



# Prosper ISD

Public Hearing for District of  
Innovation

"We cannot solve our problems with the same  
thinking we used when we created them."

-Albert Einstein

# What is a District of Innovation?

- House Bill 1842 passed by the 84<sup>th</sup> Legislature allows traditional public school districts to exempt certain education laws with the District of Innovation designation.
- In order to access these laws a school district must adopt an innovation plan in accordance with Texas Education Code (TEC) chapter 12A.
- To be eligible for designation as a District of Innovation, the school district's most recent academic rating must be at least acceptable.





# Why Would a School District Choose to Pursue this Option?

- A local school district may want to pursue specific innovations in curriculum, instruction, parent or community involvement, school calendar, budgeting, or other ideas. An innovation plan also allows a school district to gain exemption from many Texas Education Code requirements.
- Essentially, innovation plans will be about local control. Each district will pursue designation as a District of Innovation for different reasons, and no two plans may look the same. Community members should note that each innovation plan will be unique to the local school district.

# Potential Exemptions

This legislation provides an opportunity to exempt certain Texas Education Code requirements, such as:

- School start date
  - 90% attendance rate (compulsory attendance still applies)
  - Minimum minutes of instruction
  - Class size ratio
  - Site-based decision making (to the extent required by state law)
  - Teacher certification (except as required by federal law)
  - Teacher appraisal system
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- Not all of these may be right for Prosper ISD, but it is the District of Innovation Committee that will drive decisions.

# Why Consider District of Innovation?

- Greater local control.
- Increased freedom to make decisions based on what is best for Prosper ISD students that aligns with our campus and district goals.
- Added flexibility, especially with respect to the school calendar, attendance, and the instructional model for students.
- Innovations in curriculum and instruction.



# Initiating the Process

- Process must be initiated by either:
  - Resolution adopted by the Board of Trustees; or
  - Petition signed by a majority of the District Advisory Committee
- The Board of Trustees must hold a public hearing to consider whether the District should pursue the opportunity or not.
  - The Board of Trustees can decline or pursue the designation; or
  - Appoint a committee to develop an innovation plan



# District of Innovation Makeup

- If the Board decides to pursue the designation, the Board must appoint a committee to develop the District's innovation plan.
- The committee could include:
  - Representatives from the District Advisory Committee(DAC)
  - Additional staff, parent and community representatives appointed by the Board
  - Recommendations from the Superintendent
- Committee size and makeup varies by district, ranging in size from 16 members to 45.

# Will innovation plans have to be approved by the Texas Education Agency?

No, but TEA has rulemaking authority regarding the implementation of Districts of Innovation. A district that has proposed an innovation plan is required to notify TEA, and TEA is required to maintain information about the statutory exemptions adopted by districts in their innovation plans. TEA must then report to the Legislature about a school district's statutory exemptions.

A green chalkboard with two pieces of pink chalk and a white arrow pointing upwards.

# What impact could innovations have on school funding?

School district funding will remain substantially the same for Districts of Innovation. Unlike innovation zones in other states, this statutory option in Texas was not created to provide additional grant funding to participating districts. Depending on a district's innovation plan, the district may have some flexibility in the use of compensatory education funds. Districts are encouraged to think about how their flexibility choices, especially with respect to the school calendar and attendance, could impact funding calculations.

The plan that is adopted may have a term of up to five years, and it may be amended, rescinded, or renewed by a majority vote of the District Advisory Committee (DAC) or a comparable committee if the District of Innovation is exempt from having a DAC, and the board of trustees in the same manner required for initial adoption.



# Other Districts Considering or Pursuing Innovation Plans

- Austin ISD
- Brownsville ISD
- Canton ISD
- Denton ISD
- Dripping Springs ISD
- El Paso ISD
- Harlingen CISD
- Huntsville ISD
- Kaufman ISD
- Keller ISD
- Kemp ISD
- Leander ISD
- Lewisville ISD
- Los Fresnos CISD
- Mansfield ISD
- Pasadena ISD
- Plano ISD
- Red Oak ISD
- Rio Vista ISD
- Round Rock ISD
- San Antonio ISD
- Sherman ISD
- Splendora ISD
- Spring Branch ISD

# Steps to become a District of Innovation

- Board Resolution or District Advisory Committee petition
- Public Hearing
- Board decides whether to pursue District of Innovation
- Appoint committee to develop innovation plan
- Plan must be posted for 30 days and commissioner notified
- District Advisory Committee holds public hearing; approves plan by majority vote
- Board approves with 2/3 majority vote