



Cleburne Independent School District
Local Innovation Plan
January 18, 2022 – January 18, 2027

I. INTRODUCTION

The District of Innovation (DOI) is a concept passed by the 84th Texas Legislature through House Bill (HB) 1842. This concept 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, Cleburne 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; and
- 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.

II. OUR PROCESS

The original District of Innovation Plan is set to expire on February 14, 2022. On August 16, 2021, the Cleburne ISD Board of Trustees advised the District to begin work on a renewal District of Innovation Plan to increase local control over Cleburne ISD operations and to support innovation and local initiatives.

A District of Innovation Committee comprised of diverse leaders representing a cross-section of Cleburne ISD was formed and meeting dates were set to explore the renewal of the District of Innovation Plan. Stakeholders including teachers, principals, parents, community

members, administrators, business representatives, and others were chosen. Cleburne ISD's District of Innovation Committee Members are as follows:

| Role | Name |
|---|--|
| Community Member/ | Chuck Bailey, President Chamber of Commerce |
| Parent | Warren Amyett |
| Parent | Heidi Valerius |
| Cleburne High School, Principal | Ben Renner |
| Santa Fe Elementary, Assistant Principal | Matthew Ford |
| Irving Elementary, Principal | Sherqueena Jackson |
| Adams Elementary, Principal | Brandi Geltmeier |
| Director of Alternative Learning | Suzanne Keesee |
| Wheat Middle School, Assistant Principal | Ryan Stepp |
| Cooke Elementary, Principal | Jacob Walker |
| Gerard Elementary, Principal | Tracy White |
| Secondary Teacher of the Year, 2020-2021 | Adair Smith |
| Elementary Teacher of the Year, 2020-2021 | Jennifer Gaston |
| UEA Representative | Ronni Davis-Sandoval |
| ATPE Representative | Alyce Bell |
| Elementary Counselor Representative | Glenna Pollock |
| Secondary Counselor Representative | Michelle Smith |
| District Site Base Member | Eric Godfrey |
| District Site Base Member | Angela Felkins |
| District Site Base Member | Kaleigh Black |
| Smith Middle School, Classroom Teacher | Lee Howington |
| Coleman Elementary, Classroom Teacher | Ashley Hamel |
| Business/Industry Representative | Eric Schwindt, Johns Manville |

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| Director of World Languages | Christy Burton |
| Director of Career Technology | Mark McClure |
| Director of Special Education | Cory Borden |
| Director of Athletics | Jeri Larrison-Hall |
| Executive Director of Technology | Mike Wallace |
| Executive Director of Maintenance and Operations | Barry Hipp |
| Chief Financial Officer | Sarah Taylor |
| Assistant Superintendent of Assessment, Research, and Accountability | Dr. Chris Jackson |
| Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction | Dr. Kristi Rhone |
| Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources | Dr. Andrea Hensley |
| Assistant Superintendent of Student Services | Tammy Bright |

The DOI Committee set the following meeting dates:

- October 12, 2021
- November 9, 2021
- December 7, 2021

All meetings were held from 4:00 – 5:30 pm at the Cleburne ISD Central Office Administration Building.

III. TIMELINE

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| August 16, 2021 | Board Consent to Renew District of Innovation Plan that expires February 2022 |
| September 27, 2021 | Cabinet Evaluations of DOI Topics |
| October 12, 2021 | Committee Meeting |
| November 9, 2021 | Committee Meeting |
| December 7, 2021 | Committee Meeting |
| January 6, 2022 | District Site Base Meeting |

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|------------------|---|
| January 18, 2022 | Board Action |
| January 19, 2022 | File Revised Plan with Texas Education Agency |

IV. TERM

The term of the plan is for five years, beginning January 18, 2022 and ending January 18, 2027, unless terminated. If within the term of this plan, additional district needs or revisions become needed, a committee of stakeholders would reconvene to initiate an amendment process. The stakeholder committee, along with District Site Base majority vote and Board vote are necessary to amend the plan.

V. CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT

The Local Innovation Plan is guided by and aligned with the District's Mission, Vision, and Beliefs as follows:

Our Mission

The mission of Cleburne ISD in partnership with parents and the community is to provide all students with rigorous and relevant learning.

Our Vision

Excellence Happens Here...

Our Beliefs

We believe that every student can succeed.

We believe that high expectations foster a high level of performance. We will make all decisions in the best interest of our students.

We will prepare our students to be successful, productive citizens.

VI. INNOVATIONS

Cleburne ISD proposes flexibility and seeks exemption in the following areas:

| Minimum Minutes of Attendance |
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| <p>TEC 25.081 Operation of Schools</p> <p>85th Legislature repealed parts of this statute. The 420 daily instructional minute requirement that was located in §25.081e and the 7-hour school day requirement in §25.082(a) were both repealed and are no longer applicable. CISD understands that statute still requires the minimum number of instructional minutes to be met annually. Not meeting this statute could result in funding for the school district to be reduced proportionally.</p> |
| <p>CISD Board Policy: EB (LEGAL) EB (LOCAL)</p> |
| <p>RATIONALE:</p> <p>Relief from this statute could potentially allow the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional scheduling options for innovative learning settings• Flexibility in Professional Development opportunities• Elimination of TEA waivers <p>Exemption from this requirement will provide the district with the needed flexibility to consider instruction and credit acquisition for students, especially students who have unique needs. This exemption can be used to craft programs for nontraditional students and our youngest students to best meet their needs. Instruction does not always have to take place in a classroom seat, and this exemption will allow the district to explore more online options, project-based learning outside the classroom, and the structure of programming.</p> |
| <p>LOCAL GUIDELINES:</p> <p>Exemption from any mandatory school day length would allow Cleburne ISD the flexibility needed to alter the school day schedule and overall school calendar as most beneficial to the district and its stakeholders. Exempting completely from a 'minimum minute' or a 'specific number of school days' requirement would give the district a significant amount of local control over scheduling without the fear of diminishing state funding or losing credit for the instructional time that might cause the district to fall out of compliance with annual minute requirements. This would allow the district the flexibility to schedule non-instructional days into the schedule to allow teachers to analyze student data and engage in targeted, relevant professional development.</p> |

First Day Of Instruction

[TEC 25.0811](#) First Day of Instruction

CISD Board Policy: [EB \(LEGAL\)](#) [EB \(LOCAL\)](#)

RATIONALE:

The current code prohibits the district from starting school before the fourth Monday of August. A calendar designed under these parameters:

- 1) provides limited opportunity for teacher professional development
- 2) requires the first semester to be significantly shorter than the second semester
- 3) gives inequity to instructional time for semester-long courses
- 4) limits instructional days prior to state assessments
- 5) provides little time for student interventions prior to summer state assessments.

Relief from this statute could permit the following:

- Earlier start date allows for a balance of instructional days in both semesters, resulting in completion of the fall semester before Winter Break
- More instructional days before state assessments; flexibility for different types of learners and learning needs
- The calendar could be more closely aligned with college schedules, providing our students and staff with additional educational opportunities.

LOCAL GUIDELINES:

Cleburne ISD intends to seek ways to equalize both fall and spring semesters to the maximum extent possible. Seeking this exemption in the Plan of Innovation would allow our district Site-Based Committee and Board of Trustees to have greater control of the local development of our school calendar.

Starting school earlier:

- 1) provides a balance in the number of instructional days within each semester
- 2) allows for additional teacher professional development throughout the school year facilitates options in student schedules that are more conducive to their individual learning needs

Transfer of Student

[TEC 25.036](#) Transfer of Student

CISD Board Policy: [FDA \(LEGAL\)](#) [FDA \(LOCAL\)](#)

RATIONALE:

Relief from this statute could allow the district to revoke the Out-of-District transfer of a student at any time during the year based on behavior, excessive tardies, late pick-up, attendance, or not remaining in good academic standing. Revocation of transfers for the above reasons is final and may not be appealed. This will allow this district to revoke students that do not adhere to CISD expectations and allow flexibility for the campuses to make decisions best for their students.

LOCAL GUIDELINES:

Current board policy states that any child, other than a high school graduate, who is younger than 21 years of age and eligible for enrollment on September 1 of any school year may transfer annually from the child's school district of residence to another district in this state if both the receiving district and the applicant parent or guardian or person having lawful control of the child jointly approve and timely agree in writing to the transfer. Exemption from this policy will allow more campus discretion concerning transfers.

Excused Absences

[TEC 25.087](#) Excused Absences

CISD Board Policy: [FEA \(LEGAL\)](#) [FEA \(LOCAL\)](#)

RATIONALE:

The current limit of two days does not allow time for a student to travel to an out-of-state or some in-state institutions. Exemption from this statute would allow students to visit out-of-state colleges outside of the two absence limit. CISD will establish the number of days that a student may receive an excused absence while visiting an institution of higher education.

LOCAL GUIDELINES:

Currently students are allowed to miss only two days for college or military visits limiting how many campuses they can see and where. This exemption could allow more opportunities for students to visit colleges further away from the area.

Teacher Certification

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| TEC 21.003 | Certification Required |
| TEC 21.053 | Presentation and Recording of Certificate |
| TEC 21.055 | School District Teaching Permit |
| TEC 21.057 | Parental Notification |

CISD Board Policy: [DBA \(LEGAL\)](#) [DBA \(LOCAL\)](#)
[DK \(LEGAL\)](#) [DK \(LOCAL\)](#) [DK \(EXHIBIT\)](#)
[DPB \(LEGAL\)](#)

RATIONALE:

- Texas Education Code §21.003(a) requires that all district teachers be certified in accordance with rules adopted by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC). 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.
- Texas Education Code §21.053 requires a person who desires to teach in a public school to 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. Additionally, 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 §21.055 (School District Teacher Permit). Statue TAC §102.1309 allows local district permits as an optional power for school district to utilize. CISD requires that if a person is not certified, the district may issue a teaching permit to employ the individual. To be eligible for a school district teaching permit under this section, a person must hold a baccalaureate degree. Promptly after employing a person under this section, a school district shall send to the commissioner a written statement identifying the person, the person's qualifications as a teacher, and the subject or class the person will teach. The person may teach the subject or class pending action by the commissioner. Not later than the 30th day after the date the commissioner receives the statement under Subsection (c), the commissioner may inform the district in writing that the commissioner finds the person is not qualified to teach. The person may not teach if the commissioner finds the person is not qualified. If the commissioner fails to act within the time prescribed by this subsection, the district may issue to the person a school district teaching permit and the person may teach the subject or class identified in the statement.
- Texas Education Code §21.057 requires that the district provide written notice to parents if an inappropriately or uncertified teacher is assigned to a classroom for more than 30 consecutive instructional days.

Exemption from these requirements will provide the district with the flexibility to hire the most qualified candidate for teaching positions in hard-to-fill areas if qualified and certified teachers are not available. The benefits of this include, but are not limited to:

- Local discretion/criteria to hire teachers who meet district teaching qualifications and standards of excellence in high need and/or hard to find areas;

- Flexibility to hire professionals/practitioners in CTE and LOTE / World Languages when certified teachers are not available; and
- Ability to meet the district's unique staffing needs in a timely manner without further delays that could prove detrimental for students.

LOCAL GUIDELINES:

Cleburne ISD will maintain its current expectations for employee certification and will make every attempt to hire individuals with appropriate certification for the positions in question.

When this is not reasonably possible, the district will have the flexibility to hire individuals who are knowledgeable in the content area, and equipped to effectively perform the duties of the positions in question. Cleburne ISD would like the ability to locally certify teachers in high need and/or hard to find areas, to better meet the educational needs of our students in a timely manner. These areas would include but are not limited to Career and Technical Education (CTE), and languages other than English (LOTE) / World Languages. Per TEA guidance, special education and bilingual/ESL teachers must continue to be SBEC certified.

Additionally, CISD would like to consider the persons hired for these positions to be appropriately qualified and thus, not provide written notice (of a non-certified teacher) to parents of students assigned to their classrooms.

District Level and Site Based Decision-Making

- [TEC 11.251](#) Planning and Decision Making Process
- [TEC 11.252](#) District-Level Planning and Decision Making Process
- [TEC 11.253](#) Campus Planning and Site-Based Decision-Making

CISD Board Policy: [BQ \(LEGAL\)](#) [BQ \(LOCAL\)](#)
[BQA \(LEGAL\)](#) [BQA \(LOCAL\)](#)
[BQB \(LEGAL\)](#) [BQB \(LOCAL\)](#)

RATIONALE:

Under TEC 11.251, 11.252, and 11.253, each school district appoints committees of stakeholders to engage in a defined process of developing, evaluating and revising District and Campus Improvement Plans annually, in accordance with district policy and state law. Cleburne ISD seeks flexibility from TEC 11.251, 11.252, and 11.253 for the following reasons:

- Although the original intent of site-based decision-making committees is to maximize the stakeholder involvement in the process, bureaucratic requirements in the content, structure, and format of the campus and district decision-making process hinder flexibility and autonomy.
- The above-referenced Texas Education Codes contain several compliance measures that make the committees' role less relevant to campus needs and detract from the importance of local design, thoughtful planning, and meaningful implementation.

- Cleburne ISD believes the process and membership of district and campus planning should be a local decision rather than a response to a state mandate.

Contract Days/Required Staff Development

[TEC 21.401](#) Minimum Service Required
[TEC 21.451](#) Staff Development Requirements

CISD Board Policy: [DC \(LEGAL\)](#) [DC \(LOCAL\)](#)
[DMA \(LEGAL\)](#) [DMA \(LOCAL\)](#)

RATIONALE:

TEC21.401, Minimum Service Required

Texas Education Code § 21.401 currently requires a contract between the District and an educator to be for a minimum of 10 months. Additionally, an educator employed under a 10-month contract must provide a minimum of 187 days of service.

Cleburne ISD would benefit from the flexibility to set its teachers' contract days from a range of 182 - 187 days with no negative effect on teacher salaries. This would provide flexibility to align teacher contract days to instructional days which would improve morale and help with recruitment efforts. This exemption would better align the number of teacher contract days to the required 75,600 minutes of instruction for students and be driven by the approved district calendar.

RATIONALE:

TEC 21.451, Staff Development Requirements

Texas Education Code §21.451 states the staff development provided by a school district to an educator other than a principal must be conducted in accordance with standards developed by the district and designed to improve education in the district. These requirements impede the District's ability to provide timely professional development to employees based on newly emerging issues, data, and student needs.

Cleburne ISD will exercise local discretion in determining areas of need, content, duration, and frequency for professional development for its instructional and non-instructional staff.

LOCAL GUIDELINES: TEC21.401, Minimum Service Required

The number of contract days will be determined on an annual basis, per the approved district calendar. The decrease in the number of contract days will have no effect on teacher salaries. The reduced number of contract days could result in an increased daily rate.

LOCAL GUIDELINES: TEC 21.451, Staff Development

Cleburne ISD will complete training every 2 years for teachers at district discretion. New teachers will complete the training as part of onboarding and begin the 2-year rotation after

their first year.

School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)

[TEC 28.004](#) Local School Health Advisory Council and Health Education Instruction

CISD Board Policy: [BDF \(LEGAL\)](#) School Health Advisory Council
[EHAA \(LEGAL\)](#) Coordinated Health Programs
[FFA \(LEGAL\)](#) [FFA \(LOCAL\)](#) Student Welfare Wellness and Health Services

RATIONALE:

CISD is requesting exemption from posting the meeting agenda 72 hours in advance due to the time-sensitive SHAC issues. We are also requesting that these meetings not be audio or video recorded. In a small community, recording and posting of these meetings will break down the discussion and inhibit the ability of all members to be open/honest regarding the sensitive topics reviewed by SHAC.

LOCAL GUIDELINES: The local school health advisory council will meet at least four times each year. Written minutes will be posted within the guidelines.

VII. IMPLEMENTATION AND LOCAL POLICY

This Innovation Plan is designed to create parameters within which Cleburne ISD will operate in order to provide improved student opportunities and sets out the laws from which Cleburne ISD seeks relief so that it can develop more innovative programming and better meet the needs of its stakeholders. While this Plan sets out those parameters, it does not and cannot establish the full scope of innovative practices within Cleburne ISD. Specific implementation plans will be developed by the appropriate campuses, departments, and committees in order to fully realize the work of the Innovation Committee.

Adjustments to Board Policy will be researched, developed, and presented to the Board of Trustees where appropriate. It is the expectation of the Innovation Committee that all Board Policy language will reflect the spirit of the Committee work and honor the parameters and limitations expressed in this Plan.