gaining credits in ways that make sense for students, especially our students who have unique needs. This exemption can be used to craft programs for nontraditional students, students with special needs, and even our youngest students to best meet their needs. Instruction does not always have to take place in a classroom seat, and this exemption will allow the district to explore more online options, project based learning outside the classroom, and the structure of programming for various groups of students.</p>	

Requirement to have in school disciplinary placements for students including minimum academic requirements for disciplinary placements	
Texas Education Code §37.008, 37.0082 ¹	FOCA(Legal)
<p>Rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently states “a DAEP shall be provided in a setting other than the students’ regular classroom. It may be located on or off a regular school campus.” • Students occasionally need to stay connected to their courses such as choir, band, athletics, a dual credit course, CTE course, or AP course. • There are barriers to learners always being able to take the course at the DAEP building. • Relief from this law would look at rewording the location section of the policy to provide some exceptions for learners to be able to continue in specific courses in their regular classroom while assigned to DAEP. 	
<p>Innovation: TEC Ch. 12A.003(b)(1)(E) any other innovations prescribed by the board of trustees</p> <p>Exemption from this requirement will provide campus staff freedom in terms of choosing discipline techniques that best suit the situation and the student. This change will provide greater opportunities for academics (Extra-Curricular, Dual Credit, and Advance Placement Courses on Campus). It is the district’s desire to allow students to maintain rigorous coursework while in a disciplinary placement and this exemption will allow the district to think about academics and extracurricular opportunities in a disciplinary placement in new ways.</p>	

¹ Texas Education Code section 12.131 and 37.027 were originally and erroneously included in this section. The typographical errors has been corrected. Removal of these code provisions does not impact the content, rationale, or innovation in this section of the Plan.

Three day limitation on suspensions	
Texas Education Code §37.005	FOB(Legal)
<p>Rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently states “A suspension may not exceed three school days.” This exemption is desired to be change the maximum number of days of suspension allowed. • The law has been interpreted to apply to both in and out of school suspensions. This limitation minimizes the options a campus has for discipline without sending a student to DAEP. • Committee discussed additional days on campus in suspension could provide a way for a campus to avoid excessive discretionary DAEP placements. It is beneficial to allow students to stay on campus and closer to their normal educators and services. 	
<p>Innovation: TEC Ch. 12A.003(b)(1)(E) any other innovations prescribed by the board of trustees</p> <p>Because of the law’s three day limit for suspensions, campus staff is limited in the choices of discipline that can be applied to students for moderately serious offenses. Exemption from this requirement will provide campuses with the option of keeping students on campus and closer to their regular teachers during a disciplinary placement rather than always opting to send students to the disciplinary alternative educational placement. Providing a range of options for the campus is a new and innovative way of thinking about discipline and more fully meeting a student’s needs while they are being disciplined.</p>	

Campus Behavior Coordinator	
Texas Education Code §37.0012	FO (Legal)
<p>Rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently legal policy states “A person at each campus must be designated to serve as the campus behavior coordinator (CBC). The person may be the campus principal or any other campus administrator selected by the principal. The CBC is primarily responsible for maintaining student discipline and the implementation of education Code Chapter 37.” • On large campuses (high school - 2,900 students; middle school - 1,200 students) one individual is designated at CBC to manage discipline. • It is necessary to have additional administrators provide notice to parents about disciplinary incidents. • Exception to law sought to no longer require a single administrator, but allow multiple administrators. This would allow for CBCs to be used with fidelity. • The recommendation is to change wording in Campus Behavior Coordinator, Duties, and Notice to Parents section, and to change the number/who on each campus. 	
<p>Innovation: TEC Ch. 12A.003(b)(1)(E) any other innovations prescribed by the board of trustees</p> <p>Exemption from this requirement will provide campuses the opportunity to allow campus administrators to fully understand and get to know the students in their caseload rather than sourcing all discipline matters to one employee designated as a campus behavior coordinator. While it is imperative that all employees work together and be informed as to the discipline that is occurring on a campus, it is just as crucial for students to depend on an administrator they know and trust in all facets of their education, including their discipline. Each campus should have the freedom to designate more than one campus behavior coordinator to best meet the needs of their students and teachers.</p>	

Planning and preparation periods	
Texas Education Code §21.404	DL (Legal)
<p>Rationale:</p> <p>By exempting the District from this law, the District:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will have flexibility for special days on campus (state testing, field trips, etc.). • will have flexibility in time for more collaboration during the school day. • will allow for administrative flexibility based on student needs by campus. 	
<p>Innovation: TEC Ch. 12A.003(b)(1)(A) innovative curriculum, instructional methods, and provisions regarding community participation, <i>campus governance</i>, and parental involvement</p> <p>Exemption from this requirement will provide each campus with the local control needed to determine how best to use staff time, especially as it pertains to collaborative planning and best meeting the needs of the students. The number of minutes that a teacher receives for planning and preparation must not be reduced but the committee discussed the possibility of 900 minutes over a 20 day period. The committee did emphasize a minimum increment of no less than 30 minutes per day. The recommendation is that the amount and increment of time is to be consistently implemented throughout the district.</p>	

State certification requirements for teachers and other educators	
Texas Education Code §21.003, §21.053	DBA (Legal)
<p>Rationale:</p> <p>By exempting the District from this law, the District:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will have the flexibility to hire experts in their field even if they don't yet have a teaching certificate. • will have the flexibility in hiring "hard to fill" positions. • will have the flexibility to hire those with industry expertise (e.g. HB 5 courses). 	
<p>Innovation: TEC Ch. 12A.003(b)(1)(E) any other innovations prescribed by the board of trustees</p> <p>Exemption from this requirement will provide much needed flexibility to hire the most qualified candidate for teaching positions. With an increasing number of innovative courses created after implementation of HB5, finding exceptionally qualified applicants in specific fields who are also certified teachers is increasingly difficult if not impossible. This flexibility will allow the District to hire individuals who best meet the needs of the students and provide the content knowledge our students need to enter an increasingly innovative world.</p>	

Certified employee contract rights (specifically second probationary year for teachers hired under 5 of 8 rule and suspensions without pay)	
Texas Education Code §21.102(b), §21.211(b)	DCA (Legal)
<p>Rationale:</p> <p>By exempting the District from this law, the District:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will have the flexibility of hiring a probationary teacher for a second year to provide for more growth and coaching when the teacher is hired under the 5 of 8 rule. • will have the flexibility to suspend without pay when under allegation that is covered in Educator Code of Conduct. Any decisions made regarding suspension without pay would be open to appeal through the grievance process. 	
<p>Innovation: TEC Ch. 12A.003(b)(1)(E) any other innovations prescribed by the board of trustees</p> <p>Exemption from this requirement will provide campus administrators and hiring officials with the time needed to fully assess and support a teacher before making decisions regarding moving the employee from a probationary contract when that employee has only been with the district one year. This exemption will also allow the district to make employment and financial decisions that are in the best interest of the district when an employee is alleged to have violated serious provisions of the Educator Code of Ethics or law, including crimes against children. This flexibility from some of the provisions of Chapter 21 of the Education Code will allow the District to approach some employment issues in ways that best meet the needs of the district and take quick action to protect students when necessary.</p>	

V. IMPLEMENTATION AND POLICY EXPECTATIONS

This Local Innovation Plan is designed to create parameters within which the KISD will operate in order to provide improved student opportunities. This Plan sets out the laws from which KISD seeks relief so that it can develop more innovative programming and better meet the needs of its stakeholders. While this Plan sets out those parameters, it does not and cannot establish the full scope of innovative practices within the KISD. Specific implementation plans will be developed by the appropriate campuses, departments, and committees in order to fully realize the work of the Innovation Committee.

Adjustments to Board Policy will be researched, developed, and presented to the Board of Trustees where appropriate. It is the expectation of the Innovation Committee that all Board Policy language will reflect the spirit of the Committee work and honor the parameters and limitations expressed in this Plan. Policy development resulting from this Local Innovation Plan will be provided to the Committee for review and feedback before the policies are presented to the Board of Trustees for consideration. After policies resulting from this Plan are adopted, it is the expectation of the Committee that future revisions to these specific policy provisions, if any, will be reviewed by Committee members prior to Board review to ensure alignment with the work of the Committee.

Any and all changes that arise from the District of Innovation work will be accompanied by a comprehensive communication plan for students, families, and the community.