

**DEER PARK INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLAN**

*Preparing Today's Students*



*for Tomorrow's Challenges*

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Deer Park Independent School District is to maximize educational opportunities for all students so they may perform at their highest potentials and be successful in meeting the challenges of the future.

**DEER PARK ISD**  
**DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLAN**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

House Bill (HB) 1842, passed during the 84<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session, permits Texas public school districts to become Districts of Innovation and to obtain exemption from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code. On February 21, 2017, the Deer Park Independent School District's Board of Trustees passed a resolution to adopt a District of Innovation Plan to increase local control over District operations and to support innovation and local initiatives. The adoption of this plan seeks to increase the District's flexibility in order to improve educational outcomes for the benefit of students and the community.

On February 21, 2017, the DPISD Board held a hearing to allow the public to learn more about the plan, the designated innovations, and to provide feedback. The School Board appointed a District of Innovation Advisory Committee comprised of diverse leaders representing a cross-section of the District's stakeholders, including teachers, principals, parents, community members, and administrators. The committee met on February 22, 2017, to discuss and draft the Local Innovation Plan and met additional times to refine the plan on February 28, 2017, and March 21, 2017. The plan was posted online for public viewing and feedback on March 1, 2017. The District of Innovation Advisory committee met to consider feedback received and made final adjustments to the plan before presenting it to the DPISD Education Improvement Committee (EIC) on April 4, 2017. At that time, the EIC meeting was open to the public for further comments. After receiving EIC approval, the recommendation was made by the committee that the plan be presented to the School Board for consideration and approval. The plan was considered for adoption by the Board of Trustees on April 10, 2017.

**II. TERM**

The term of the plan is for five years, beginning at the start of the 2017-2018 school year and concluding at the end of the 2021-2022 school year, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. District policies will be amended as necessary to be consistent with the statutory exemptions and the Local Innovation Plan. The EIC will continually monitor the effectiveness of the plan and recommend to the Board any suggested modifications to the plan.

III. PROCESS

<b>District of Innovation Advisory Committee</b>		
<b>First</b>	<b>Last</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Katie	Brabham	High School North Campus
Adrian	Burke	Parent
Greg	Byers	Business
Tiffaney	Clark	High School Wolters Campus
Steve	Corry	High School South Campus Principal
Scott	Davis	Deepwater Junior High Principal
Amy	Dickey	Parkwood Elementary
Lisa	Dorthy	High School South Campus
Jamie	Ellis	Fairmont Elementary
Che'	Gamble	Carpenter Elementary
Pam	Greene	San Jacinto Elementary
Kay	Henley	Dabbs Elementary
Cindy	Hart	Executive Director for Instruction
Katy	Kerbow	Deer Park Junior High
Erica	Klein	Deepwater Junior High
Ronda	Kouba	Assistant Superintendent for Instruction
Matt	Lucas	Director of Communications
Lisa	McLaughlin	Deer Park Elementary Principal
Ana	Mercado	Instructional Facilitator and DPEA
Kari	Murphy	Chief Technology Officer
Deana	Parrish	Deepwater Elementary
Bill	Patterson	Community
Tina	Turner	High School South Campus
Laurie	Webb	Deer Park Junior High
Katy	Zorn	Deepwater Junior High

<b>Timeline – District of Innovation</b>	
December 2016- January 2017	Inform Board of Trustees of the interest to become a District of Innovation
February 13, 2017	District of Innovation Resolution presented and adopted by the Board of Trustees
February 20, 2017	Public Hearing regarding District of Innovation
February 20, 2017	Board of Trustees approved committee to develop District of Innovation Plan
February 22, 2017	Meeting with District of Innovation Advisory Committee to develop plan
March 1, 2017	Proposed plan posted to the District website
March 2, 2017	Board of Trustees sends letter to Commissioner informing of intent to become a District of Innovation
March 20, 2017	Update on Process given to Trustees at Board Meeting
March 21, 2017	District of Innovation Advisory Committee met to consider recommended changes to the plan
April 4, 2017	Public meeting with District EIC at which committee submits plan for consideration
April 10, 2017	Board of Trustees considers adoption of District of Innovation Plan during special meeting

#### **IV. INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS**

##### **Instructional Rounds**

Deer Park ISD embarked on the journey of instructional rounds during the summer of 2016. This new practice pushes administrators and teachers to learn new ways of thinking about the instruction delivered in our classrooms by focusing on the instructional core – the students, the teacher, and the content. It is based on the professional practice of medical rounds used by doctors in teaching hospitals. Medical rounds are a teaching and learning process where doctors lead groups of residents and specialists to interview patients, observing and analyzing their medical data that would then allow them, along with the doctor, to formulate the best plan for the patient’s improvement.

Teachers and administrators come together much like the doctor and residents, observing side by side in classrooms, describing what they see in nonjudgmental language, looking at patterns, making predictions, and providing possible next steps for academic gains. Our schools develop a Problem of Practice – a school-identified problem with student learning that could be improved if specific information is obtained, providing a course of action to pursue. Network teams composed of teachers and administrators visit schools to conduct the instructional rounds, providing valuable information to the school. In addition to the Network Rounds Teams, individual schools conduct internal rounds, visiting classrooms, observing and gathering information focused on the identified problem of practice. The continuous process allows our District to make reflective changes in our instructional delivery while creating a culture of success for our students.

## Professional Learning Communities

The practice of Instructional Rounds has allowed our schools to begin having deep conversations around our own current instructional practices. The focus of our Professional Learning Communities is not on teaching but on learning, with the intended commitment of success for all students. Collectively, teachers and staff members work collaboratively to focus on student learning. The questions considered within our discussions are: 1. What do we want each student to learn; 2. How will we know when each student has learned it; 3. How will we respond when a student experiences difficulty in learning? 4. How will we respond if they already know it? Students who experience difficulty are then provided with systematic and timely interventions. Our goal through our PLCs is for our teachers to work together to improve and analyze their classroom practices with a continuous focus on student learning and success.

## V. INNOVATIONS

**DPSD seeks flexibility and exemptions from the following statutory requirements:**

<b>Uniformed School Start Date</b>	
Texas Education Code §25.0811 (a) Except as provided by this section, a school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.	EB (Legal)
<p><b>Rationale:</b></p> <p>Relief from this statute could potentially allow the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balance the amount of instructional time/days per semester</li> <li>• Flexibility in the start and end of the school year</li> <li>• School calendar would align more with college schedules, allowing students to enroll in summer courses that start in early June</li> <li>• Allows for flexible opportunities for professional development</li> <li>• More instructional days before required state assessments (i.e. STAAR)</li> <li>• Provide additional flexibility in calendar planning</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Innovation:</b> TEC Ch. 12A.003(b)(1)(A) <i>innovative curriculum, instructional methods</i>, and provisions regarding community participation, campus governance, and parental involvement</p> <p><b>Action Steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise calendar to start before the last Monday in August</li> <li>• Balance instructional days per semester</li> <li>• End the first semester before winter break</li> <li>• Keep CIC, EIC and the community informed of the changes to the calendar and the rationale behind it</li> </ul>	

<b>Length of School Day</b>	
TEC 25.082 (A) A school day shall be at least 7 hours each day, including intermissions and recess.	EC (Legal)
<p><b>Rationale:</b> Relief from this statute could potentially allow the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual campus flexibility, independence and creativity for designated early release days</li> <li>• Additional opportunities for teacher professional development and collaboration</li> <li>• Individualized, flexible opportunities for alternative high school students</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Innovation:</b> TEC Ch. 12A.003(b)(1)(B) <i>Modifications to the school day or year</i></p> <p><b>Action Steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a flexible calendar, which includes early release time for students during each nine-week grading period to accommodate additional professional development/collaboration opportunities</li> <li>• Utilize the early release days to support the information gained through campus and network instructional rounds</li> <li>• Utilize the early release days to support campus principals, teachers and staff through their Professional Learning Communities as they perfect their craft of teaching, deepen their content knowledge and analyze data</li> <li>• Plan time for parent teacher conferences to be scheduled</li> <li>• Schedule early release days for the administration of final exams at the secondary level</li> </ul>	

<b>Attendance for Class Credit or Final Grades</b>	
Texas Education Code §25.092 (a) Except as provided by this section, a student in any grade level from kindergarten through grade 12 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.	FEC (Legal)
<p><b>Rationale:</b></p> <p>This would provide flexibility for students to be awarded credit based on course completion rather than daily attendance. It would apply to students who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have chronic health issues</li> <li>• Experience family issues that keep them from attending school</li> <li>• Want to accelerate their academic career through our Wolters DPHS accelerated school</li> <li>• Want to complete District approved on-line courses for credit</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Innovation:</b> TEC Ch. 12A.003(b)(1)(A) <i>innovative curriculum</i>, instructional methods, and provisions regarding community participation, campus governance, and parental involvement</p> <p><b>Action Steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow students to demonstrate mastery of the course through various methods to award credit, including but not limited to personalized learning and varied locations and times for instruction</li> <li>• Evaluate a student’s potential for success in these various opportunities through the recommendations of teachers, counselors and administrators, who will evaluate a student’s potential for success in these various opportunities</li> <li>• Examine different formats and instructional strategies such as online course work, blended course work, dual enrollment, early college, performance tasks, community-based learning, independent study, mentorships, and credit recovery for the awarding of credit</li> <li>• Examine practical opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery of content-specific standards at all grade levels</li> </ul>	

<b>Teacher Appraisal System/Local Role</b>	
<p>Texas Education Code §21.352            (a)(2) The commissioner shall adopt a recommended appraisal process and criteria on which to appraise the performance of teachers. The criteria must be based on observable, job-related behavior, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The performance of teachers’ students (student growth measure)</li> </ul>	<p>EB (Legal)</p>
<p><b>Rationale:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is essential to maintain flexibility in using a variety of measurements, including goal-setting, self-assessment, observations, student progress toward learning objectives, and other formative assessments in determining the performance of our teachers</li> <li>• Flexibility in the evaluation of various performance measures is valued in the creation of the DPISD appraisal instrument</li> <li>• DPISD believes this should be a local decision to meet the needs of our students, teachers, and community</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Innovation:</b> TEC Ch. 12A.003(b)(1)(A) innovative curriculum, instructional methods, and provisions regarding community participation, <i>campus governance</i>, and parental involvement.</p> <p><b>Action Steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate the student growth measure component from the DPISD appraisal instrument used for the evaluation of certified personnel</li> <li>• Evaluate teachers using various performance measures, including classroom observations, walk-throughs, self-assessments, goal-setting and tracking</li> </ul>	

<b>Campus Behavior Coordinator</b>	
<p>Texas Education Code §37.0012 (a)  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.</p>	FO (Legal)
<p><b>Rationale:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principals and Assistant Principals already serve in this capacity and it is unnecessary at this time</li> <li>• The collaboration between a principal and their assistant principal(s) is valued in implementing Chapter 37 of the TEC</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Innovation:</b> TEC Ch. 12A.003(b)(1)(A) innovative curriculum, instructional methods, and provisions regarding community participation, <i>campus governance</i>, and parental involvement.</p> <p><b>Action Steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serving currently in this role are principals and assistant principals</li> <li>• Collaboration among campus principals and assistant principals addresses the requirements of Chapter 37 of the TEC</li> <li>• Developing rapport with students, administrators can hold students accountable while teaching them how to more effectively monitor their own behavior in the future</li> </ul>	