



DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLAN 2026-2031



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Introduction

House Bill 1842, Section 4, passed in the 84th Texas Legislative Session, provides an opportunity for Texas public school districts to modify state requirements at the local level to better meet the needs of the students served, in order for each student to develop his or her unique talents and interests. As a District of Innovation, Clear Creek ISD (CCISD) is able to implement the CCISD Strategic Plan with the increased flexibility and the freedom necessary to personalize learning and ensure each student is prepared to assume the role as a productive citizen.

The Clear Creek Independent School District Strategic Plan is focused on meeting the needs and aspirations of each student. Initially developed by a diverse group of thirty teachers, administrators, parents, and school board trustees, the strategic plan has been shaped by over 1,000 teachers, parents, and community members to embody the hopes and dreams for the future. House Bill 1842 and the subsequent Texas Education Code, Subchapter 12A provide CCISD an opportunity to deepen the strategic plan in all aspects of district operations.

Timeline

Steps	Notes	Proposed Dates
District-level committee holds a <u>public meeting</u> to consider the final version of the proposed plan, and has approved the plan		March 18, 2026
Final version of the proposed plan on website for at least 30 days		April 2, 2026
Board of Trustees adopts proposed plan	Before expiration (October 31, 2026)	May 4, 2026
District notifies commissioner of plan approval and provides a link/copy to TEA	No later than 15 th day after Board adoption	By May 19, 2026



CCISD Strategic Plan

The foundational components of the CCISD Strategic Plan are as follows:

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Clear Creek Independent School District, the visionary leader igniting learning for all, is to ensure each student achieves, contributes and leads with integrity in a safe and nurturing environment distinguished by authentic relationships, service before self and the spirit of exploration.

Vision

Empowering every student with a world-class education that ignites passions and fuels endeavors.

Value Statement

People, Purpose & Promise

Statement of Beliefs

- There is a collective moral imperative to invest in each person's capacity to thrive.
- People thrive when they are physically safe and emotionally resilient.
- Determination, perseverance, and resilience lead to growth and excellence.
- We are stronger because we develop each person's unique talents and abilities.
- Relationships built on trust, compassion, and respect fuel student growth.
- A culture of innovation is driven by curiosity and exploration.
- Each person is responsible for our collective success.
- Our success will be evident in each student's achievements.

Core Values

- Trustworthiness: Act with honesty in all that you do
- Respect: Value yourself and others
- Responsibility: Own your choices
- Fairness: Play by the rules and consider the needs of others
- Caring: Be kind to others
- Citizenship: Work to improve your school, community, and country.

Parameters

- We will stand firm in our commitment to each student.
- We will focus decisions on what is best for students.
- We will base decisions on facts and data.
- We will treat each person with dignity and respect.
- We will sustain a culture of inclusion and collaboration.
- We will model what we expect.
- We will compromise neither excellence nor integrity.

Goals & Strategies

1. Students and staff will thrive in a secure environment, build connections and community, and become resilient leaders.



- 1.1. Strengthen districtwide systems to ensure a safe environment.
- 1.2. Develop and facilitate intentional opportunities to build connections and community.
- 1.3. Create challenging experiences for students and staff to elevate their leadership abilities.
2. Each student will engage in world-class learning experiences that foster curiosity, develop talents, guide exploration, and fuel achievement.
 - 2.1 Enhance our comprehensive framework of learning standards to guarantee all students have high quality curriculum, meaningful assessments, interventions, and enrichment to ensure academic achievement.
 - 2.2 Develop the attributes of a CCISD Profile of a Learner in each student.
 - 2.3 Connect all students to learning pathways that align to interests and ensure future-ready graduates.
 - 2.4 Scale up proven academic programs and replicate best practices.
 - 2.5 Provide innovative learning experiences to attract and retain students.
3. CCISD will cultivate innovation through strategic collaboration and responsive organizational stewardship.
 - 3.1 Invest the resources needed to foster a culture of innovation and improvement.
 - 3.2 Develop a framework to ensure cross functional collaboration.
 - 3.3 Organize strategic partnerships to better align community resources with school and student needs.
 - 3.4 Streamline the communication and engagement experience for families.
 - 3.5 Implement an objective evaluation process to improve, modify, or abandon existing district programs and processes.

Background

On September 26, 2016, the CCISD Board of Trustees appointed the District Education Improvement Committee to serve as the District of Innovation District Advisory Committee (“Committee”) comprised of diverse leaders representing a cross-section of the District’s stakeholders including teachers, campus professionals, parents, and administrators. The 2021-2026 District of Innovation Plan (“Plan”) was approved for five years, beginning November 1, 2021, and ending October 31, 2026. The Plan was amended on September 19, 2022.

New legislation passed in 2025 during the 89th Legislative Session impacting the exemptions permitted under the Plan and prompting renewal of the Plan prior to its October 31, 2026, expiration date. On March 18, 2026, the District Education Improvement Committee convened in a public meeting to discuss, provide feedback, and approve the proposed 2026-2031 District of Innovation Plan for Clear Creek ISD.

Under Texas Education Code, Subchapter 12A, districts may identify certain requirements imposed by the Texas Education Code (TEC) “that inhibit the goals of the plan and from which the district should be exempted on adoption of the plan. . .” Because CCISD’s Strategic Plan and its Local Innovation Plan are comprehensive and impact areas in the TEC, and because CCISD seeks to maximize local control of educational decisions for each student, CCISD seeks exemption from the following provisions of the TEC:



First Day of Instruction

Texas Education Code §25.0811

The first day of school may not be held prior to the fourth Monday of August.

Innovation

Determining a school district calendar that best meets the needs of students, families, educators, and community members is one of the most basic forms of local control. Annually, the Board of Trustees adopts a calendar based on draft calendars developed by the District Education Improvement Committee (DEIC) which gathers feedback from each school community. Draft calendars are also subject to a community vote. Exemption from the first day of instruction mandate enables CCISD to begin the school year on an abbreviated/staggered week, easing the transition for students entering kindergarten, intermediate school, and high school. This added measure of flexibility provides an element of autonomy and local control and a more collaborative decision-making. As part of the CCISD Local Innovation Plan, draft calendars will continue to be developed, shared, and feedback gathered stakeholders. Additionally, the District Education Improvement Committee will fully examine all input before making a final recommendation to the Superintendent. The CCISD Board of Trustees is committed to examining and carefully considering all input.

School Day Interruptions and Minimum Attendance for Class Credit or Final Grade

Texas Education Code §§25.083 and 25.092

State law prohibits school districts from removing students from regularly scheduled classes for remediation or test preparation if removal would cause the student to miss more than 10% of the school days the class is offered. The law also requires students to attend class 90% of the school days the class is offered to earn credit or a final grade. The law requires the District to award class credit to students based on "seat time" rather than based on demonstrated mastery of the learning.

Innovation

The Minimum Attendance for Class Credit or Final Grade requirement is also referred to as the 90% rule. This requirement is an arbitrary percentage where school districts award credit based on seat time rather than demonstrated mastery of the learning. The Local Innovation Plan maintains a minimum attendance percentage for traditional classes, while allowing for flexibility in students demonstrating mastery of content through an innovative system and a more flexible pace, such as personalized learning.



Student/Teacher Ratios and Class Size

Texas Education Code §§25.111, 25.112 & 25.113

Classes in grades prekindergarten through 4th may not exceed a ratio of 22 students to 1 teacher. When an individual class exceeds this ratio, the District must either add a new teacher, reassign teachers from other schools with lower student enrollment, or submit a waiver request to the Texas Education Agency. These waiver requests have not been rejected by TEA. In addition to the waiver request, it is required that a letter be sent to each parent in the class that exceeds the 22:1 ratio, informing them the waiver has been submitted and the class exceeds the 22:1 ratio.

Innovation

CCISD believes that smaller class size plays a positive role in the classroom, but this must be balanced with the timing of adding the best qualified teachers. As part of the CCISD Local Innovation Plan, the District will maintain the 22:1 student to teacher ratio in prekindergarten through fourth grades and will continue to follow the process of thoughtful planning, assignment of teachers to the schools with growing student enrollment, reviewing staffing ratios, and making decisions in the best interests of students while taking into consideration the financial capacity of the District. In the event class sizes exceed the 22:1 ratio in prekindergarten through fourth grade, a TEA waiver will not be necessary, but the Superintendent will submit a request to the Board of Trustees for approval. Additionally, parents will be informed of all efforts relative to class size. This exemption provides CCISD local control over class size ratios, without the unnecessary step of seeking a waiver from the Texas Education Agency.

District-Level Planning and Decision-Making

Texas Education Code § 11.252

Site-based decision-making has existed in Texas for over 30 years. The original intent of classroom teachers making informed decisions has been replaced with a list of compliance measures that have removed meaning and relevance from this district decision-making process. The requirements in content and format of the district improvement plan have shifted an otherwise important planning process into a bureaucratic process that detracts from the importance of thoughtful planning and implementation.

Innovation

CCISD has a strong history of involving teachers, administrators, parents, community members and students in the decision-making process. Under the Local Innovation Plan, the prescriptive list of requirements in the district improvement plan is replaced by the Strategic Planning process. Those items listed in TEC Section 11.251 detailing the selection of representatives for the District Improvement Committee continue to be implemented. Those items listed in TEC Section 11.252 of a compliance nature are no longer implemented and are replaced by relevant strategic plan components.



Campus-Level Planning and Decision-Making

Texas Education Code §11.253

The original intent of campus site-based decision-making has been replaced with a list of compliance measures that have removed meaning and relevance from this campus decision-making process. The requirements in content and format of the Campus Improvement Plan have shifted an otherwise important planning process into a bureaucratic process that detracts from the importance of thoughtful planning and implementation.

Innovation

CCISD has a strong history of involving teachers, administrators, parents, community members and students in the decision-making process. Under the Local Innovation Plan the prescriptive list of requirements in the campus improvement plan will be replaced by the Campus Strategic Planning process. Those items listed in TEC Section 11.251 detailing the selection of representatives for the Campus Improvement Committee will continue to be implemented. Those items listed in TEC Section 11.253 that are of a compliance nature will no longer be implemented and be replaced by relevant campus strategic plan components.

Educator Certification Requirements

Texas Education Code §21.003

All teachers paid by a school district must hold the appropriate teacher certificate or permit.

Innovation

The District seeks exemption from the teacher certification requirement set forth in TEC Section 21.003 only to the limited extent necessary to allow the District to hire teachers who are not currently certified, but who have bachelor's degrees and are qualified to teach. CCISD is committed to hiring the best staff available; however, teachers are occasionally needed for difficult-to-fill positions. The District and hiring campus will assess appropriate professional learning needs for any teacher hired under this exemption. Special education and bilingual/ESL teachers must hold SBEC certifications. Moreover, the District, in compliance with TEC Section §21.0032, has established a structured and data-driven approach for reducing the number of uncertified teachers hired in the District. This plan will be fully implemented by the 2029-2030 school year.



Teacher Mentors

Texas Education Code §21.458

Teachers are required to have three or more years of experience in the field to serve as mentors, thereby limiting the possibility of allowing exceptional teachers with less than three years of experience to mentor novice teachers.

Innovation

Some teachers enter the education profession and quickly develop exceptional skills. This exemption allows the District flexibility in designating exceptional teachers with fewer than three years of experience to serve as mentors for novice teachers.

Teacher and Administrator Appraisal System

Texas Education Code §21.352, 21.353, 21.354, 21.3541

All teachers and school/district administrators are required to be evaluated yearly, whether through the Texas Teacher/Principal Evaluation and Support System or a local district's appraisal system.

Innovation

The District seeks exemption from the yearly evaluation and conferencing requirements because exceptional teachers and administrators are included in the yearly appraisal system. Time invested in conducting yearly appraisals for exceptional teachers and administrators could be better spent working with teachers or administrators in need of assistance. This exemption allows distinguished teachers and administrators to be appraised once every three years and to be exempt from conferencing requirements. This exemption gives exceptional educators time and space for personalized improvement and gives evaluators more time to support developing educators.

Probationary Contracts

Texas Education Code §21.102

New hires entitled to Chapter 21 contracts are generally employed for up to three years on a probationary contract. An exception to this rule exists for employees who have been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight years immediately preceding employment by the district. These employees are entitled to a term contract in their second year of employment (commonly referred to as "the five of eight rule"). In addition, if there is doubt as to whether an employee should be given a term contract after three years on a probationary contract, school districts are prohibited from extending a probationary contract for a fourth year without first obtaining approval from the school board.

Innovation

Exemption from the "five of eight rule" will provide campus administration with additional time to evaluate staff proficiency and facilitate the employment of highly effective employees before issuing them a term contract. In addition, flexibility in offering fourth year probationary contracts will allow the district to provide additional opportunities for professional growth and increase opportunities for employee retention.



Grievances

Texas Education Code §§26A.001 and 26A.002

During the 89th legislative session, the legislature approved new rules that amended timelines, filing requirements, and grievance procedures. The new rules make the process less efficient and inhibit the district from timely addressing and remedying grievances. The new grievance rules extended the period for filing a complaint to up to 60 days. Complainants who engaged in informal attempts to resolve their grievance have 90 days to file a formal grievance from the date the district provided information to the person regarding how to file the grievance. Complainants also have up to 20 days to appeal a decision, compared to the ten business days in the district's previous policies. Complainants are allowed to amend their complaints and supplement the record at any point in the grievance process, thereby extending the grievance process and interfering with the administration's efforts to investigate and resolve the entire complaint at the lowest level possible.

Innovation

These sections of the Education Code restrict the District's ability to maintain local control and an orderly process over grievances. The extended timelines under the new law make it difficult to investigate claims, gather evidence, and obtain statements from witnesses, some of whom may be students. The use of calendar days for calculating timelines makes compliance very difficult when the days fall over weekends and holidays. The district's former grievance policies allowed for a complainant to supplement the record to address any evidence or information the District relied upon or discovered at the various levels of the grievance process. Exemption from the new laws will enable the district to return to its former fair and orderly process where grievances were addressed through the District's local publicly posted grievance policies and procedures, including reasonable timelines and a prohibition against retaliation. This exemption does not exempt the district from requirements or authority of the Texas Commissioner of Education or the Texas Education Agency, such as those in § 26A.001(f), § 26A.001(h), and § 26A.001(i).