

Questions Posed on District of Innovation

How soon will this plan be implemented?

The DOI Plan includes the term of the Plan. It would be a Plan that would commence in the Fall of 2017 and be in effect until the Spring of 2022.

What specific areas of a DOI does the district intend to utilize? How will this affect teachers?

The DOI Plan includes the specific exemptions the District intends to utilize. There are 6 exemptions proposed:

- *TEC §25.0811 and §25.0812 First day of Instruction and Last Day of Instruction*
- *TEC §25.092 Minimum Attendance for Class Credit or Final Grade*
- *TEC §25.081 Minimum Minutes of Instruction- 75,600 minutes/year, 420 Minutes/Day*
- *TEC §21.003 and TEC §21.051 Certification and Required Field-based Experience*
- *TEC §25.112 and §25.1113 Class Size and Notice of Class Size*
- *TEC §29.151 Free Kindergarten*

These exemptions would allow for more flexibility for teachers to deliver high-quality instruction and to meet the needs and interests of all students of South South San, in turn, fulfilling the District's Call to Action: All students will enjoy successful education experiences to empower them to make decisions and enrich their lives in the future they create.

How can increasing class size benefit my child? Will the teacher be able to meet the needs of my GT child when she/he has so many students?

Student success is the primary focus with all of the exemptions. All children will continue to receive the support they need in class. This exemption is not designed to carry out a plan to increase all class sizes. The exemption for class size is the equivalent to what school district's are already able to accomplish with class size waivers through the Texas Education Agency (TEA). A school district, having a designation of District of Innovation, would now allow the Board of Trustees to serve as the final approvers of such a request, rather than TEA. At South San we will always be committed to ensure classroom ratio decisions will continue to positively impact student success.

Will "Local Teaching Certificates" give the superintendent the right to grant anyone a local teaching certificate in any teaching field he chooses? Would this include no requirements such as degree or college hours other than approval of the superintendent?

This exemption is designed to offer more opportunities and electives for our students. Hard-to-fill and high-need areas are currently courses that we are unable to staff or unable to offer our students due to the lack of available talent. We will always fill a vacancy with the most qualified person to teach our students the content. The requirements for all local teaching certificates will be determined in collaboration with Human Resources and Legal.

Would eliminating the 90% rule cause us to lose money since the state allocates state dollars based on student attendance?

The exemption to address the 90% rule is specifically for students who are in extreme situations, such as students who have experienced a significant illness or trauma. This exemption will be available on a case-by-case basis. The funding we receive for these students would not change with this exemption because funding is tied to their daily attendance. Their attendance would not change in these circumstances, therefore neither would the funding we receive for the students. What would change is

the district's ability to determine if a child should be promoted to the next grade if they have shown mastery of the content. As it stands, we are required to have a child to repeat an entire grade (elementary and middle school) or course (high school) if they have not earned the required "seat time" of 90%. This exemption would allow the school district and Board of Trustees the flexibility to do what is in the best interest of students who have extenuating circumstances regarding their inability to attend school. The Compulsory Attendance Law will remain in effect by the state of Texas.

Would allowing some four year olds to start kindergarten early be at the expense of the district.

This exemption has not been used by any school district's holding a DOI exemption. This delay in its use is due to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) still working on the parameters surrounding this exemption and how funding could be affected, if at all. The DOI Committee voted to leave this exemption in the Local DOI Plan but to delay implementing its use until after TEA has provided more guidance on its impact. It was included so that the district would have the ability to educate young children once the specifics for funding are spelled out.

What is the check and balances for "local Teaching Certificates? Is there a school board review?

The District level committee will develop detailed guidelines on how this exemption will be carried out. The Superintendent will inform the Board of Trustees of such decisions as spelled out by the Local Plan.

Will all questions submitted on DOI Plan be given to school board and DOI Committee? When will questions be shown to board?

All questions submitted are answered and made public on this document. This document is updated as questions are submitted.

Has any consideration been given to the impact this new DOI ? Will the participation of the students involved in extracurricular activities like academics, athletics, and music been negatively impacted in any way?

There are no negative consequences of the DOI when referencing extra-curricular activities. Many of these exemptions are designed to do just the opposite. By offering more choice and greater opportunities and experiences for our students, we provide a more positive impact.

With one of the 6 waivers having to do with the certification of teachers, could a teacher's position be eliminated and then, after a period of time, re-added with a non certified "professional"?

The decision to eliminate a position is based on student need and resources available. We will always fill a vacancy with the most qualified person to teach our students the content. This exemption is designed to offer more opportunities and electives for our students. Hard-to-fill and high-need areas are currently courses that we are unable to staff or unable to offer our students due to the lack of available talent.