



November 28, 2016

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

Dear Commissioner Morath,

In 2015, the 84th session of the Texas Legislature passed House Bill 1842 allowing districts to pursue the District of Innovation designation.

House Bill 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. On May 3, 2016, the Plano Independent School District's Board of Trustees passed a resolution to initiate the process of designation as a District of Innovation in order to increase local control over District operations and to support innovation and local initiatives to improve educational outcomes for the benefit of students and the community. With the May 17 meeting of the Board of Trustees, they hosted a public hearing commensurate with the guidelines as specified by House Bill 1842.

On July 21, 2016, the Board appointed a thirteen member Local Innovation Committee comprised of district leaders representing a variety of roles and responsibilities. The Committee met on September 21 and 30, 2016, to discuss and draft this Local Innovation Plan. 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. The Committee will continually monitor the effectiveness of the plan and recommend to the Board any suggested modifications to the plan.

The Plano ISD Board of Trustees and the district administration have followed the guidelines of the Texas Education Association. Components of the district's plans:

- Minimum Minutes of Instruction
- Minimum Attendance for Class Credit
- First Day of Instruction
- Teacher Certification for Career and Technical Education Instructors
- Teacher Appraisals

A timeline for the appointed committee was provided to the Board of Trustees on October 4, 2016 and was subsequently posted on the district's website at www.pisd.edu. The timeline was completed as follows:

- November 7, 2016 – Public hearing – Advisory Committee meeting
- November 15, 2016 – Final plan submitted to the Board of Trustees and approved unanimously.

With submission of this letter and attached Figure: 19 TAC §102.1307 (d), the Plano ISD Board of Trustees requests the approval of the Commissioner of Education to proceed with the plan's implementation per the stated guidelines.

Sincerely,

Brian T. Binggeli
Superintendent of Schools

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.