District Of Innovation (DOI)
2025-2030

Approval by DOIC: March 28, 2025
Posted Online: March 29, 2025
Pending approval by MISD Board: 5/29/2025

Introduction

House Bill 1842, passed during the 84th Legislative Session, permits Texas public districts to become Districts of Innovation and to obtain exemption from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code (TEC), During 2020, the Matagorda Independent School District's Board of Trustees ("Board") 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. In Spring 2025, the District Improvement Plan Committee and the Board approved the Local District of Innovation Plan. The term of the current plan ends May 31, 2030.

Local Innovation Plans must be renewed every five years to maintain a District of Innovation Status. In Spring 2025, Matagorda ISD began the process to review and renew the current District of Innovation Plan. Based on direction provided by the Board and input from various stakeholders, the Local Innovation Committee proposed this plan.

Term

The term of the plan is for five years, beginning May 29, 2025, and ending May 31, 2030, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. If, within the terms of this Plan, other areas of operations are to be considered for flexibility as part of HB 1842, the Board will nominate a new 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 District may not implement two separate plans at any one time.

Matagorda ISD District of Innovation Renewal Timeline	
March 28, 2025	Local Innovation Committee met to review plan and renewal process
March 29, 2025	Renewed plan posted to Matagorda ISD website for 30 days prior to school board approval
May 29, 2025	Matagorda ISD Board of Trustees approved the renewed local innovation plan.
May 30, 2025	The renewed plan was provided as a link of the current local plan to the Texas Education Agency

I. Certification – General:

Exemption from TEC §21.003, §21.053, & §21.057
Related Board Policies: DBA (Legal/Local); DK (Legal/Local)

TEC §21.003(a) states a person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern or teacher trainee, librarian, educational aide, administrator, educational diagnostician, or school counselor by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued as provided by Subchapter B.

Innovative Strategies:

1. The campus administration may submit to the Superintendent a request for local certification that will allow a certified teacher to teach one subject in a related field for which he/she is not certified. The campus administration must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses that would qualify this individual to teach the proposed subject. Emergency or financial situations creating the need for this assignment should also be noted.
2. The current certification requirement severely limits the district's options to hire professionals with work related experience or degrees to teach a variety of courses, including CTE and STEM related courses. To provide more students with the opportunity to take such courses, and obtain industrial certifications, the District seeks to establish its own local qualification requirements instead of the requirements set forth in TEC §21.003(a). The district does not wish to be exempted from any existing laws relating to teacher contracts or teacher benefits. This exemption will allow the district to:
    a. Consider part-time professionals to teach courses
    b. Provide an opportunity for professionals to transition from other work-related jobs to the teaching profession.
    c. Increase the number of CTE and STEM type courses available.
    d. Grant trade related professionals the ability to teach related courses.

3. The Superintendent will report this action to the Board of Trustees as soon as practical.
4. A teacher certification waiver, state permit applications, or other paperwork will not be submitted to the Texas Education Agency.
5. All candidates would be carefully considered to ensure the individual has sufficient education and expertise to provide instruction necessary to meet the TEKS for the course to be taught. Qualifications would include demonstrated subject matter expertise, such as: professional work experience, formal training and education, relevant industry license, certification, or registration; or any combination of these deemed sufficient by the Superintendent and Board of Trustees.
6. The district will ensure criminal background checks are completed as required by the State Board of Education (SBEC).
7. Matagorda ISD does ensure that **TEC §21.003 will be followed with regard to special education, bilingual/ESL, and prekindergarten must continue to be SBEC certified.**

II.School Calendar - School Start and End Date, Need for Local Control:

Exemption from TEC §25.0811; TEC §25.0812
Related Board Policies: EB (Legal/Local)

TEC §25.0811 states that a school district may not begin student instruction before the 4th Monday of August. TEC §25.0812 states that a school district may not schedule the last day of school before May 15. The current process allows no flexibility in the design of the annual academic calendars to fit the needs of the community or the desires of the local Board of Trustees who represent community interests in this matter.

Innovative Strategies: ***while meeting the overall 75,600 minutes required.***

1. Relief from the statute will allow Matagorda ISD to develop a calendar that addresses student instruction and focused professional development in conjunction with the new instructional minutes' requirement, rather than days.
2. Alignment of the district calendar with local colleges, advanced placement exams, and STAAR timelines.

Provide for increased local control of the instructional calendar to be responsive to community needs.

III. Teacher Contract Days:

Exemption from: TEC §21.401
Relevant Board Policies: DCB (Legal/Local)

TEC 21.401 currently requires a contract between the district and educator to be a minimum of 10 months. Additionally, an educator employed under a 10-month contract must provide a minimum of 187 days of service.

Innovative Strategies:

1. This strategy aims to provide the district with the flexibility to reduce teacher contracts by two to five days. Depending on the chosen calendar and the number of instructional days, teacher contracts could range from 182 to 185 days. This approach seeks to better align teacher service days with instructional needs.

IV. Class Size

Exemption from: TEC §25.112, 25.113, 25.111
Relevant Board Policies: BF & EEB (Legal)

Under current state law, kindergarten through 4th-grade classes may not exceed a student-to-teacher ratio of 22:1. If an individual class surpasses this ratio, the district must take one of the following actions: hire an additional teacher, reassign teachers from other schools with lower enrollment, or submit a waiver request to the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Along with the waiver request, the district is required to notify each parent of the affected class by sending a letter informing them that the waiver has been submitted and that the class size exceeds the 22:1 ratio.

Innovation Strategies:

1.
2. **Proposed:** Matagorda ISD will strive to maintain a 22:1 student-to-teacher ratio in all K-4 core classrooms. If a classroom exceeds this ratio, the district will make decisions at the local level on how to address the situation, eliminating the need to submit a waiver request to the Texas Education Agency (TEA)

MISD District of Innovation Committee Members for Renewal Plan

Meeting 3/28/2025 10 AM

Sign- In Sheet

Member	Role
Shannon Chapman	Superintendent
Kristi Washburn	Principal
Patricia Broussard	Special Programs Director
Moira Gesford	District Testing Coordinator/Teacher
Marlene Guevera	Teacher
Jamie Brent	Teacher
Hallie McKee	Teacher
Stephanie Weigt	Teacher
Megan Martin	Parent
Stephanie Whitehurst	Community Member