

KLONDIKE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

LOCAL INNOVATION PLAN

Background & Timeline

The 84th Texas Legislature passed House Bill 1842, which allows public school districts to declare exemptions from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code (TEC) by becoming a designated District of Innovation. On February 13, 2017, during their regularly scheduled board meeting the Klondike ISD Board of Trustees unanimously pass a resolution to approve considering Klondike ISD as a District of Innovation and a public hearing was held during the same meeting.

The Board of Trustees appointed a five person Local Innovation Committee (LIC) to research, discuss and develop the Local Innovation Plan.

Committee members: Steve McLaren, Superintendent – Chair
Tony Bushong, Principal
Julie Dossey, Counselor
Cynthia Clark, HS Teacher
Angela Enns, JH Teacher
Hailey White, Sp. Ed. Teacher

The committee met on the following dates: February 10, 2017 and February 14, 2017.

The LIC reviewed provisions in Texas Education code that apply to HB1842 and identified those exemptions that will provide for greater local control and more flexibility therefore benefitting the students of Klondike ISD. It is the belief of the committee that we work with our students and community on a daily basis and are in the best position to make decisions for our students and community. A plan we believe will allow us to do just that. Our committee voted unanimously on February 14, 2017 to post the following plan on-line, for 30 days, for comments and feedback.

Please direct any comments or questions to steve.mclaren@klondikeisd.net.

AMENDED LOCAL INNOVATION PLAN

(* - Amended portions -#5, #6, #7)

The committee met on September 9, 2018 to discuss and approve the amendments to the previous DOI plan. The amended plan has been posted on our website for comments and feedback.

Amended Plan Committee Members

Steve McLaren, Superintendent
Danielle Therwhanger, Principal
Kelley O'Brien, Board Member
Manuela Banuelos, Parent
Jillery Roberts, Elementary teacher
Cynthia Clark, Secondary teacher
Julie Dossey, Counselor
George Elliott, Secondary teacher
Roxanne Gregory, Elementary teacher

1. Uniform start Date (TEC §25.0811)

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

Innovation Strategies

The flexibility of the start date allows the district to determine locally what best meets the needs of the students, the school, and the community. In addition, this allows us to better align with the start date of the college that our student use to earn dual credits. Approximately 90% of our juniors and seniors take dual credit classes.

In addition, the ability to change the school start date can help balance the amount of days in each semester. Flexibility to begin instruction earlier in the calendar year will enable the District to improve active learning by balancing the amount of instructional time in the semesters, allow teachers to better pace and deliver instruction before and after the winter break.

In addition, by having the flexibility to start and end the school year earlier, students will be able to enroll in college courses that start in June, thereby increasing college and career readiness.

2. Class sizes and Student-Teacher Ratios (TEC §25.111, §25.112, §25.113)

State law requires districts to maintain an average student-teacher ratio at most of 20-1 for average daily attendance. In Kindergarten through fourth grade, the class student-teacher ratio must not exceed 22-1.

Districts are also required to notify parents of waivers or exceptions submitted to TEA due to class size limits.

Innovation Strategies

At the beginning of each school year, the goal of Klondike ISD will be to meet the suggested student to teacher ratio of 22:1 ratio per K-4th grade. In the event that any class size exceeds this ratio during the school year, the superintendent will report this information to the Klondike Board of Trustees and to the parents of the affected students. The determination of whether to add another teacher to bring the class under the 22:1 mandate will be made by the principal and superintendent. This recommendation will be reported to the Klondike Board of Trustees. A waiver will not be filed with TEA.

3. 90% Attendance Rule (TEC §25.092)

State law mandates a student may not be given credit or a final grade for a class unless the student is in attendance for at least 90% of the days the class is offered. In addition, if a student is in attendance greater than 75% and less than 90% may be given credit or a final grade for the class if the student completes a plan approved by the campus administrator and meets the instructional requirements for the class.

Innovation Strategies

The 90% rule is an arbitrary percentage. Districts should have the option to set their own requirement. Local districts need the flexibility to set attendance requirements that reflect their specific situations and expectations. If Klondike ISD is to be able to implement innovative instructional methods such as online classes, dual credit classes and other educational activities as approved by the administration, it will need an exemption from the 90% “seat time” attendance rule.

4. Teacher Certifications (TEC §21.003, §21.004, §21.053, §21.057)

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 submit a request to TEA. TEA then approves or denies this request.

Innovation Strategies

In order to best serve KISD students, decisions on certification will be handled locally.

- A. The principal may submit to the superintendent a request to allow a certified teacher to instruct and supervise students out of their certified field. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses in which would qualify this individual to this subject. Background checks will be conducted and fingerprints required.
- B. An individual with experience in a CTE field could be eligible to teach a vocational skill or course through a local teaching certificate. The principal will submit the request to the superintendent with all the individual's credentials. The superintendent will then approve the request if they feel the individual could be an asset to the students. The superintendent will then report his actions to the Board of Trustees prior to the individual beginning any employment. Local teaching certificates will be for one year. The employee will be at will. Background checks will be conducted and fingerprints required.
- C. This proposal will provide more flexibility in our scheduling and more options for our students in class offerings. We envision classrooms with multiple subjects being taught through multiple formats, in which the "teacher" will become a facilitator in student learning.

***5. Teacher Contract Days (TEC 21.401 Minimum Service Required.)**

According to TEC 21.401(b), an educator employed under a 10-month contract must provide a minimum of 187 days of service.

Innovation Strategies

- A. Reduce teacher contract days to match the adopted school calendar.
- B. It will be part of the calendar planning process to reduce the number of teacher contract days, contract days will not exceed the 187 but may be lessened based upon the needs of the district.
- C. Benefits:
 1. Provide teachers more flexibility during the summer months to seek out beneficial staff development that relates to their field.
 2. Daily rate will be consistent with a 187-day calendar
 3. Improve teacher morale
 4. Enhance teacher retainment and recruitment.

***6. Inter-District Transfers (TEC 25.036 District Transfers)**

TEC 25.036(a) District transfers are for an entire school year. (FDA Local)

Innovation Strategies

- A. Klondike ISD would follow FDA Local policy requiring nonresident students to file a transfer application each school year.
- B. In approving transfer requests, the availability of space and instructional staff, availability of programs and services, the student's disciplinary history, records, work habits, and attendance records will be evaluated. The parent's willingness to cooperate with Klondike ISD teachers, coaches, and administration in a positive manner will also be a determining factor.
- C. Transfer students are required to follow the attendance requirements, rules, and regulations of the district.
- D. The superintendent may revoke transfer status at any time during the school year if the student is at risk of failing one or more classes during a six weeks period.
- E. The superintendent may revoke transfer status at any time during the school year if the student is assigned disciplinary consequences such as suspension (in school or out of school), placement of the DAE, or expulsion. In addition, students not meeting the State's 90% attendance standard may also be

subject to immediate revocation of the student's transfer status. Furthermore, the superintendent may revoke the student's transfer if the parent or legal guardians fail to support the District in a positive manner.

This will allow Klondike ISD the flexibility to revoke transfer students who, on rare occasions, violate the transfer policy, whose parents do not support the district and will allow Klondike ISD to better utilize school resources for the benefit of the district

***7. Site-Based Decision Making (TEC 11.251 & 11.252) (BQ Legal/Local, BQA Legal/Local)**

Klondike ISD seeks exemption from the site-based decision-making (SBDM) process and the convening of the school health advisory committee (SHAC) and the many accompanying requirements falling under the governance of those two bodies. The statutory requirements as set forth in the Texas Education Code in Chapter 11 are burdensome, time consuming, and ultimately cause a misdirection of resources from the primary focus of schools: giving students the best education possible.

Innovation Strategies

- A. Stakeholders will continue to be involved in the process, but one that meets the needs of the District, school, and community as opposed to the broad brush of statutory requirements leveled down from a one-size fits all approach as detailed in the code.
- B. In place of the SBDM and the SHAC, a Superintendent's Advisory Team (SAT) will be established, meet, review, and analyze, and respond to both qualitative and quantitative data regarding the district's success and most importantly, student's success. This team will convene at least two times per year and generate the general direction of district resources and efforts.

This will consolidate the number of meetings and the number of committees required by law and will better serve this small community. This consolidation will yield greater opportunity for one team to address a multiple of needs as opposed to having one meeting after another throughout the year.

Term

The amended District of Innovation Plan will become effective in 2017 and will remain in effect for five years, through July of 2022, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Klondike ISD Board of Trustees in accordance with the laws. The DOIC will monitor the effectiveness of the Plan on an annual basis and recommend to the Board of Trustees any suggested modifications to the Plan.