

Caddo Mills ISD District of Innovation Plan



Plan Approved

District of Innovation Committee

January 2, 2017

District Improvement Committee

January 11, 2017

Approved by Board of Trustees

April 18, 2017

I. Introduction

The 84th legislature passed House Bill 1842 which allowed traditional independent school districts the ability to access flexibilities which had previously been reserved for Texas’ open enrollment charter schools. In order for an independent school district to obtain these flexibilities, districts must seek designation as a “District of Innovation.” On December 12, 2016, the Caddo Mills ISD Board of Trustees initiated the process by adopting a resolution to pursue a “District of Innovation” designation.

II. Process

On December 12, 2016, the Board appointed a District of Innovation Committee that was composed of campus administrators, teachers, parents, community members, curriculum directors, and Superintendent. The committee met on December 14, 2016, to discuss and draft a Local Innovation Plan. The committee discussed the Texas Education Codes that would benefit Caddo Mills ISD to make the education process and or more effective and or efficient.

The District of Innovation Committee designated two members to convey the plan to each campus at a faculty meeting in order to gather input from campus personnel. These meetings were held during the week of January 2-6, 2017. The District Improvement Team also approved the plan on January 11, 2017, and the plan was posted on the district website for public input on January 13, 2017 for 30 days before the Board of Trustees voted on the plan on April 18, 2017.

III. Committee Members

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| 1. Vicki Payne | Superintendent |
| 2. Kathy Weis | Asst. Superintendent |
| 3. Julie Wiebersch | Secondary Curriculum Director |
| 4. Courtney Painter | Elementary Curriculum Director |
| 5. Jana Everett | Caddo Mills High School Principal |
| 6. Anne Payne | Caddo Mills Middle School Principal |
| 7. Kendra Mosher | Kathryn Griffis Elementary Principal |
| 8. Vonda Farmer | Frances & Jeannette Lee Elementary Principal |
| 9. Sydni Johnston | Elementary Teacher |
| 10. Karen Roberts | Elementary Teacher |
| 11. Jessica Anderton | Elementary Counselor |
| 12. Dena Poteet | Elementary Teacher |
| 13. Jenna Richardson | Elementary Teacher |
| 14. Jaime Wygal | Elementary Counselor |
| 15. Tabitha Pounds | Middle School Teacher |
| 16. Kerry Hardin | Middle School Teacher |
| 17. Tricia Bruner | Middle School Counselor |
| 18. Sarah Morrison | High School Teacher |
| 19. Hope Whitlock | High School Teacher |
| 20. Arliss Tredway | High School Counselor |
| 21. Sharon Adams | Elementary Parent |
| 22. Corrie Petzold | Middle School Parent |
| 23. Jennifer Wright | High School Parent |
| 24. Susan Sikes | Community Member |

IV. **Timeline of Events**

Wednesday, November 16, 2016

Initial meeting with administrative staff to discuss preliminary thoughts and discuss possible members of the District of Innovation Team.

Monday, December 12, 2016

6:00 pm, Special Board Meeting

Board of Trustees approve resolution to hold a public hearing to discuss the possibility of using HB 1842 to become a District of Innovation.

7:00 pm, Public Hearing

Public hearing to explain and discuss the possibility of becoming a District of Innovation.

7:00 pm, Regular Meeting

Approve a motion to pursue local District of Innovation plan.

Board of Trustees approve the members of the District of Innovation Committee.

Wednesday, December 14, 2016 – 3:45 Board Room

Initial meeting of the District of Innovation Committee

Monday, January 2, 2017 – 2:00 Board Room

2nd meeting of the District of Innovation Committee

Week of January 2-6, 2017 – 3:45 in Library at each campus

Griffis, Lee, Middle School, and High School Faculty Meeting

Wednesday, January 11, 2017

District Improvement Meeting – Final Approval

Friday, January 13, 2017

Post the District of Innovation Plan on the district website for 30 days.

February 24, 2017

Notify Commissioner of Education of the board's intention to vote on adoption of proposed plan.

Tuesday, April 18, 2017, Regular Board Meeting

Approve the District of Innovation plan.

Wednesday, April 19, 2017

Update all policy changes with TASB.

Notify Commissioner of Education of Approval of Local Innovation Plan

V. Term of Plan

The term of the District of Innovation Plan, as constituted by the Texas Education Agency, will be five years. The plan will begin in the 2017-2018 school year and conclude at the end of the 2021-2022 school year unless terminated by the Board of Trustees. The District Improvement Committee will monitor the Innovation Plan and will give feedback on the effectiveness of the plan.

VI. Innovations

- **First Day of Instruction (EB Legal) (Education Code 25.0811)**

TEC Sec. 25.0811 states that a school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August. TEC Sec. 25.0811 allows no flexibility in the design of annual calendars to fit the needs of the community or the wishes of the local Board of Trustees who represent community interests in this matter.

Innovation Strategy

The district should be able to determine locally and on an annual basis the best school start date for our community. Having the ability to modify the start date of school allows the flexibility to balance the number of days in a semester, align classes to college courses, and provide more opportunities for summer school, internships, and industrial certifications.

- **Class Size Waiver (EEB Legal) (Education Code 25.112, 25.113)**

TEC Code 25.112 requires Kindergarten thru 4th Grade classes to be kept at a 22 student to 1 teacher ratio (22:1). If a classroom exceeds the ratio, a waiver is required to be filed within 30 days to the Texas Education Agency. A letter must be sent home to parents in the section that exceeds the 22:1 ratio notifying parents that a waiver has been submitted.

Innovation Strategy

Caddo Mills ISD is a growing district that will strive to keep the 22:1 ratio, with the flexibility to go above if needed. This flexibility will eliminate the requirement of the waiver process and improve student success by not having to potentially split a class mid-year, disrupting instruction, or finding a qualified hire.

In addition, Caddo Mills ISD will not be forced to hire new teachers not accounted for in the Local Board's adopted budget.

The innovative strategy will change the policy regarding class size in grades K-4 ratios as follows:

1. If the student/teacher ratio averaged across the grade level needs to go over the 22:1, it must have administrator and Superintendent approval.

2. If the student/teacher ratio averaged across the grade levels needs to go over 24:1, it must have administrator and Superintendent approval. The school board will be notified, along with the parents of students within that classroom.
3. The goal of the district is to keep the 22:1 ratio, with the flexibility to exceed the cap to adjust to growth and budget expenditures.

- **Teacher Certification (DK Legal, Local, Exhibit) (Texas Education Code 21.003)**

TEC 21.003 requires 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.

Innovation Strategy

Non-CTE Subjects

In order to best serve Caddo Mills ISD students by allowing more flexibility in scheduling and more course offerings, decisions on certification will be handled locally. For grades 6-12, in all subjects except *Special Education* and *ESL/Bilingual*, the campus principal may submit to the Superintendent a request for a local certification that will allow a certified teacher to teach one subject in a related field of their current certification for which he/she is not certified.

Related Fields:

English: English, Reading, Speech, Journalism, any other English course accepted by SBOE for graduation credit in English.

Social Studies: History, Government, Economics, Political Science, any other Social Studies course accepted by SBOE for graduation credit.

Science: Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Biology, Earth Science, Physics, Chemistry, any other Science course accepted by SBOE for graduation credit in Science.

Fine Arts: Art, Music, Theater Arts, Dance, any other Fine Art course accepted by SBOE for graduation credit in Fine Arts.

Mathematics: Mathematics, Engineering, Statistics, Accounting, any Mathematics course accepted by SBOE for graduation credit in Mathematics.

The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses that would qualify the individual to teach the proposed subject in the related area. The Superintendent will approve all requests.

To assist the teacher that a local certificate is enacted, lesson plans for the uncertified teacher will be created in partnership with certified teachers in the same field, whenever possible.

CTE Subjects

The current certification requirements limit the District's ability to hire professionals with industry experience to teach Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, & Mathematics (STEM) courses. In order to provide more students, the opportunity to take such courses and promote student's ability to obtain professional certifications, the District seeks to establish its own local qualification requirements for such courses in lieu of the requirements set forth in law. Flexibility to establish its own CTE teacher certification requirements affords the District the following advantages:

- Industry certified and/or trade professionals to teach specialized certification courses.
- Greater number of CTE course offerings, thus resulting in more opportunities for students.
- Realistic requirements for professionals transitioning from industry to teaching.
- Ability to employ part-time professionals to teach CTE courses.

The Principal must specify, in writing, the reason for the request and document what credentials the individual possesses that would qualify the individual to teach the proposed CTE subject. The Superintendent will approve all requests.

- **Teacher Contracts (DCA Legal) (TEC 21.102)**

Texas Education Code 21.102 requires that experienced teachers new to a district cannot have a probationary contract period that exceeds one year if the person has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the previous eight years.

Innovation Strategy

For experienced teachers, counselors, librarians, or nurses new to the district that have been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the previous eight years, a probationary contract may be issued up to two years from the first day of employment with Caddo Mills ISD.

TEC 21.102 does not allow sufficient time to evaluate a teacher's effectiveness in the classroom since teacher contract timelines demand that employment decisions be made prior to state assessment results and T-TESS time frames.

VII. Summary

The direction provided from the Local Innovation Plan comes from collaboration between community members, parents, teachers, staff, and board members. The needs of the District were investigated, and the plan created allows Caddo Mills ISD the flexibility to make local decisions to best educate our students.