

# **Edgewood ISD**

**February 13, 2017**

**District of Innovation Committee Meeting**

# Agenda for Tonight

- What is a District of Innovation (DOI)?
- **WHAT SCHOOL DISTRICTS ARE ELIGIBLE TO BE DISTRICTS OF INNOVATION?**
- **WHY WOULD A SCHOOL DISTRICT CHOOSE TO PURSUE A DOI OPTION?**
- **WHAT POTENTIAL BENEFITS WOULD A DOI DISTINCTION OFFER EDGEWOOD ISD?**
- **WHAT LEGAL REQUIREMENTS CAN A DOI NOT EXEMPT?**
- Term of DOI Plan?
- **WHAT IMPACT COULD A DOI HAVE ON EISD SCHOOL BOARD POLICY?**
- **WHAT PROCESS IS REQUIRED TO ADOPT AN INNOVATION PLAN?**
- **POSSIBLE DOI CONSIDERATIONS FOR EDGEWOOD ISD**
- **COMMITTEE ACTIVITY**
- **ADJOURN MEETING**

# What is a District of Innovation?

- In 2015, the Texas 84<sup>TH</sup> Legislature with [House Bill 1842](#), amended the Education Code to empower school districts to enjoy some of the same flexibility given to Texas open enrollment charter schools by allowing public independent school districts to be exempt from certain requirements imposed by state law. Essentially, the District of Innovation (DOI) legislation is about offering districts more local control. "Innovation" is somewhat a misnomer in this instance, and a more appropriate title would have been "District of Local Control."
- With federal legislation such as No Child Left Behind and the ever-expanding Texas Education Code, public schools districts have had little decision-making authority at the local level to reflect the uniqueness of each community. To some extent, DOI legislation offers a window of opportunity for districts to take back some local decision-making. As much as anything, many districts are seeking the DOI designation to demonstrate the desire for local control free of overarching federal and state mandates. That being said, districts cannot seek exemption from certain federal and state legislation such as academic accountability, including student standardized assessments.

# WHAT SCHOOL DISTRICTS ARE ELIGIBLE TO BE DISTRICTS OF INNOVATION?

- To be eligible for a designation as a District of Innovation, a school district's most recent academic performance rating must be at least acceptable.
- Edgewood ISD has met all state and federal accountability performance criteria for the 2015-16 school year with a MET STANDARD rating from the Texas Education Agency

# WHY WOULD A SCHOOL DISTRICT CHOOSE TO PURSUE A DOI OPTION?

- A local school district may want to pursue specific innovations in curriculum, instruction, governance, 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. The experiences of other school districts may be informative, but may not directly relate to the purpose or progress of a plan in another location (TASB DOI Information Sheet).

# WHAT POTENTIAL BENEFITS WOULD A DOI DISTINCTION OFFER EDGEWOOD ISD?

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- Potential benefits of Edgewood ISD becoming a District of Innovation include:
- **Local control:** EISD decides which available flexibilities best suit our local needs.
- **Customization:** EISD can create an innovation plan that suits very specific needs of our school district.
- **Autonomy:** The DOI Committee must submit a district of innovation plan to the EISD School Board and the Texas Commissioner of Education.
- **Flexibility:** EISD will have the flexibility to implement practices similar to open enrollment charter schools, including exemptions from mandates such as:
  - School start date
  - 90% attendance rule
  - Class-size ratios
  - Site-based decision-making processes
  - Certain student discipline provisions
  - Use of planning and preparation periods
  - Teacher appraisal requirements

# WHAT LEGAL REQUIREMENTS CAN A DOI NOT EXEMPT?

As outlined in the TASB DOI Information Sheet, a DOI plan cannot seek exemption from a state or federal requirement applicable to open enrollment charter schools, certain parts of Chapter 11, state requirements for curriculum and graduation, and academic and financial accountability. Laws from which a District of Innovation cannot be exempt include statutes regarding:

- Elected boards of trustees
- Powers and duties of school boards, superintendents, and principals
- PEIMS
- Criminal history record checks and educator misconduct reporting
- Curriculum and graduation requirements
- Bilingual education
- Special education
- Prekindergarten
- Academic accountability, including student assessments
- Financial accountability and related reporting
- Open meetings
- Public records
- Public purchasing under the Texas Local Government Code and conflicts of interest
- Nepotism
- Other state and federal laws outside of the Texas Education Code

# Term of DOI Plan?

- The DOI plan may have a term of up to five years, and it may be amended, rescinded, or renewed by a majority vote of the District Level Advisory Committee, and the district's board of trustees in the same manner required for initial adoption.
- If a District of Innovation receives unacceptable academic and/or financial performance ratings for two consecutive years, the commissioner may terminate the innovation plan or require the district to amend its plan. If a District of Innovation receives unacceptable academic and/or financial performance ratings for three consecutive years, the commissioner must terminate the innovation plan.

# **WHAT IMPACT COULD A DOI HAVE ON** **EISD SCHOOL BOARD POLICY?**

- A District of Innovation will likely need to make changes to LOCAL policies and may need adjustments to LEGAL policies to reflect that some legal provisions may be affected by the district's innovation plan. After TEA publishes rules and the list of legal provisions from which a District of Innovation may seek an exemption, TASB Policy Service will be able to help each District of Innovation evaluate necessary changes to the district's policy manual, which could vary greatly from district to district, depending on the extent of the district-wide exemptions included in the innovation plan.

# WHAT PROCESS IS REQUIRED TO ADOPT AN INNOVATION PLAN?

- The DOI process for Edgewood ISD was initiated in January, 2017 by the unanimous approval of a resolution of the EISD School Board of Trustees board of trustee. Promptly after the resolution was approved, the EISD Board held a public hearing to consider whether the district should develop an innovation plan. At the conclusion of this hearing, the Board unanimously approved to move forward with creating a District of Innovation Plan and to appoint a committee to develop the plan.

# Possible DOI Considerations for Edgewood ISD?

- Calendar – First Day of Instruction
- Minimum Minutes of Instruction (Pre K)
- Educator Certification (Local Guidelines)
- Minimum Attendance for Class Credit or Final Grade
- Professional Employee Contractual Days
- Professional Employee Probationary Employment Contracts
- Professional Employee Appraisal Process and Performance Criteria
- Student/Teacher Classroom Ratio (22/1)
- Other??

# Activity

- Example using Calendar – First Day
- Break into groups #1
  - Four Groups
    - Each person gets a notepad to record your thoughts
  - Group discussion
    - 3-5 discussion points for each DOI Consideration
- Break into groups #2
  - Each person review and share your 3-5 discussion points from your original DOI Considerations
- Committee Review
  - Committee discussion....pro's and con's of each DOI consideration
  - Additional thoughts and ideas about DOI Considerations not discussed tonight?