

Donna ISD

Proposed District of Innovation Plan



“THE DISTRICT”

Approved by Donna ISD Board of Trustees

Nov 17, 2022

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Donna ISD Vision

"All Donna ISD students are empowered with academic and life skills to boldly lead and achieve personal success in a global society."

Donna ISD Mission

The mission of Donna I.S.D. is to provide a rigorous and supportive learning environment with meaningful and relevant learning experiences that inspire creativity, character development, and critical thinking that ensures educational excellence for all students.

Donna ISD Strategic Goal

- Goal 1: Focus on Student Success
- Goal 2: Focus on Family & Community Engagement
- Goal 3: Focus on Operational Excellence
- Goal 4: Focus on Employee & Organizational Excellence
- Goal 5: Focus on Financial Stewardship

Introduction

House Bill (HB) 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.

Potential benefits to becoming a District of Innovation include:

- Flexibility: Districts will have the flexibility to implement practices similar to charter schools, including exemptions from certain mandates including the uniform school start date and required minutes of instruction.
- Local control: Districts decide which flexibilities best suit their local needs.
- Autonomy: Districts must submit a district of innovation plan to the commissioner of education, but approval is not required.

On August 9, 2022, the Donna ISD Board of Trustees (“Board”) passed a Resolution to explore the development of a District of Innovation Plan to increase local control over District operations, and to support innovation and local initiatives. The adoption of this plan seeks to increase the District’s flexibility in order to improve educational outcomes for the benefit of students and the community. On September 13, 2022, the Board appointed a District of Innovation Committee (“Committee”) composed of diverse leaders representing a cross-section of the District’s stakeholders including administrators, principals, parents, and district members. The Committee met on October 12, 2022 to discuss and draft the Local Innovation Plan (“Plan”). The District will accept input on the proposed District of Innovation Plan by posting the Plan on the district website for 30 days starting October 14, 2022. The District will conduct a public forum and present the plan to the board.

The DLPAC will hold a public hearing to discuss the Local Innovation Plan and take a vote on whether to approve the plan on October 25, 2022.

The Donna ISD Board of Trustees approved the plan at its meeting on November 17, 2022.

District of Innovation Advisory Committee

Name	Role
Angela Dominguez	Superintendent
Rashad Rana	Asst. Superintendent of Edu. Services
Javier Garza	Chief Operating Officer
Stephanie Powelson-Garza	Executive Director of C and I
Deborah Medrano	Principal - Donna High School
Thelma Luna	Dean of Instruction - Solis Middle School
Maria Partida	Principal - Garza Elementary
Itzhamara Moses	Curriculum Specialist - Salinas Elementary
Salome Diaz	Teacher - Veterans Middle School
Innocencio Perez	Teacher - Caceres Elementary

District of Innovation Timeline

Date	Action
May 25, 2022	District Level Planning Advisory Board Approves moving forward with presentation to Board of Trustees
August 9, 2022	Donna ISD Board presentation of DOI and signed resolution to initiate process
September 13, 2022	Donna ISD Board Trustees Public Hearing and representatives for the 2022 DOI Committee selected
October 12, 2022	DOI Committee Meeting
October 14, 2022	DOI Plan posted on website
October 14, 2022	Board of Trustees notify the TEA Commissioner of intent to create the DOI Plan
October 25, 2022	District Level Planning Advisory Committee (DLPAC) holds public meeting to approve the DOI plan (<i>majority vote required</i>)
November 17, 2022*	Board of Trustees vote to approve the DOI Plan ($\frac{2}{3}$ <i>majority vote required</i>)
November 18, 2022*	Post the final approved plan on the District website and notify the TEA Commissioner of approval of the plan.
November 18, 2022	Provide a copy of the new DOI plan to the TEA for posting on agency's website.

Innovation Plan Exemptions

First Day of Instruction

Exemption Form: TEC 25.0811

Relevant Board Policies: EB(Legal)

Current Statute

TEC 25.0811 states that a school district may not begin student instruction before the 4th Monday of August. The current process allows little flexibility in the design of annual calendars to fit the needs of the community or the wishes of the local Board of Trustees who represent community interests in this matter.

Local Guidelines

1. Donna ISD will gather input from district stakeholders to develop a calendar that addresses student instruction and focused professional development in conjunction with minimum instructional minutes requirement.
2. The start date of each school year will be determined with input from the staff and community. The start date may occur on or after the second Monday of August based on input.
3. Alignment of the district calendar with neighboring districts, dual credit college partner, and STAAR timelines will be considered.
4. The proposed calendar will be posted for public comment prior to Board approval.

Minimum Attendance for Class Credit (90% Attendance Rule)

Exemption Form: TEC 25.092

Relevant Board Policies: FEC(Legal)

Current Statute

TEC 25.092 states in order to receive credit or a final grade for a class, a student is required to attend class 90 percent of the days class is offered regardless of whether the student's absences are excused. The current process allows little flexibility for students with extenuating circumstances or that are in extracurricular/UIIL activities.

Local Guidelines

1. Student will complete all assigned coursework
2. Demonstrate mastery of course content to earn credit and/or a passing final grade for a class in accordance with local policy and regulations designed to encourage scholarly behaviors and good attendance

District of Innovation Plan Term

The term of the Plan is for five years, in effect for the 2022-2023 school year through the 2027-2028 school year, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law.

The Plan will be reviewed annually by the District of Innovation Committee. If, within the term of this Plan, other areas or operations are to be considered for flexibility as part of HB 1842, the committee will consider and propose additional exemptions in the form of an amendment to the Plan to be presented and approved by the Board. Any amendment adopted by the Board will not extend the term of this Plan.