



# District of Innovation

## Frisco ISD Local Innovation Plan

Renewed January 2022

### Introduction

House Bill 1842, passed in 2015 in the 84th Session of the Texas Legislature, in part amended Chapter 12A of the Texas Education Code (TEC) to create Districts of Innovation. The designation allows school districts to be exempt from certain sections of the TEC, providing more flexibilities and control in locally meeting the needs of students and the communities served.

On October 17, 2016, the Frisco ISD Board of Trustees (Board) adopted a resolution to initiate the process of becoming a District of Innovation. On November 14, 2016, the Board held a public hearing and appointed a Local Innovation Plan Committee (Committee) comprised of staff members and community members named by each member of the Board and the Instructional Support Team (IST). The 15-member Committee met on November 28 and 30, 2016, to discuss the process and drafted a Local Innovation Plan (Plan). Final adjustments were agreed upon via email. The District of Innovation Plan was considered for renewal beginning in November 2021 when the DOI committee convened. Their recommendations were submitted to the Board for consideration on January 11, 2022. The proposed renewal was approved for implementation on February 14, 2022 following the expiration of the initial plan on February 13, 2022.

Further timeline information regarding the process will be included in this section as appropriate.

### Terms

By law, the term of the designation as a District of Innovation may not exceed five years. The term of the renewed Frisco ISD Local Innovation Plan begins on January 11, 2022, and ends on January 11, 2027, unless rescinded or further renewed by the Board in accordance with law or terminated by the Commissioner of Education. The plan may be amended, rescinded or renewed by a majority vote of the district-level committee established under the TEC 11.251 (District Improvement Team) along with a two-thirds majority vote of the Board. An amendment to the Plan does not change/extend the date of the term of designation as an innovation district; exemptions that were already formally approved are not required to be reviewed. The District must notify the TEA within five business days of rescission of the plan and provide a date (not to be later than the start of the following school year) at which time it will be in compliance with all sections of the TEC. During renewal, all sections of the plan and exemptions shall be reviewed and the original statutory adoption process must be followed. The District shall notify the Commissioner of any actions taken to amend, rescind or renew the Plan along with the associated TEC exemptions and local approval dates. The Local Innovation Plan Committee will annually review the plan, unless the Board determines a review must be done prior to the annual review, to ensure that the recommendations are continuing to meet the needs of the District as intended and are in line with the Fisd Strategic Plan efforts.

See attached exhibits A and B for processes related to the annual review and for amending the Plan.

# Committee

In the spring of 2019, the Board of Trustees adopted DOI Committee Operating Procedures. The procedures included expectations for committee establishment and functioning as follows.

## Committee Establishment

The Board of Trustees will establish a District of Innovation Committee under provisions of Chapter 12A of the Texas Education Code, and under provisions of Chapter 102 of the Texas Administrative Code, which specifically relate to Innovation Districts. The Superintendent shall oversee the formation and operations of the DOI Committee. The Superintendent shall ensure that all statutory and regulatory requirements are met.

The DOI Committee membership shall provide a balance of representation among various stakeholders and interests. The DOI Committee shall be constructed as follows:

- Four community representatives as designated by the Board.
- Four staff representatives as designated collectively by the Instructional Support Team (IST).
- The FISD District Improvement Team (DIT) when in session with the eight members noted above.

## Committee Tenure

The members of the DOI Committee shall serve according to the terms of their positions. Four members designated by the Board along with four members designated by the IST shall be selected annually for a term of one year and shall be limited to two consecutive terms on the committee. Members of the DIT shall be elected or selected according to BQA (Local) of the Board Policy.

## Committee Authority

The DOI Committee shall be an ad hoc advisory body of the district and shall serve to provide guidance and counsel to the Board and the District Administration as it relates to recommendations for district innovations. The DOI Committee shall have no power to expend public funds, enter into contracts, or otherwise place obligation or liability upon the district.

## Committee Responsibilities

The DOI Committee is charged with providing input to District Administration and the Board regarding recommendations in alignment with the provisions of Chapter 102 of the Texas Administrative Code. The committee will implement procedures that will facilitate timely input regarding innovations that will perpetuate the mission and goals of the district. The Superintendent shall keep the Board informed of the work of the DOI Committee.

## Staff Support

The Superintendent shall designate at least one staff member to serve as Facilitator. The Facilitator(s) shall arrange and conduct DOI Committee meetings and represent the committee as appropriate. The Superintendent may also designate other staff to serve as advisors to the committee.

## Committee Meetings

The DOI Committee Facilitator(s) shall set the regular meeting schedule for the committee and establish the agenda. In conducting regular meetings, the facilitator(s) shall preside and may employ basic parliamentary procedure.

As necessary or appropriate, the facilitator(s) may form subcommittees or work groups. Subcommittees or work groups shall not constitute a quorum of the DOI Committee; as such, no formal action of the committee may be taken in subcommittee or work group meetings. Any findings or recommendations of subcommittees or work groups shall be reported to the DOI Committee.

The Local Innovation Plan is aligned with the beliefs, vision, mission and motto of the Frisco ISD and is guided by the strategies and objectives of the Strategic Plan established in 2015, which is the framework for the comprehensive educational program for the District and focuses the work and the daily operations of the District employees in meeting the needs of students.

## Beliefs

Education is a shared responsibility of students, school, home and community. With that as an essential principle, we believe the following to be true for students, staff, families and the community:

- Everyone has equal inherent worth and deserves to be treated with respect and dignity.
- Everyone needs challenge, opportunity and encouragement.
- Each person is unique.
- Meaningful relationships have profound lifelong impact.
- Integrity is essential.
- Imagination and creativity are vital.
- A safe environment is necessary for learning.
- Every person can learn.
- Each person is ultimately responsible for his/her own learning.
- Learning is lifelong and unlimited.
- There is always room for improvement.
- All students must graduate with the skills they need to pursue their aspirations.

## Vision

We look at education in a different way... through the eyes of children.

## Motto

Pride. Tradition. Excellence.

## Mission

Our mission is to know every student by name and need.



# District of Innovation Frisco ISD Review Process Exhibit A



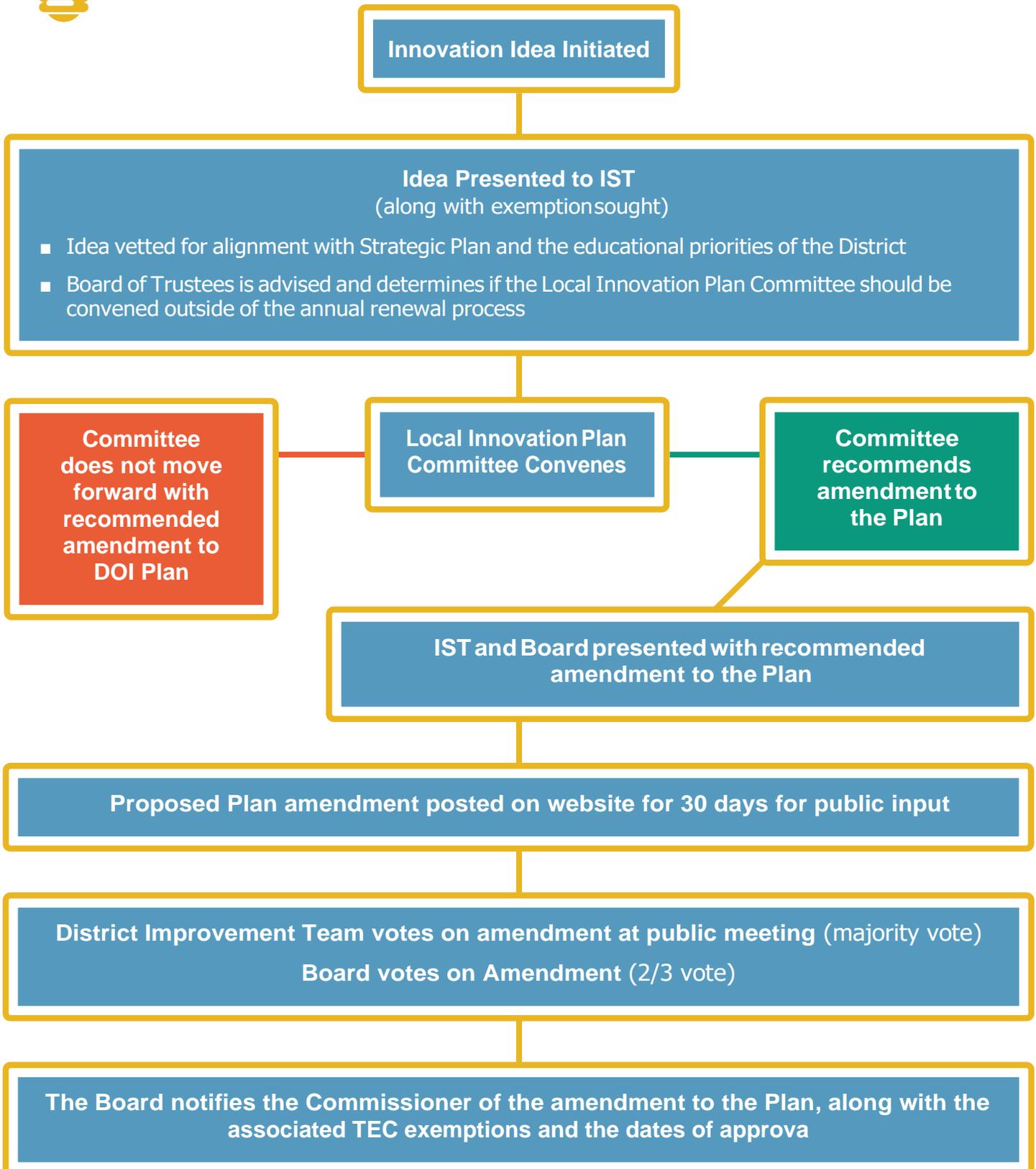
The Board of Trustees will annually convene the Local Innovation Plan Committee to review the Local Innovation Plan to ensure the recommendations are continuing to meet the needs of the District as intended and are in line with the FISD Strategic Plan efforts.

The IST and its designee will facilitate this meeting and bring forward any recommended changes. Any recommendation to amend, rescind, or renew the Plan will be moved forward by the IST or its designee to the District Improvement Team and the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law and the terms of the Local Innovation Plan.

The Board may convene the Local Innovation Plan Committee prior to the annual review process if deemed necessary.



# District of Innovation Frisco ISD Amendment Process Exhibit B



Innovation #1: <b>TEACHER CERTIFICATION</b>	
<b>Current State Requirement</b>	All teachers must hold an appropriate certificate or permit issued by the state. In the absence of the certification, districts can request emergency certification from the State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC). When a teacher does not have certification, the district has to provide written notification to parents within 30 days.
Texas Education Code:	§21.003, §21.0031, §21.051, §21.053, § 21.057
<b>Challenge(s)</b>	Traditional certification requirements are not aligned with the realities of the current educational environment and the need to hire industry experts to teach many of the “hard to fill” course offerings such as career and technology, world languages, and others. As a result, student interest is subject to being negatively impacted by the limited availability of these courses.
<b>District Recommendation</b>	<p>Continue to seek certified educators for teaching positions and maintain expectations for employee certification. When efforts have been reasonably exhausted, the district will have the flexibility to hire individuals who are knowledgeable in the area and are fully equipped to perform the duties of the position. Develop minimum required qualifications. Possible qualification criteria might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Professional work experience</li> <li>● Formal training/education in the content area</li> <li>● Active/relevant professional industry certification</li> <li>● A combination of work experience, training, and education</li> <li>● Demonstration of successful experience working with students</li> </ul> <p>Provide teachers identified under this option with the training necessary to carry out the expectations of their positions.</p>

Innovation #2: PROBATIONARY CONTRACTS	
<b>Current State Requirement</b>	<p>A person who is employed as a teacher by a school district for the first time, or who has not been employed by the district for two consecutive school years subsequent to August 28, 1967, shall be employed under a probationary contract.</p> <p>All teachers that have been teaching in public education at least five of the last eight years prior to being employed by the district must be offered a term contract following one year on a probationary contract.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> A “teacher” means a principal, supervisor, classroom teacher, school counselor or other full- time professional employee who is required to hold a certificate issued under TEC§21. Subchapter B.</p>
Texas Education Code:	§21.102
<b>Challenge(s)</b>	<p>Current requirements do not always allow for sufficient time to effectively evaluate the full range of skills and abilities of a teacher. Teachers may be limited in the time provided for them to demonstrate improvement in their teaching and instructional delivery.</p>
<b>District Recommendation</b>	<p>Provide all new teachers, in good standing, with a second year of probationary status (probationary contract) to allow enough time to effectively evaluate the full range of their skills and abilities.</p>

Innovation #3: <b>NINETY PERCENT RULE</b>	
<b>Current State Requirement</b>	<p>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 percent of the days the class is offered.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> <i>This innovation would not apply to standard credit bearing courses offered in the traditional classroom setting, but would be appropriate to apply to nonstandard, non-traditional courses offered outside of the campus classroom, such as an off-site internship or a dual credit course taken on a college campus.</i></p>
Texas Education Code:	§25.092
<b>Challenge(s)</b>	<p>Current reality reflects that some students are unable to attend class in the traditional brick and mortar building for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to, illness, family concerns, disabilities, efforts to pursue an accelerated programming, etc.</p>
<b>District Recommendation</b>	<p>Continue to provide students who are unable to attend in traditional settings the opportunity to benefit from virtual and online classes in addition to or in place of the traditional instructional offerings AND provide them with the associated credits and final grades for their work when recommended by district designated staff.</p> <p>Consider other innovative methods, locations and times for instruction to further accommodate students with legitimate scheduling conflicts which in turn could reduce dropouts and increase the number of qualifying graduates.</p>

Innovation #4: LIMITATIONS ON STUDENT SUSPENSIONS	
<b>Current State Requirement</b>	Students below grade three may not be placed in out-of-school suspension unless the student engages in behaviors that include weapons, violent offenses or being under the influence.
Texas Education Code:	§37.005
<b>Challenge(s)</b>	There are times when students engage in behaviors that do not necessarily fit into the categories of weapons, violent offenses or being under the influence, but warrant removal from the instructional setting. An example might include students who engage in “persistent misbehaviors” that are deemed to be harmful to the student or others. Currently students in these situations sometimes fail to understand the seriousness of their behaviors due to administrative limitations in responding to their behaviors.
<b>District Recommendation</b>	Establish a district protocol to facilitate appropriate disciplinary steps to address the behaviors of students in grades three and below. The protocol might include consideration of such student behaviors by campus administration in collaboration with district support staff.

Innovation #5: DISCIPLINE PLACEMENT FOR STUDENTS UNDER AGE 6	
<b>Current State Requirement</b>	A student younger than age 6 may not be placed in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (“DAEP”) unless the student brings a firearm to school.
Texas Education Code:	§37.006(1); §37.007(e)(2)
<b>Challenge(s)</b>	There are times when a student under age 6 engages in serious behavior that does not fit into the category of bringing a firearm to school but nonetheless poses a risk to other students and/or staff.
<b>District Recommendation</b>	If a student under the age of 6 has engaged in persistent misbehavior that is deemed by the Threat Assessment Team to put other students and/or staff in danger of bodily harm, the student may be placed temporarily in a non-traditional classroom setting at the Student Opportunity Center pending a placement conference. For a student receiving special education or 504 services, a manifest determination ARD would also be required for a change of placement. While at the Student Opportunity Center, staff will implement restorative practices and social skills in a structured environment with the goal to transition the student successfully back to the home campus.

Innovation #6: <b>ADDITIONAL HEALTH CARE OPTIONS</b>	
<b>Current State Requirement</b>	TEC§22.004(i) states that a school district may not make group health coverage available to its employees pursuant to TEC §22.004(b) after the date a District implements the program of coverages provided under Chapter 1579 of the Texas Insurance Code.
Texas Education Code:	§22.004
<b>Challenge(s)</b>	This provision allows for no flexibility in the design of group health insurance benefits and prohibits Frisco ISD from designing and making available better and more cost-effective coverage to staff, their families and prospective employees.
<b>District Recommendation</b>	Frisco ISD is proposing an amendment to its DOI which would permit the district to maintain local control of the group health benefits allowing the district to be flexible and responsive to the needs of current and future staff.

Innovation #7: LESS-THAN-ANNUAL APPRAISALS OF CERTAIN ADMINISTRATORS	
<b>Current State Requirement</b>	School administrators, other than principals, must be appraised annually using either the TEA Commissioner’s recommended appraisal process and performance criteria, or a locally developed appraisal process.
Texas Education Code:	§21.354
<b>Challenge(s)</b>	In a district the size of Frisco ISD, the formal appraisal process of employees consumes a significant amount of resources, including time, and can divert those resources from areas of greater need. Additionally, supervisors are expected to work collaboratively with their teams throughout the year to ensure that employees are meeting expectations, performing at an acceptable level, and exhibiting growth. As a result, annual appraisals can become perfunctory for employees who have consistently met performance expectations throughout the year over multiple years. Frisco ISD recognizes the importance of continuing to annually, formally appraise new employees and employees who need a higher level of support. Allowing for less-than-annual appraisals will provide flexibility for supervisors to devote resources, including time, to more formally support employees based on need while continuing to monitor all staff for satisfactory performance and growth.
<b>District Recommendation</b>	Establish district procedures and criteria to allow for less-than-annual appraisals for all non-principal, professional staff under contract. The criteria will include specific procedures for appraisals, including the conditions under which a non-principal, professional employee must be appraised annually.

Innovation #8: LESS-THAN-ANNUAL APPRAISALS OF PRINCIPALS	
<b>Current State Requirement</b>	Principals must be appraised annually using either the appraisal process developed or established by the TEA Commissioner or a locally developed appraisal process.
Texas Education Code:	§21.354
<b>Challenge(s)</b>	In a district the size of Frisco ISD, the formal appraisal process of employees consumes a significant amount of resources, including time, and can divert those resources from areas of greater need. Additionally, supervisors are expected to work collaboratively with their teams throughout the year to ensure that employees are meeting expectations, performing at an acceptable level, and exhibiting growth. As a result, annual appraisals can become perfunctory for employees who have consistently met performance expectations throughout the year over multiple years. Frisco ISD recognizes the importance of continuing to annually, formally appraise new employees and employees who need a higher level of support. Allowing for less-than-annual appraisals will provide flexibility for supervisors to devote resources, including time, to more formally support employees based on need while continuing to monitor all staff for satisfactory performance and growth.
<b>District Recommendation</b>	Establish district procedures and criteria to allow for less-than-annual appraisals for all non-principal, professional staff under contract. The criteria will include specific procedures for appraisals, including the conditions under which a non-principal, professional employee must be appraised annually.

Innovation #9: <b>UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS</b>	
<b>Current State Requirement</b>	Currently, the Texas Education Code requires that school districts keep records of every verbal warning issued to an individual behaving in a manner that is inappropriate for the school setting under 37.105(a)(2)(A). Additionally, districts are required to provide to individuals at the time of their removal, written information explaining the district’s process for appealing the decision to remove the individual. Finally, the statute requires districts to post the provisions of this statute as well as the appeal process on every individual campus website.
Texas Education Code:	<b>§37.105 (c), (d), and (g)</b>
<b>Challenge(s)</b>	<p>It is not always practicable to keep detailed records of every verbal warning given to an individual who is behaving in such a way as to elicit a verbal warning. Often, stopping to gather the necessary information could further escalate the situation, rather than de-escalate. Additionally, in many circumstances, the administrator addressing the unruly individual may not be able to document the event immediately. Because verbal warnings only lead to ejection if the individual continues to act improperly immediately after the verbal warning, documenting those that do not lead to ejection is unnecessary and overly burdensome.</p> <p>Similarly, given the volatility of situations in which an individual is ejected from school property, it is rarely feasible to provide the individual with a written copy of the district’s appeals process. These processes are readily available on the District’s website together with all other information regarding complaints. Finally, posting this information on campus websites is duplicative and unnecessary as all information regarding complaints and appeals is available in a single location on the District’s main website which is frequented by District stakeholders.</p>
<b>District Recommendation</b>	The District should only keep records of ejections themselves, rather than all verbal warnings, including those that do not lead to ejections. Such records should contain relevant information as determined by the appropriate administrator. Upon request, the District should direct individuals to the District website for information on the appeals process.

Innovation #10: <b>FIRST DAY OF INSTRUCTION</b>	
<b>Current State Requirement</b>	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.
Texas Education Code:	§25.0811
<b>Challenge(s)</b>	<p>This calendar restriction does not allow for professional learning prior to the start of school and throughout the year. It is also prohibitive to including strategic breaks for staff and students that is believed to help with the overall well-being of both, while also providing for extended family time throughout the year.</p> <p>Without local flexibility with the calendar, FISD is challenged with balancing the days in each semester in a manner that is best for students and teachers, particularly at the secondary level when participating in a one-semester course, and in all courses relative to the pacing of lessons and learning.</p>
<b>District Recommendation</b>	The first day of instruction will not begin prior to the second Monday in August but will be scheduled to best meet the needs of FISD and its students, staff and community in furthering the educational program.

Innovation #11: DESIGNATION OF CAMPUS BEHAVIOR COORDINATOR	
<b>Current State Requirement</b>	A person at each campus 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.
Texas Education Code:	§37.0012
<b>Challenge(s)</b>	This statute came out of the 84th Legislative Session and limits the District’s ability to know the name and need of each of its students. By placing this duty on one administrator, rather than allowing assistant principals to be responsible for this duty with the students assigned to him/her as was done previously in FISD, it creates great inefficiencies and limits the effectiveness of FISD administrators. The burden of placing this on one person is not sustainable, and the additional stress it creates to staff, students and families should be avoided. The assistant principals are building relationships with the students and families assigned to them and are best equipped to handle discipline concerns and the management of behavior issues and consequences. In order for the District to promote the social and emotional learning of its students and foster the connection between actions and consequences, the District seeks relief from this Code. This will allow for more student-centered behavior management programs that have the support and buy-in of the students, staff members, parents and local community.
<b>District Recommendation</b>	The principal may delegate the duties of the Campus Behavior Coordinator to campus administrator(s) to best serve the needs of students and families, and the District will provide the training and guidance necessary for them to execute the expectations, practices and protocols of FISD that also meet all other provisions of the applicable code. This will ensure consistency and adherence to policy and legal requirements.

**Innovation Consideration #1: District-Level Committee Member Selection**

<b>CURRENT STATE REQUIREMENT</b>
Texas Education Code Section 11.251(e) requires that Board policy include a procedure for nominating and electing staff representatives to the district-level planning committee.
<b>Texas Education Code : §11.251(e)</b>
<b>CHALLENGE(S)</b>
Currently, Frisco ISD’s District-level committee has 125 staff spots, which is more than the number of applications received in the past several application cycles. As a result, every staff member who applied was added to the Committee, making the current election nomination and election policy unnecessary and burdensome.
<b>DISTRICT RECOMMENDATION</b>
Continue to provide for significant levels of staff participation, including at least one classroom teacher representative from every campus. Use the current District committee application and selection process, which includes soliciting applications for staff who are then selected by committee facilitators, in accordance with the membership requirements for the committee, to apply to staff on the District-Level committee as well.

**Innovation Consideration #2: District and Campus Improvement Plans**

<b>CURRENT STATE REQUIREMENT</b>
Statute currently spells out very specific requirements for District and Campus Improvement plans. These requirements including reporting specific information based on statewide issues.
Texas Education Code: §11.252, §11.253, §11.255
<b>CHALLENGE(S)</b>
The state requirements are not tailored to Frisco ISD's distinct needs which vary from campus to campus. As a result, the District and Campus Improvement plans may not adequately address the needs of a particular campus or the District as a whole.
<b>DISTRICT RECOMMENDATION</b>
As part of the District's Strategic Blueprint, the District Improvement Plan will reflect the district's system responses to the Board-adopted priorities and to supporting campus improvement efforts. Campus Improvement Plans will reflect the comprehensive needs assessments completed by the campus staff and the system responses identified.