



Spring Creek ISD

DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLAN

2022-2027

Introduction

HB 1842 was passed during the 84th Texas Legislative Session in spring 2015. This bill provides Texas public school districts the opportunity to be designated as Districts of Innovation. To access these flexibilities a school district must adopt a District of Innovation Plan.

Districts of Innovation provide opportunities for:

- Greater local control;
- Increased flexibility governing education programming; and
- Empowerment to innovate and think differently.

Districts are not exempt from statutes related to curriculum, graduation requirements, nor academic and financial accountability.

On February 17, 2022, the Board appointed the members as the Local Innovation Plan Committee (“Committee”) comprised of district administrators and teachers.

Timeline

02/17/2022	Appoint Committee The Board of Trustees will appoint the Local Innovation Committee members to review and revise, as necessary, the District of Innovation Plan.
03/04-10/2022	Innovation Plan Development The Local Innovation Committee will review and revise, as necessary, a District of Innovation Plan.
03/29/2022	Renewed Innovation Plan Complete The Local Innovation Committee will hold a public meeting to review the proposed Renewed Innovation Plan and consider approval of the Plan.
03/30/2022	District of Innovation Plan Posted The proposed Renewed District of Innovation Plan will be posted on the Spring Creek ISD website for at least 30 days.
03/30/2022	TEA Notification The Commissioner of Education will be notified of SCISD Board’s intention to vote on adoption the of the proposed renewed DOI Plan.
05/19/2022	Board of Trustees Approval The Board of Trustees will consider approval of the renewed District of Innovation Plan.
05/23/2022	TEA Notification The Commissioner of Education will be notified of the approval of the renewed District of Innovation Plan.
05/23/2022	Posting of the Plan A copy of the approved DOI Plan will be provided to the Texas Education Agency for posting on its website. A copy of the DOI Plan will be posted on the district’s website.



Introduction (cont'd)

The Local Innovation Committee developed this plan to provide increased flexibility to better meet the needs of students and staff of our district. Careful consideration was given to the selection of the exemptions contained within this plan. All were chosen to provide opportunities for Spring Creek ISD to personalize and enhance learning for students. This plan is specific to the exemptions as outlined.

The district intends to follow the Texas Education Code (TEC) in all other areas. Any revisions or changes to the innovation plan that may arise will be brought before the Local Innovation Committee to explore the request. If the committee determines that a revision is needed, the innovation plan will then be taken back to the Spring Creek ISD Board of Trustees for approval with the revisions.

Under HB 1842, districts may identify certain requirements imposed by the Texas Education Code (TEC) “that inhibit the goals of the plan and from which the district should be exempted on adoption of the plan...”, therefore, SCISD seeks exemption from the following permissible provisions of the TEC as allowed in the statute.

Term

The term of this plan is for five years, beginning June 1, 2022 and ending May 31, 2027, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board in accordance with applicable law. The Local Innovation Committee will annually monitor the effectiveness of the Plan and recommend to the Board any suggested modification to the Plan on or before May 1 of each year of implementation. Following adoption by the Board of Trustees, the Spring Creek ISD Innovation Plan for the District of Innovation designation will be reported to the Texas Education Agency.

Local Innovation Committee

- Danielle Crawford, Teacher
- Quinna Emory, Teacher
- Forrest Harding, Teacher
- Mindy Tindall, Teacher
- Danny Finch, Principal
- Dr. Ken Miller, Interim Superintendent



Term of Plan: **June 1, 2022 - May 31, 2027**

Plan applies to:

☒ **Entire District: Spring Creek Independent School District**

☐ Campus (list) _____

☐ Other (please describe) _____

CHAPTER 11 – SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Subchapter D. Powers and Duties of Board of Trustees of Independent School Districts

☐ §11.1511 (b)(5), (14) Specific Powers and Duties of Board

☐ §11.162 School Uniforms

Subchapter F. District-Level and Site Based Decision-Making

☒ §11.251 Planning and Decision-Making Process

☒ §11.252 District-Level Planning and Decision-Making

☒ §11.253 Campus Planning and Site-Based Decision-Making

☒ §11.255 Dropout Prevention Review

CHAPTER 21 – EDUCATORS

Subchapter A – General Provisions

☐ §21.002 Teacher Employment Contracts

☒ §21.003 Certification Required

☐ §21.0031 Failure to Obtain Certification; Contract Void

Subchapter B – Certification of Educators

☐ §21.051 Rules Regarding Field-Based Experience and Options for Field Experience and Internships.

☒ §21.053 Presentation and Recording of Certificates

☒ §21.057 Parental Notification

Subchapter C – Probationary Contracts

☒ §21.102 Probationary Contract

☐ **Subchapter D – Continuing Contracts**

☐ **Subchapter E – Term Contracts**

Subchapter H – Appraisals and Incentives

☒ §21.352 Local Role

☐ §21.353 Appraisal on Basis of Classroom Teaching Performance

☐ §21.354 Appraisal of Certain Administrators

☐ §21.3541 Appraisal and Professional Development System for Principals



Subchapter I – Duties and Benefits

- ☒ §21.401 Minimum Service Required
- ☐ §21.402 Minimum Salary Schedule for Certain Professional Staff
- ☐ §21.4021 Furloughs
- ☐ §21.4022 Required Process for Development of Furlough Program or Other Salary Reduction Proposal
- ☐ §21.403 Placement on Minimum Salary Schedule
- ☐ §21.4031 Professional Staff Service Records
- ☐ §21.4032 Reductions in Salaries of Classroom Teachers and Administrators
- ☐ §21.404 Planning and Preparation Time
- ☐ §21.405 Duty-Free Lunch
- ☐ §21.406 Denial of Compensation Based On Absence for Religious Observance Prohibited
- ☐ §21.407 Requiring or Coercing Teachers to Join Groups, Clubs, Committees, or Organizations: Political Affairs
- ☐ §21.408 Right To Join or Not To Join Professional Association
- ☐ §21.409 Leave Of Absence for Temporary Disability
- ☐ §21.415 Employment Contracts

Subchapter J – Staff Development

- ☐ §21.451 Staff Development Requirements
- ☐ §21.452 Developmental Leaves of Absence
- ☒ §21.458 Mentors

CHAPTER 22 – SCHOOL DISTRICT EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

Subchapter A – Rights, Duties, and Benefits

- ☐ §22.001 Salary Deductions for Professional Dues
- ☐ §22.002 Assignment, Transfer, or Pledge of Compensation
- ☐ §22.003 Minimum Personal Leave Program
- ☐ §22.006 Discrimination Based on Jury Service Prohibited
- ☐ §22.007 Incentives for Early Retirement
- ☐ §22.011 Requiring or Coercing Employees to Make Charitable Contributions

CHAPTER 25 – ADMISSION, TRANSFER, AND ATTENDANCE

Subchapter C – Operation of Schools and School Attendance

- ☒ §25.0811 First Day of Instruction
- ☒ §25.0812 Last Day of School
- ☐ §25.083 School Day Interruptions
- ☐ §25.092 Minimum Attendance for Class Credit or Final Grade

Subchapter D – Student/Teacher Ratios; Class Size

- ☐ §25.111 Student/Teacher Ratios
- ☐ §25.112 Class Size
- ☐ §25.113 Notice of Class Size



☐ §25.114 Student/Teacher Ratios in Physical Education Classes; Class Size

CHAPTER 37 – DISCIPLINE; LAW AND ORDER

Subchapter A – Alternative Setting for Behavior Management

☐ §37.0012 Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator

☐ §37.002 Removal by Teacher Chapter 44 –Fiscal Management

CHAPTER 44 – FISCAL MANAGEMENT

Subchapter B – Purchases; Contracts

☐ §44.031 Purchasing Contracts

☐ §44.0331 Management Fees Under Certain Cooperative Purchasing Contracts

☐ §44.0352 Competitive Sealed Proposals

☐ §44.042 Preference to Texas and United States Products

☐ §44.043 Right To Work

☐ §44.047 Purchase or Lease of Automated External Defibrillator

Subchapter Z – Miscellaneous Provisions

☐ §44.901 Energy Savings Performance Contracts

☐ §44.902 Long-Range Energy Plan to Reduce Consumption of Electric Energy

☐ §44.903 Energy-Efficient Light Bulbs in Instructional Facilities

☐ §44.908 Expenditure of Local Funds

CHAPTER 45 – SCHOOL DISTRICT FUNDS

Subchapter G – School District Depositories

☒ §45.205 Term of Contract

☒ §45.206 Bid Or Request for Proposal Notices; Bid and Proposal Forms

☒ §45.207 Award of Contract

☐ §45.208 Depository Contract; Bond

☐ §45.209 Investment of District Funds

Other: *Please list any additional exemption required for your Innovation District Plan:*

Chapter 22 - SCHOOL DISTRICT EMPLOYEES AND VOLUTEERS

Subchapter A – Rights Duties, and Benefits

☒ §22.004(i) Group Health Benefits for School Employees

Chapter 25 - ADMISSION, TRANSFER, AND ATTENDANCE

☒ §25.036 Transfer of Student

Chapter 28 - COURSES OF STUDY; ADVANCEMENT

☒ §28.004 Local School Health Advisory Council and Health Education Instruction

Chapter 29 – EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

☒ §29.151 Free Kindergarten



SPRING CREEK ISD

DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLAN

2022-2027

Spring Creek ISD

District of Innovation Plan, 2017-2022

With regard to each area of innovation, the District declares exemption from the listed statutory provision, as well as any implementing rules or regulations promulgated pursuant to those statutory provisions by any state agency or entity, including but not limited to the Commission of Education, Texas Education Agency, State Board for Educator Certification, and State Board of Education.

Spring Creek ISD seeks exemption in the following areas:

CHAPTER 11 - SCHOOL DISTRICTS	
DISTRICT-LEVEL AND SITE BASED DECISION-MAKING	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planning and Decision-Making Process• District-Level Planning and Decision-Making• Campus Planning and Site-Based Decision-Making• Dropout Prevention Review	
<u>Texas Education Code</u>	<u>Board Policy</u>
TEC §11.251: Planning and Decision-Making Process	BQ (Legal)
TEC §11.252: District-Level Planning and Decision-Making	BQ (Local)
TEC §11.253: Campus Planning and Site-Based Decision-Making	BQA (Legal)
TEC §11.255: Dropout Prevention Review	BQA (Local)
Innovation:	
<p>Spring Creek ISD is located in an extremely small, rural community consisting of few residents and property used mainly for agricultural purposes. The District and Campus are combined into one building. The District has a current enrollment of 99 students (K-12). Resources for persons serving as members of the District/Campus Planning Committee and other school-related committees are limited without asking the same people to serve on several committees. Communication between the superintendent and principal of the campus occurs on a daily basis. The proposal to allow the District/Campus Planning Committee to become synonymous with the Local Innovation Committee with the same duties as required in law of the District/Campus Planning Committee would be beneficial in order to develop a more cohesive plan that establishes continuity of programs and performance through grades K -12.</p> <p>Therefore, Spring Creek ISD is claiming exemption from the specific provisions of TEC § 11.251 - 11.255 allowing the District to determine the processes, including but not limited to the number of meetings within the school year, and memberships of the committee along with which decisions will be referred to the committee, except those prescribed by law.</p>	



CHAPTER 21 - EDUCATORS

TEACHER CERTIFICATIONS

- **Certification Required**
- **Presentation and Recording of Certificates**
- **Parental Notification**

Texas Education Code

[TEC §21.003: Certification Required](#)

[TEC §21.053: Presentation and Recording of Certificates](#)

[TEC §21.057: Parental Notification](#)

Board Policy

[DK \(Legal\)](#)

[DK \(Local\)](#)

[DK \(Exhibit\)](#)

[DBA \(Legal\)](#)

[DBA \(Local\)](#)

Innovation:

Spring Creek ISD will retain local control over certification requirements so that the best interest of our students are served.

- The District will maintain its current expectations for employee certification. The District will make every attempt to hire individuals with appropriate certification for the position in question; however, where that is not reasonably possible, the District will have the flexibility to hire individuals who are knowledgeable in the area and equipped to effectively perform the duties of the position in question. In core subjects, K-12, individuals must have a Bachelor's Degree.
- The campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request for local certification that will allow an already certified teacher to teach a course or grade level for which he/she is not certified. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials or life experience the teacher possesses that would qualify this individual to teach the proposed subject.
- An individual with experience in the content of a course could be eligible to teach a vocational skill or a course through a local teaching certificate. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials or life experience the teacher possesses that would qualify this individual to teach the proposed subject. Examples: an experienced homebuilder teaching a building trades course, a licensed corrections officer teaching a criminal justice course, or a retired CPA teaching an entry level accounting course.
- The District will develop criteria requirements for individuals seeking a local certification. Those individuals with a local certification will not be guaranteed teacher contracts as outlined in TEC §21.
- Whenever possible, instructional planning for the uncertified teacher's course will be created in partnership with certified teachers in the same field. Uncertified teachers will be provided teacher mentoring, increased observations and feedback, professional development or instructional resources, or other supports.



- The superintendent will report this action to the Board of Trustees at the first board meeting following the assignment.
- Teacher certification waiver requests, state permit applications, or other paperwork will not be submitted to the Texas Education Agency. The District will ensure that all individuals assigned to teach have the knowledge and resources necessary to be successful.
- All teachers will still be required to complete the criminal background check in compliance with State Board of Education rules.



CHAPTER 21 - EDUCATORS

PROBATIONARY CONTRACTS

- Probationary Contract

Texas Education Code

[TEC §21.102: Probationary Contract](#)

Board Policy

[DCA \(Legal\)](#)

Innovation:

For experienced teachers new to the district who have been employed in public education for at least five of the eight previous years, a probationary contract may be issued for up to two additional years from the date of employment with Spring Creek ISD.

By providing additional year(s) of probationary status, the district/campus administration can:

- Better evaluate a teacher's effectiveness;
- Ensure fit for the district/campus culture; and
- Provide an opportunity for teacher growth.



CHAPTER 21 - EDUCATORS

APPRAISALS AND INCENTIVES

- Recommended Appraisal Process and Performance Criteria
- Local Role

Texas Education Code

[TEC §21.352: Local Role](#)

Board Policy

[DNA \(Legal\)](#)

[DNA \(Local\)](#)

Innovation:

Spring Creek ISD believes it is essential to maintain flexibility in using a variety of measurements, including goal setting, observations, student growth progress toward learning objectives, and other formative assessments in determining the performance of its educators.

By claiming exemption from Sec. 21.352, the District can determine locally the most appropriate appraisal instrument to evaluate its educators. Spring Creek ISD will also have option of local control to appraise less frequently than annually.

Regardless of whether any adjustments or changes are made to the state-mandated appraisal system and laws, Spring Creek ISD believes this issue to be a local decision as opposed to a state mandate.



CHAPTER 21 - EDUCATORS

TEACHER CONTRACT DAYS

- **Minimum Service Required**

<u>Texas Education Code</u>	<u>Board Policy</u>
TEC §21.401: Minimum Service Required	DCB (Legal) DCB (Local)

Innovation:

This plan gives the District the flexibility to set the required number of teacher contract days, not to exceed 187 days, each year with no effect on teacher salaries, except in accordance with TEC §21.4021 (Furloughs) which the district is not seeking exemption.

In each Plan year, it will be part of the calendar planning process to establish the number of required teacher contract days.

This innovation will provide the following advantages:

- This flexibility in contract days without a corresponding reduction in teacher salaries will make the District's salaries more competitive.
- This would increase the daily rate the District pays teachers.
- This should enhance teacher recruitment, therefore putting the District on a more level playing field with neighboring districts.
- This may significantly improve teacher morale.
- This will provide teachers opportunities during the summer months to seek beneficial staff development that relates to their field.



CHAPTER 21 - EDUCATORS

MENTORS

- Mentors

Texas Education Code

[TEC §21.458: Mentors](#)

Board Policy

[DEAA \(Legal\)](#)

[DEAA \(Local\)](#)

Innovation:

The District will exercise local discretion in assigning teachers to serve as mentors based on a variety of factors, including experience, knowledge, and areas of instruction targeted for improvement or innovation.

The District will establish requirements regarding the assignment, training, and procedures to follow concerning mentors.



CHAPTER 22 – SCHOOL DISTRICT EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

GROUP HEALTH BENEFITS FOR SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

• OPTIONAL HEALTH BENEFITS

Texas Education Code

[TEC §22.004\(i\): Group Health Benefits for School Employees](#)

Board Policy

[CR\(Legal\)](#)
[CRD\(Legal\)](#)
[CRD\(Local\)](#)

Innovation:

TEC §22.004(i) Group Health Benefits for School Employees 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. The current process allows no flexibility in the design of group health insurance benefits to fit the needs of all district employees. This provision also prohibits the district from procuring group health insurance benefits that may provide better coverages for its employees at a lower cost. This provision does not give the district the flexibility needed to acquire benefits packages that would potentially be more attractive to prospective employees.

In order to have the option to offer additional benefits options to employees and to increase local control of the group health benefits plan to allow the District to be responsive to employee and community needs, the district would be exempt from the health insurance requirements in TEX §22.004(i).



CHAPTER 25 - ADMISSION, TRANSFER, ATTENDANCE

TRANSFER OF STUDENT

- **Transfer of Student (Inter-District Transfer)**

Texas Education Code

[TEC §25.036: Transfer of Student](#)

**Note: This rule has been interpreted to require a transfer to be for a period of one school year.*

Board Policy

[FDA \(Legal\)](#)

[FDA \(Local\)](#)

Innovation:

Spring Creek ISD maintains a transfer policy under FDA (Local) requiring students not residing in the Spring Creek Independent School District to file an application for transfer each school year. In approving transfers, several factors are considered:

- Student's latest report card
- Student's attendance records
- Student's scores on all applicable state-mandated assessments
- Student's disciplinary history
- Availability of space, resources, and instructional staff
- Existence of any outstanding balances that the student may have with the District
- Potential adverse effect of the transfer on the financial well-being of the District or the Districts' ability to continue providing quality educational services to all students.

The District will reserve the right to revoke the transfer of a student at any time during the year based on one or a combination of the following factors:

- Academic standing
- Course grades
- Assessment scores (state and local)
- Work habits
- Behavior
- Disciplinary history
- Excessive tardies
- Attendance



CHAPTER 25 - ADMISSION, TRANSFER, ATTENDANCE

FIRST DAY OF INSTRUCTION/LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

- **First Day of Instruction/Last Day of School**

Texas Education Code

[TEC §25.0811: First Day of Instruction](#)

[TEC §25.0812: Last Day of School](#)

Board Policy

[EB \(Legal\)](#)

[EB \(Local\)](#)

Innovation:

Spring Creek ISD seeks local control over the start and end dates of a school year. The District anticipates starting school during the month of August and concluding the school year in May.

The primary advantages of this change will be to:

- Balance the days of instruction in grading periods and semesters
- Allow for the first semester to conclude prior to the holiday break
- Afford greater flexibility in calendar options
- Utilize more instructional time prior to the state assessments
- Allow calendar to be more efficient following STAAR/EOC assessments
- Align the district's calendar with the area junior college(s) in order to accommodate Spring Creek High School students. This will also allow time to provide student orientation time prior to the start of the college semester, eliminate inefficient time after the conclusion of the college semester, and allow break time prior to the start of summer school for all students.
- Align curriculum of dual credit courses through area junior college(s)



CHAPTER 28 - COURSES OF STUDY; ADVANCEMENT

LOCAL SCHOOL HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL AND HEALTH EDUCATION INSTRUCTION

- Local School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)

Texas Education Code

[TEC §28.004: Local School Health Advisory and Health Education Instruction](#)

Board Policy

[BDF \(Legal\)](#)

Innovation:

Spring Creek ISD will claim an exemption to this requirement. The District will determine the make-up of members to the local school health advisory council. The members of the SHAC should determine how often the committee should meet; however, the SCISD SHAC shall meet at least once per year. Due to the District's size, the SHAC is consistently aware of the needs of the District's students and are often able to review, advise, and revise plans in fewer than four meetings.



CHAPTER 29 - EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

FREE KINDERGARTEN

- Free Kindergarten

Texas Education Code

[TEC §29.151: Free Kindergarten](#)

Board Policy

[FD \(Legal\)](#)

[FD \(Local\)](#)

Innovation:

Children mature and demonstrate readiness for school at varying rates, and their social/emotional development can be affected by a wide range of factors. The September 1st deadline for entering public kindergarten does not provide the flexibility needed for the district to serve students who are ready for school slightly earlier than the established date.

The District will develop criteria to determine eligibility of students who are not yet 5 years old by September 1 and allow those students meeting the locally determined eligibility requirements to optionally enroll with all the same district financial benefits of those students who are 5 years old by September 1st. Assessment of students will take place the summer before the start of school only.

Students who are not yet 5 years old by September 1 who have demonstrated academic and social readiness based upon the local assessment tool(s) must be enrolled on the first day of the school year as they will not be allowed to enroll at any time after the start of the school year.

In addition, the District shall consider the availability of space, resources, and instructional staff prior to accepting a student who is not yet 5 years old by September 1.



CHAPTER 45 - SCHOOL DISTRICT FUNDS

DEPOSITORY CONTRACT

• Depository Contract

Texas Education Code

[TEC §45.205: Term of Contract](#)

[TEC §45.206: Bid or Request for Proposal Notices; Bid and Proposal Forms](#)

[TEC §45.207: Award of Contract](#)

Board Policy

[BDAE \(Legal\)](#)

[BDAE \(Local\)](#)

Innovation:

In a small district and a small town, the District's choices for its depository bank are limited. Historically, no other financial institutions have ever successfully bid for the District's business as the District's depository.

This exemption is to allow the District's existing bank contract to be extended beyond the total 6-year allowable contract term if the district determines contract pricing remains competitive, and there is no operational or financial reason to send the district's banking services out for bid. This exemption lessens the administrative burden related to preparing and reviewing a Request for Proposal (RFP) when there is a limited number of banking institutions available to bid on the District's business. This will further mitigate any impact to employees that would have to change direct deposit instructions each time a new depository occurs and allows the district flexibility with respect to banking relationships. The time saved by the superintendent and the board of trustees by not having to deal with this ministerial duty every two years will allow the superintendent and the board more time for studying and planning for student progress, instructional strategies, and innovative options for the district educational goals.

Local Guidelines:

The District will only send depository services out to bid if the district determines contract pricing becomes uncompetitive or there is some operational or financial reason to send the district's banking services out for bid. With this exemption in place, none of the additional requirements related to the bid or request for proposal detailed in Sec 45.205 through 45.207 would be applicable.

