

# *Dallas Independent School District Local Innovation Plan Renewal*

*Final Version (Approved 2022.2.17)*

## **DISTRICT OF INNOVATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Appointment (Trustee District)</b>
Luisa del Rosal	Trustee Edwin Flores (District 1)
Mita Havlick	Trustee Dustin Marshall (District 2)
Michael Gagne	Trustee Dan Micciche (District 3)
Blanca Sanchez	Trustee Karla Garcia (District 4)
Marquis Hawkins	Trustee Maxi Johnson (District 5)
Nethel Jackson	Trustee Joyce Foreman (District 6)
Jennifer Sanders	Trustee Ben Mackey (District 7)
Daisy Jamaica	Trustee Joe Carreon (District 8)
Harry Kennedy	Trustee Justin Henry (District 9)
Robert Abel	Superintendent Michael Hinojosa
Santos Catalan	Superintendent Michael Hinojosa
Rena Honea	Superintendent Michael Hinojosa
Abby Mayer	Superintendent Michael Hinojosa
Drexell Owusu	Superintendent Michael Hinojosa
Yulise Reaves Waters	Superintendent Michael Hinojosa

## **DISTRICT CONTEXT**

The Dallas Independent School District (“Dallas ISD” or “the District”) serves 145,000 students across 384 square miles and is proud of our hardworking students, award-winning schools, outstanding teachers and staff, and engaged and committed families and communities. Although the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have brought challenges, the District has realized exciting gains in:

- the number and percent of Associate degrees earned (up from 177 or 1.7% in 2018 to 624 or 7.6% in 2020);
- the number of Texas Education Agency (TEA) approved A-F industry-based certifications earned (up from 103 or 1.3% in 2018 to 243 or 3.0% in 2020); and
- the number level I or II certificates earned (up from 0 in 2018 to 333 in 2020).

This success is due in part to the implementation of the 2017 - 2022 District of Innovation (DOI) plan which allowed for better alignment with college scheduling and increased opportunities to hire teachers with real-world expertise.

The Local Innovation Plan that follows will help advance efforts aligned to the following:

### **Vision Statement**

Dallas ISD seeks to be a premier urban school district.

### **Mission Statement**

Educating all students for success.

### **Student Outcome Goals**

1. Student achievement on state assessments in all subjects in Domain 1 will increase from 46 to 58 by June 2025.
2. Student achievement on the third-grade state assessment in reading at the Meets performance level or above will increase from 40.2% to 56.0% by June 2025.
3. Student achievement on the third-grade state assessment in mathematics at the Meets performance level or above will increase from 42.3% to 56.0% by June 2025.
4. The percent of graduates who are college, career, or military ready (CCMR) from Domain 1 will increase from 42.0% to 54.0% by June 2025. (This is lagged 1 year.)
5. Middle-grade (grades 6-8) student achievement on state assessments in all subjects in Domain 1 will increase from 40 to 50 by June 2025.

## Strategic Initiatives

- Career Institutes: The vision of the Dallas ISD Career Institutes is to provide high school students a choice to pursue a Career and Technical Education (CTE) Pathway; work with industry partners; train on state-of-the-art industry-standard equipment; obtain four or more certifications; and obtain dual credit when appropriate, prior to graduation. A Career Institute will prepare students for high skill, high wage, and high demand occupations.
- Early Learning: Ninety percent of human brain development happens before age five, and studies show that kids who attend Pre-K are more likely to succeed in school, more likely to graduate, and more likely to go to college. To support our earliest learners, the District is working to increase Kindergarten readiness, expand Pre-K enrollment and facilities, increase Pre-K program quality and rigor, and improve Pre-K teacher effectiveness.
- Public School Choice: As the District seeks to ensure that all students graduate from high school ready for college and career, Public School Choice will help grow the range of options so that all students can attend a best-fit school. A best-fit school taps into students' interests, aspirations, and preferred learning styles so that they may realize their full academic potential.
- Racial Equity: The Racial Equity Office mission is to eliminate systemic disparities and ensure equity so all students, regardless of race, have the opportunity to graduate equipped to compete in a society and world that is racially and culturally diverse. This mission is accomplished through six pillars: Instructional Equity, Programmatic Equity, Equitable Leadership & Operations, Culturally Competent & Diverse Workforce, Internal & External Community Engagement, and Facility & Location Equity.
- Strategic Compensation: In Dallas ISD, we recognize the important role of all staff in raising student achievement results and building and sustaining a positive and supportive school culture. The strategic compensation models developed for principals, assistant principals, and teachers, called excellence initiatives (PEI, APEI, and TEI), have provided the District an objective way to measure effectiveness. The combination of multiple measures presents a holistic view of employees within the District. Our goal is to continue to expand these performance initiatives to additional positions in the District.

## **TEXAS EDUCATION CODE, CHAPTER 12A**

Passed during the 84th Legislative Session, Texas Education Code, Chapter 12A allows Texas school districts to pursue the designation of ‘District of Innovation,’ a provision that enables traditional independent school districts to access many of the flexibilities that are currently available to open-enrollment charter schools. Texas Education Code, Chapter 12A was also intended to generate greater flexibility, local control, and innovation to better meet the needs of Texas students. Through the development and approval of a ‘Local Innovation Plan,’ a district may obtain certain exemptions from the Texas Education Code to advance their local strategic priorities.

## **DISTRICT OF INNOVATION - RENEWAL**

In 2017, Dallas ISD Board of Trustees approved the implementation of two exemptions under the DOI: flexibility in start of school and the hiring of teachers for career and technical education courses. The five-year term of the current DOI plan is near expiration, requiring a renewal to continue with these exemptions.

### **Local Innovation Plan Timeline for Renewal**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>
October 14, 2021	Dallas ISD Board presentation of DOI Update
October 15-29, 2021	Dallas ISD Board Trustees nominate representatives for the 2021 DOI Committee
November 17, 2021	DOI Committee Meeting #1
December 8, 2021	DOI Committee Meeting #2
December 15, 2021	DOI Committee Meeting #3
December 17, 2021	Revised DOI Plan posted on website
January 5, 2022	Board of Trustees notify the TEA Commissioner of intent to renew the DOI Plan

Date	Action
January 6, 2022	District Advisory Committee (DAC) holds public meeting to approve the DOI plan ( <i>majority vote required</i> )
February 17, 2022	Board of Trustees vote to approve the renewed DOI Plan ( $\frac{2}{3}$ <i>majority vote required</i> )
February 18, 2022	Post the final approved plan on the District website and notify the TEA Commissioner of approval of the plan.
March 4, 2022	Provide a copy of [link to] the new DOI plan to the TEA for posting on agency website.

## *LOCAL INNOVATION PLAN*

### **Term**

The term of the Local Innovation Plan will begin on February 18, 2022 and will end on February 17, 2027, unless terminated, amended, and/or renewed in accordance with the law.

### *School Start Date*

#### **Exemption**

**Texas Education Code [§25.0811](#)**

FIRST DAY OF INSTRUCTION.

(a) Except as provided by this section, a school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.

#### **Benefits of Exemption**

This exemption allows the District to better balance the school year such that the number of days in each semester is relatively equal and each grading period is similar in length. The District seeks flexibility to begin the school year before the fourth Monday in August. Beginning the school year earlier may also result in the following advantages:

- More instructional days in advance of standardized assessments, such as Advanced Placement and STAAR exams;
- Additional instructional time after the last official day of school for students retaking a STAAR exam over the summer;
- Completion of fall semester exams before dismissing for Winter Break;

- Opportunity for students to take advantage of the full array of summer dual-credit offerings at institutions of higher education; and
- More balanced distribution of instructional time for one-semester coursework, as students who currently take a one-semester course in the fall have fewer instructional days to master course content than students who take the same one-semester course in the spring.

## **Implementation Guidance**

When planning the student and staff calendars, the District shall ensure the following:

- The public must be notified that the school year may start earlier than the fourth Monday in August in the following school year.
- Winter Break should serve as the midpoint of the school year.
- Adjustments to the student and staff calendars must be budget-neutral.

## *Teacher Certification*

### **Exemptions**

**Texas Education Code** [§21.003](#), [§21.053](#), and [§21.044](#) and [19 Texas Administrative Code Chapter 231](#) limit the District's ability to hire instructors for hard-to-fill and high-demand courses when high quality, State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC) certified teachers are not available. This exemption will be limited to the following:

- **Non-Certified Experienced Professionals**
  - 9th to 12th grade Career and Technical Education (CTE)<sup>1</sup>
  - 9th to 12th grade Dual-credit<sup>2</sup>
  - World Languages<sup>3</sup>
  - Visual & Performing Arts<sup>4</sup>
- **Out of State Standard Certified Professionals**

### **Benefits of Exemptions**

The District seeks flexibility to recruit, select, and place instructors who do not hold teaching credentials required by these statutes when high quality, certified teachers are not available in hard-to-fill and high-demand positions. In addition, teachers who hold teaching credentials from another state could be considered for positions (with the exception of Bilingual/English as a Second Language (ESL) and Special Education) upon a local review of experience, education, and credentials. Local decisions outside of state certification requirements would allow the District to provide flexibility in scheduling to better meet student needs.

Flexibility on teacher certification in these areas may also result in the following advantages:

- Ability to hire credentialed postsecondary instructors to teach dual-credit courses to

students in grades 9 through 12;

- Ability to hire instructors with industry experience that align to career and technical pathways offered to District students in grades 9 through 12;
- Opportunity to increase the number of career and technical and dual-credit course offerings to students in grades 9 through 12;
- Ability to hire individuals who are highly proficient in world languages and staff hard-to-fill Languages Other Than English (LOTE) positions;
- Ability to hire instructors with industry experience in specific advanced, highly specialized visual and performing arts courses<sup>4</sup>; and
- Ability to hire Out-of-State Certified<sup>5</sup> instructors who hold an active standard teaching certification from another state in the same content area of the teaching position.

### **Implementation Guidance**

When developing parameters for hiring instructors in the areas of career and technical education, dual-credit, world languages, and visual and performing arts coursework who do not have the requisite certificate or permit and out-of-state certified<sup>5</sup> teachers in all content areas, the District shall ensure the following:

- The District must first consider high quality, certified teachers.
- The District must establish criteria for selection of high quality, non-certified candidates.
- The District must implement a rigorous on-boarding and training program for newly-hired, non-certified instructors. The program must emphasize support in classroom management and effective instructional practice.
- Non-certified instructors hired under this provision must be evaluated under the Teacher Excellence Initiative (TEI).
- The District must establish metrics to assess the effectiveness and efficacy of non-certified instructors hired under the Local Innovation Plan.
- The District must establish metrics to assess the effectiveness and efficacy of out-of-state certified<sup>5</sup> instructors hired under the Local Innovation Plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Career and technical education “prepares youth and adults for a wide range of high-wage, high-skill, high-demand careers.” (*Association for Career & Technical Education*)

<sup>2</sup> Dual-credit courses award credit for college and high school simultaneously

<sup>3</sup> “World languages” include all Languages Other Than English (LOTE) and American Sign Language, but are not inclusive of Bilingual Education.

<sup>4</sup> Visual and Performing Arts include advanced, highly specialized courses for which a: there are a lack of specialized teacher preparation programs or b) certified teachers may lack necessary expertise.

<sup>5</sup> Does not include Special Education and Bilingual/ESL

# *Competency-Based Learning (CBL)*

## **Exemption**

Texas Education Code [§25.092](#)

MINIMUM ATTENDANCE FOR CLASS CREDIT OR FINAL GRADE.

(a) Except as provided by this section, a student in any grade level from kindergarten through grade 12 may not be given credit or a final grade for a class unless the student is in attendance for at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered.

Texas Education Code [§25.083](#)

SCHOOL DAY INTERRUPTIONS.

(b) The board of trustees of each school district shall adopt and strictly enforce a policy limiting the removal of students from class for remedial tutoring or test preparation.

## **Benefits of Exemptions**

The implementation of Competency-Based Learning (CBL) is available with these exemptions allowing the District flexibility for students demonstrating mastery of content through an innovative system and a more flexible, individualized pace not constrained by attendance rules. In addition, measuring mastery would be expanded to alternative educational methods that require students to demonstrate proficiency of course standards.

Most urgently, this system would allow for students to make learning leaps needed to mitigate the negative impacts of COVID-19 related to capturing course credit or grade level proficiency for on-track graduation.

## **Implementation Guidance**

- The District will allow CBL exemptions in two settings:
  1. The District virtual school
  2. As an acceleration strategy for all District students to regain class credit or get back on track academically.
- The District will create clear definitions and established standards for CBL and for student mastery of competencies to award credit.
- The District will provide ongoing training for district staff as well as parents and students on options for CBL.