

District of Innovation Plan



1305 E. Pinecrest
Marshall, TX 7560
Dr. Jerry Gibson, Superintendent

Introduction

House Bill 1842, passed during the 84th Legislative Session, provided the opportunity for Texas public school districts to pursue the designation of District of Innovation. This allows local school districts to obtain exemptions from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code to allow more flexibility and local control for innovative programming. On October 15, 2018, the Marshall Independent School District's Board of Trustees passed a resolution to initiate applying for the designation of District of Innovation.

Term

The term of the District of Innovation Plan will begin with the start of the 2020-2021 school year and end with the 2024-2025 school year, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Marshall Independent School District is to improve outcomes for all students by providing leadership, guidance and support to schools.

Vision Statement

Marshall Independent School District envisions that each learner is equipped to successfully achieve his or her vision and be a productive, contributing citizen in a global society.

Strategic Goals

1. We will support, retain and recruit district personnel aligned with the Maverick Vision.
2. We will capitalize on the resources of our diverse community to cultivate new and strengthen existing partnerships through collaboration and communication.
3. We will develop opportunities to increase parental or guardian involvement to strengthen the parents' and students' educational experience.
4. We will build and maintain facilities that are clean and efficient to provide safe and secure environments for 21st century learners.
5. We will raise academic achievement of all students through equitable, rigorous opportunities and increased expectations.
6. We will fully embrace and integrate technology so that students will be equipped to meet their needs to be marketable for their future endeavors.
7. We will adopt an effective, comprehensive and sustainable discipline management system that promotes academics and student and teacher retention.
8. We will develop sustainable processes and systems that build positive relationships for all stakeholders within the district.

MISD District of Innovation Committee Members
Dr. Jerry Gibson, Superintendent-Chair

Sub-Committee One-

- Beth Rowe, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources – Sub-Committee Chair
- Esmeralda Collazo, Bilingual/ESL/Migrant Coordinator
- Dr. Melinda Jennings, Director of State and Federal Programs
- Sharone Woolen, Director of Special Education
- Katina Brown, MHS Principal
- Lydia Fields, MHS Instructional Coach
- Nakeisha Pegues, MJHS Principal
- Marjorie Bray, MJHS Teacher
- Kelvin Jefferson, Price T. Young Elementary Assistant Principal
- Stephanie Cheyne, Price T. Young Elementary Teacher
- Jerry Hancock, Sam Houston Elementary Principal
- Allison Smith, Sam Houston Elementary Teacher
- Frances Moore, Washington Early Childhood Center Principal
- Dana Culberson, Washington Early Childhood Center Teacher
- Dr. P.J. Winters, Community Member-ETBU Masters of Education Director

Sub-Committee Two-

- Anika Perkins, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction-Sub-Committee Chair
- Callie Dorchester, PEIMS Coordinator
- Eddie Mulanax, Information Systems Coordinator
- Angela Fitzpatrick, Principal, David Crockett Elementary
- Melissa McIntosh, Academic Dean, Marshall High School
- Lula Waskom, Counselor, Sam Houston Elementary
- Demetra McElroy, Teacher, Price T. Young Elementary
- Sarah Ashcraft, Teacher, Marshall Junior High School
- Keith Hill, Community Member

Meeting Schedule

Sub-Committee One:

- 11-15-18 Meeting, 3:30-4:30 PM, at MISD Administration Lecture Hall
Thursday
- 12-13-18 Meeting, 3:30-4:30 PM, at MISD Administration Lecture Hall
Thursday
- 01-17-19 Meeting, 3:30-4:30 PM, at MISD Administration Lecture Hall
Thursday

Sub-Committee Two:

- 11-27-18 Meeting, 5:00-6:00 PM, at MISD Administration Lecture Hall
Tuesday
- 12-11-18 Meeting, 5:00-6:00 PM, at MISD Administration Lecture Hall
Tuesday
- 01-15-19 Meeting, 5:00-6:00 PM, at MISD Administration Lecture Hall
Tuesday

Timeframe

- 10-15-18 Board Approved District of Innovation Resolution
- 11-12-18 Board Conducted Public Hearing and Decided to Pursue
- 11-12-18 Board Approved Innovation Planning Committee
- 01-18-19 DOI Plan Posted on District's Website for Public Comment and Review for Thirty Days
- 01-22-19 MISD Board Meeting, 5:30 PM; District of Innovation Public Hearing
- 09-16-19 MISD Board Meeting, 5:30 PM; Board Approval of Final DOI Plan

Marshall Independent School District

District of Innovation Proposed Plan

First Day of Instruction:

TEC Code Requiring Exemption:

TEC 25.0811: A school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.

Rationale of Exemption for MISD:

Starting school a week earlier will allow the district to have more flexibility with:

- Balanced semesters
- Providing more instructional time before state and national assessments
- Semesters being better aligned with local colleges for dual credit classes

Implementation Procedures:

The district will ensure:

- Changes to student and staff academic calendar will not go into effect until the 2019-2020 school year.
- Upon approval of the innovation plan, the public will be notified of the school year beginning earlier.
- The winter break will serve as a mid-point for the school year.

Teacher Certification:

TEC Code Requiring Exemption:

TEC 21.003(a): "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."

TEC 21.053(a): "A person who desires to teach in a public school shall present the person's certificate for filing with the employing district before the person's contract with the board of trustees of the district is binding."

TEC 21.053(b): “An educator who does not hold a valid certificate may not be paid for teaching or work done before the effective date of issuance of a valid certificate.”

TEC 21.057(a): “A school district that assigns an inappropriately certified or uncertified teacher to the same classroom for more than 30 consecutive instructional days during the same school year shall provide written notice of the assignment to a parent or guardian of each student in that classroom.”

TEC 21.057(b): “The superintendent of the school district shall provide the notice required by Subsection (a) not later than the 30th instructional day after the date of the assignment of the inappropriately certified or uncertified teacher.”

Rationale of Exemption for Marshall ISD:

Currently, if the district cannot locate a certified teacher for a position or if a certified teacher is needed for a subject outside of their certification, the district must request a teaching permit or an emergency permit certification from the Texas Education Agency (TEA)/State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC). This system is burdensome and does not take into account the unique instructional and/or financial needs of the district. These statutes make it difficult for the district to recruit, employ, and retain persons who have appropriate expertise, experience, and/or industry certifications that render them qualified to fill such positions.

Upon approval of the innovation plan, Marshall ISD (MISD) will maintain its current expectation and commitment to hire certified professionals and will continue to seek highly effective, certified educators for all teaching positions. However, where that is not reasonably possible, the district will have the flexibility to issue a local teaching permit (District of Innovation Permit) and hire individuals who are knowledgeable in the area and are fully equipped to effectively perform the duties of the position in question based on local certification criteria without requesting a permit or waiver from the TEA.

Implementation Procedures:

1. In an effort to best serve the students of MISD, all decisions pertaining to teacher certification and assignments will be handled locally.
 - Teacher certification waivers, state permit applications, fees, or notifications will not be submitted to the TEA.
2. MISD will continue its quest for effective, certified teachers, but in the event that a certified teacher cannot be secured, the district may issue a District of Innovation Permit based on skills and experiences outside the traditional teacher certification pathway based on the following criteria:

- An individual with certain qualifications who is not state certified as a teacher can be eligible to teach in hard to fill positions including, but not limited to:
 - Career and Technology Education
 - Dual Credit
 - Languages other than English
 - Math
 - Science
 - Individuals hired under the MISD DOI Plan exemption, will:
 - be issued a District of Innovation Permit;
 - receive a one-year, Non-Certified contract that must be renewed annually;
 - and be appraised using the same teacher appraisal system as required of all certified teachers.
 - A person seeking a District of Innovation Permit must have the abilities and related knowledge/experience to fulfill the requirements of the position.
 - The principal/director must submit to the Superintendent and/or the Superintendent's Designee, a request for a District of Innovation Permit outlining all of the individual's credentials/qualifications.
 - The principal/director must submit a summary outlining efforts made to secure a qualified and appropriately certified teacher.
 - Qualifications that may be considered include but are not limited to:
 - Professional work experience.
 - Formal training and education, including an Associate's Degree (CTE) and Bachelors/Masters/Doctoral Degrees.
 - Active/Relevant industry certification or registration.
 - Combination of work experience, training, and education.
 - Demonstration of successful experience working with students.
 - The Superintendent and/or the Superintendent's Designee will then approve the request if he/she believes that the individual possesses the knowledge, skills and experience required for the position and believes that the individual could be an asset to students.
 - If approved by the Superintendent, the candidate will be presented to the Board of Trustees for consideration.
 - An employee working under a District of Innovation Permit will not receive a term contract, but will be issued a Non-Certified contract that may be renewed annually.
 - Determinations shall be made on a case-by-case basis.
3. In order to ensure high quality instruction, MISD will provide the following support to candidates hired under a District of Innovation Permit:
- The campus principal and/or director will create a personal professional development plan for each teacher.

- When possible, lesson plans will be created in partnership with certified teachers in the same field.
- Additional professional development and support for classroom management will be provided.
- A designated mentor will be assigned.
- Classroom observation opportunities will be available.

Elementary Kindergarten-4th Grade Class Size Limits:

TEC Code Requiring Exemption:

TEC 25.112: (a) “Except as otherwise authorized by this section, a school district may not enroll more than 22 students in a kindergarten, first, second, third or fourth grade class.”

(b) “Not later than the 30th day after the first day of the 12-week period for which a district whose average daily attendance is adjusted under Section 42.005(c) is claiming an exemption under Subsection (a), the district shall notify the commissioner in writing that the district is claiming an exemption for the period stated in the notice.”

(c) “In determining the number of students to enroll in any class, a school district shall consider the subject to be taught, the teaching methodology to be used, and any need for individual instruction.”

(d) “On application of a school district, the commissioner may except the district from the limit in Subsection (a) if the commissioner finds the limit works an undue hardship on the district. An exception expires at the end of the school year for which it is granted.”

(e) “A school district seeking an exception under Subsection (d) shall notify the commissioner and apply for the exception not later than the later of:

(1) October 1; or

(2) the 30th day after the first school day the district exceeds the limit in Subsection (a).”

(f) “If a school district repeatedly fails to comply with this section, the commissioner may take any appropriate action authorized to be taken by the commissioner under Section 39.131.”

(g) “[Expired Acts 2009, 81st Leg., ch 1347, ...”

TEC 25.113: (a) “A campus or district that is granted an exception under Section 25.112(d) from class size limits shall provide written notice of the exception to the parent of or person standing in parental relation to each student affected by the exception....”

(b) “The notice required by Subsection (a) must be provided not later than the 31st day after:

(1) the first day of the school year; or

(2) the date the exception is granted, if the exception is granted after the beginning of the school year.”

Rationale of Exemption for MISD:

State law limits class sizes to a maximum of 22 students in kindergarten through grade four. If any class exceeds that limit, the district notifies the Board and is required to file a waiver with the TEA that is typically approved without exception. Upon notification of TEA’s approval, the district is then required to notify parents of the approved class size exception via a highly specified notice.

In the event a waiver is not filed or is not approved by TEA, the district faces the following challenges:

- Finding and hiring a highly effective and qualified teacher after the school year has started;
- Requiring new students to attend schools that are not in their neighborhood;
- Splitting classes several weeks after school starts which is difficult for campus administration, teachers, and students;
- Financial constraints for hiring an additional teacher as a result of one or two students over the 22:1 ratio.

Implementation Procedures:

It is the philosophy of MISD that lower class sizes have a positive impact on Kindergarten-4th grade students and the district does not seek to create larger class sizes. We believe, however, that appropriate class sizes can be monitored and maintained at the local level without the necessity of waivers from TEA.

The district fully intends to continue its practice of maintaining reasonable class sizes in kindergarten through grade four. Those standards include staffing at a maximum K-4 class size of 24:1. However, flexibility from these statutes will allow principals to make decisions about reasonable class sizes based on local factors such as the concept of neighborhood schools, the needs and interactions of the particular students involved, the age of the students, the subjects to be taught, and the teacher’s skill and experience. The administration will continue to consider the timing in the school year, available space, and the need for another teacher or teacher aide to ensure that decisions about class size continue to be made in the best interest of the students. This exemption would provide relief from the reporting encumbrances currently required by state law.

Teacher Conference:

TEC Code Requiring Exemption:

TEC 21.404: Guarantees each classroom teacher a planning period. Specifically, each classroom teacher is entitled to at least 450 minutes within each two-week period for instructional preparation, including parent-teacher conferences, evaluating students' work, and planning. A planning period may not be less than 45 minutes within the instructional day. During a planning and preparation period, a classroom teacher may not be required to participate in any other activity.

Based on the Commissioner's interpretation, all conference period assignments must take place when the students are in attendance.

Rationale of Exemption for MISD:

In order that Marshall ISD continues its efforts of providing every classroom with an effective teacher, it is imperative that teachers have time to receive ongoing job-embedded professional development through professional learning communities, and horizontal and vertical planning opportunities. Providing each student with an effective teacher is the number one factor that impacts student achievement.

In addition, with the district's high turnover rate, the district must have a means of providing teachers with ongoing and consistent training and planning time to support teachers' development with both content delivery and art of teaching.

Implementation Procedures:

The district may:

- Assign teachers with an assigned conference period that is at the beginning or end of their scheduled work day, regardless of the students' instructional day.
- Utilize up to two planning periods per week for the purpose of planning, collaboration through PLCs, and modeling lessons. This will be done in an effort to reduce the amount of extended day planning for teachers.

Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator:

TEC Code Requiring Exemption:

TEC 37.0012: Requires that a person be designated to serve as the Campus Behavior Coordinator (CBC) who is primarily responsible for maintaining student discipline and implementation of Chapter 37.

Rationale of Exemption for MISD:

Currently, one campus administrator serves as the Campus Behavior Coordinator. Exemption from this requirement would allow all campus administrators to collaboratively monitor the compliance of Chapter 37 to ensure that the district provides a collaborative approach to discipline.

Implementation Procedures:

The district will:

- Allow all campus administrators to serve in the capacity of Campus Behavior Coordinator as a part of their job description.