

What is a District of Innovation?

The concept was passed into law by the 84th Legislative session in House Bill 1842 which created Texas Education Code 12A.

To be eligible, a school district must have met standard.

This law allows traditional school districts to access most of the flexibilities available to Texas' open enrollment charter schools.

1 The Idea of Innovation



A local school district may want to pursue specific innovations and this plan allows a school district to gain exemption from many Texas Education Code requirements.

Innovation plans are about local control and stakeholders should note that each plan is unique to the needs of the district.

The experiences of other districts may be informative but every district is unique.

2 Exemption from Laws that Lead to Innovation

These laws could include:
Site-based decision making processes
Uniform school start date
Minimum minutes of instruction
Class size and student/teacher ratio
The 90 percent attendance rule
Student discipline provisions
Teacher contracts
Teacher benefits (duty-free lunch, planning periods)
Teacher appraisal system
Teacher certification



3 Legal requirements that continue to apply



Elected boards, powers and duties of school boards, superintendents and principals, bilingual ed. sp. ed., PK

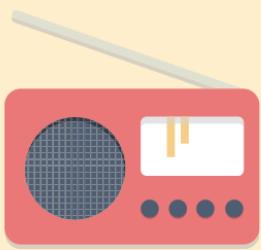


PEIMS, background checks, graduation and curriculum requirements, academic and financial accountability



Open Meetings, public records, conflicts of interest, nepotism, civil immunity, other state and federal laws

4 Conventional Practice vs. Innovative Practice



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 the Texas Education Agency. TEA then approves or denies this request. This process can be cumbersome and timely and may require the placement of substitutes until approved.

By obtaining exemption from existing teacher certification requirements for specialized CTE course offerings, the District would have the flexibility to hire community college instructors, business professionals or certified teaching professionals seeking assignments outside of their certification.

5 What is the Process?



1. The Board passes a resolution
2. Public Hearing by School Board, if no interest-STOP.
3. If approved, the board selects a committee to develop a plan of innovation and cite the education code provision that will be exempt.
4. Once the plan is approved-post online for 30 days, send to TEA Commissioner (no approval required) and the planning committee holds a public meeting and passes plan by majority vote.
5. Upon completion of these steps, the school board approves the final plan by 2/3 majority vote.