



DISTRICT EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 23, 2026

Community Rooms - Challenger Columbia Stadium

- I. **Welcome** – Dr. Michael Houston, Deputy Superintendent of Academic Advancement & Innovation welcomed the DEIC members to the first meeting of the year. He began by reading our district's mission statement, our vision statement, CORE values and our value statement, and that everything we do reflects our People, Purpose and Promise. These values guide every decision the district makes.

Dr. Houston shared with the committee that the DEIC exists to strengthen the connection between district leadership and the community we serve – through collaboration, transparency, and continuous improvement.

This committee is made up of classroom teachers, professional staff, campus and district leaders, parents, community members and business representatives.

The role of the DEIC is to assist with the development, review and evaluate the District Improvement Plan, provide feedback on district educational goals, priorities, academic calendar and major instructional programs.

While the DEIC does not make final decisions, its recommendations help inform the work of district leadership and the Board of Trustees.

- II. **Federal Programs** – Amber Patrick, Director of Federal Programs began by explaining (ESSA) Every Student Succeeds Act is the federal education law that governs K-12 public education programs funded in the United States.

ESSA is designed to ensure that all students have access to a high-quality education while providing additional support to students who may be at risk of academic failure.

It requires districts to:

- Set academic standards and measure student achievement.
- Monitor school performance and student subgroup outcomes.
- Identify and support schools needing improvement.
- Increase transparency through public reporting of school data.
- Engage families and stakeholders in school improvement efforts.

ESSA Program Overview

- Staff, parents, and community advise on ESSA programming annually.
- ESSA governs USDE entitlement grants; CCISD participates in:
 - Title I – economically disadvantaged students (schoolwide programs)
 - Title II – teacher/leader growth
 - Title III – English Learner acquisition
 - Title III Immigrant – Immigrant student support
- Majority of funding goes to staffing (direct student support + teacher professional learning). Remaining funds cover support like instructional supplies, professional learning, and family engagement.
- ESSA Program Plan guides spending across all 4 grants; driven by student achievement data and feedback from DEIC, PTAs, and district surveys.

- Plan posted annually on district website; 2026 plan posts October 1, with a new at-a-glance summary.
- Year-round anonymous survey available for feedback anytime; contact info optional if a response is requested.
- Floor opened for questions.

III. **School Calendar Review** – Dr. Houston went over the parameters used in making the school calendar and stated that since our next meeting is not until December 1, 2026, we may need to send out calendar information to the committee via email. Below are some of the considerations in developing the calendar.

- We must have 75,600 minimum operational minutes for students
- Student instructional days and first/last day of school
- Staff contract days and required professional development/workdays
- Weather/make-up days and sufficient instructional-minute buffer
- Major breaks and holidays – Thanksgiving, winter and spring break, etc.
- Semester/grading-period balance
- Early release/student holiday days
- Major testing windows – STAAR/EOC, AP, etc.
- District-specific requirements – Graduation or Summer Programming

We will develop 2 or 3 good calendar choices for consideration. Dr. Houston reiterated to the committee that their input is important and valued, however, the School Board would make the final decision on which school calendar our district adopts for the 2027-2028 school year.

IV. **District Goals 2026-2027** – Dr. Houston provided each member of the DEIC committee with a copy of the 2026-2027 District Goals along with the strategies and timeline for these goals.

Goal A – Academic Achievement

- Strengthen and align instructional systems to improve student academic growth by 2% and improve overall district accountability to 90 or higher.
- Expand innovative student learning pathways and strengthen College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR) outcomes.

Goal B – Beyond Boundaries

- Implement a District facility optimization plan that ensures every student has access to world class education in response to enrollment trends.
- Strengthen public understanding of school finance and support for future funding solutions.
- Create a sustainable financial model that reduces costs, improves efficiency, and allows employees to focus on high-value work.

Goal C – Culture of Excellence

- Improve employee engagement, trust, communication, and retention scores on the district's annual survey by at least two points through an environment where employees can do their best work.
- Improve districtwide systems to ensure a safe environment through a centralized safety vulnerability prevention system.
- Enhance the family experience through two-way engagement, technology, and streamlining systems and processes.

The DEIC meeting concluded with the committee members dividing into their selected sub-committees, led by Cabinet members. Each group will receive additional information about its assigned goal, engage in discussion, and have an opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback. This process supports deeper stakeholder engagement and strengthens the DEIC's advisory role in district continuous improvement efforts.

Goal A – Facilitated by Angi Stallings, Franklin Moses, Monica Giuffre and Kelly Sawchak-Mooney

Goal B – Facilitated by Alice Benzaia and Paul Miller

Goal C - Facilitated by Elaina Polsen and Robert Branch