



## **Cameron ISD District of Innovation Plan**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The District of Innovation (DOI) is a concept passed by the 84th Texas Legislature through House Bill (HB) 1842 that gives traditional independent school districts most of the flexibilities available to open enrollment charter schools, including exemption from many requirements mandated in the Texas Education Code. As a District of Innovation, Cameron ISD will have:

- greater local control as the decision makers over the educational and instructional model for students;
- increased freedom and flexibility, with accountability, relative to state mandates that govern educational programming;
- power to innovate and think differently.

HB 1842 does not allow for exemptions from statutes including curriculum and graduation requirements or academic and financial accountability.

### **PROCESS**

On January 8, 2018, the Cameron ISD Board of Trustees passed a resolution to hold a public hearing to consider the process of becoming a District of Innovation under HB 1842. On January 22, 2018 the public hearing was held and the local board of trustees appointed a District of Innovation committee consisting of administrators, teachers, parents and community members to develop a DOI plan. The plan would increase local control over CISD operations and support innovation and local initiatives.

## **Cameron ISD District of Innovation Committee**

Allan Sapp	Superintendent
Susan Pommerening	Asst. Superintendent
Joe Oliver	High School Principal
Wendy Mahan	Junior High/Elementary Principal
Terry Dawson	Ben Milam Elementary Principal
Missi Giesenschlag	Director of Business/Finance
Abbie Hanke	Director of Food Service
Kenneth Driska	Director of Transportation/CTE
Kyle Deal	Director of Maintenance/Technology
Tommy Brashear	Director of Athletics
John Anderle	Parent
Rhett Parker	Parent
Shantel Ruth	Parent
Brainne Brock	Yoe High Teacher
Andy Holcombe	Yoe High Teacher
William Yuengel	Yoe High Teacher
Kerry Lloyd	Cameron Junior High Teacher
Amy Morgan	Cameron Junior High Teacher
Lydia Muniz	Cameron Junior High Teacher
Jana Beckhusen	Cameron Elementary Teacher
Angela McAnulty	Cameron Elementary Teacher
Karen Skala	Cameron Elementary Teacher
Bethany DelBosque	Ben Milam Teacher
Susan Dohnalik	Ben Milam Teacher
Joni Hoyle	Ben Milam Teacher
Melanie Romine	Business Representative
Kevin Crouch	Business Representative
Diana Sanchez	YHS Paraprofessional
Kausion Wells	CJH Paraprofessional
Daine Leftwich	CES Paraprofessional
Naomi Molina	BME Paraprofessional

The DOI committee met on February 5<sup>th</sup> and again on February 15, 2018 to develop the plan. The committee chose three focuses: school start date; campus behavior coordinator; teacher certification. The CISD District Advisory Council met on March 19, 2018 to review and then approved the plan unanimously. CISD Board of Trustees approved the plan at the regular March 19, 2018 board meeting.

### **TERM**

The term of the plan is for five years, beginning July 1, 2018, and ending June 30,

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2023 unless terminated, amended or renewed by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The District Education Council and the Board of Trustees will review the plan annually. If, within the term of this Plan, other areas are to be considered for flexibility as part of HB 1842, the Board of Trustees will appoint a committee to consider and propose additional exemptions in the form of an amendment. Any amendment approved by the District Advisory Council and adopted by the Board will adhere to the same term as the original plan.

### **Innovations**

Cameron ISD proposes flexibility and seeks an exemption in the following areas:

#### **First Day of Instruction**

Board Policy: EB(Legal)

#### **Uniform Start Date (TEC 25.0811)**

State law currently prohibits school districts from starting class before the fourth Monday in August, unless they are year-round districts.

#### **Rationale for the Exemption:**

- More professional development opportunities during the school year for teachers
- Flexibility in start and end dates of the school year
- The calendar would be more aligned with college schedules, allowing students to enroll in summer courses that start in early June
- More instructional days prior to required state assessments (i.e. STAAR/EOC)
- Balance the amount of instructional time/days per semester

#### **Proposed Innovation:**

- Cameron ISD will no longer be required to delay the start of school to the fourth Monday in August. The district advisory committee will present proposed calendars annually voted on by all CISD employees. The approved calendar will include an appropriate start day for students that does not occur before August 14th.

#### **Note:**

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- Changing the first day of instruction does not alter the University Interscholastic League (UIL) restrictions for the first day of practice for athletic and fine arts programs. CISD will continue to comply with the UIL calendar for summer practices.

**Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator**  
**Board Policy: FO(Legal); Student Code of Conduct**

**Campus Behavior Coordinator (TEC 37.0012)**

A person at each campus must be designated to serve as the Campus Behavior Coordinator. The person designated may be the principal of the campus or any other campus administrator selected by the principal. Duties include, but are not limited to, promptly notifying parents by telephone and in writing when a student is suspended, removed from DAEP or taken into custody by the law enforcement.

**Rationale for Exemption:**

- This exemption is to allow for the interpretation of the role and responsibilities of a Campus Behavior Coordinator to be fulfilled by multiple administrators as it is unrealistic to have only one person in this role to serve all students.

**Proposed Innovation:**

- The district will maintain all the duties and responsibilities outlined for the Campus Behavior Coordinator and allow to be fulfilled by more than one administrator per campus.
- Will provide campuses the opportunity for campus administrators to develop rapport with students, administrators can hold students accountable while teaching them how to more effectively monitor their own behavior in the future. Each campus should have the freedom to designate more than one campus behavior coordinator to best meet the needs of their students.
- Maintenance of student discipline will be appropriately addressed in the Student Code of Conduct.

**Teacher Certification  
Board Policy DBA, DK  
TEC 21.003(a)**

State law states that a person may not be employed as a teacher by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued by the appropriate state agency. In the event a district cannot locate a certified teacher for a position or a teacher is teaching a subject outside of their certification, the district must request emergency certification from the Texas Education Agency and/or State Board of Educator Certification.

**Rationale for the exemption:**

- The Texas Education Code 21.003 limits the District's ability to hire instructors for hard-to-fill and high-demand courses when high quality, certified teachers are not available in: Career and technical education (CTE), Dual Credit and other electives.
- Teachers with industry certification and native Spanish speakers with qualified experience could be eligible to teach a course through a local teaching certificate.
- Flexibility could also allow a certified teacher to teach outside their field in order to avoid the disruption of an instructional path for students allowing CISD to reduce scheduling conflicts.

**Proposed Innovation:**

- The district will establish local requirements, such as years' experience, qualifications, and industry certifications.
- The district will utilize this exemption in the areas of Career and Technical Education, dual credit and hard to fill electives.
- A currently certified teacher could only teach outside their state certified field if they meet the established local requirements posted above. This would only be used in classes of Career and Technical Education, dual credit and hard to fill electives mentioned above. This employee must be informed as soon as possible in order to plan accordingly.
- Principals will submit candidates to the superintendent who will then determine whether it is in the best interest of the District to certify the individual. The School Board will be notified prior to beginning employment.

Any teacher employed under this exemption will receive a rigorous on-boarding and training program for newly non-certified instructors. The program must emphasize support in classroom management and effective instructional practice.

The district must first consider high quality certified educators for all teaching positions.