Flour Bluff Independent School District
District of Innovation Plan
Approved on December 12, 2019
Introduction

House Bill 1842, passed in the 84th Legislative Session, provides an opportunity for Texas public school districts to modify state requirements at the local level to better meet the needs of their unique student populations, in order to prepare them for success and lifelong learning. To access these flexibilities, a school district must adopt an innovation plan as set forth in Texas Education Code, Chapter 12A. To be eligible for designation as a District of Innovation, a school district’s most recent academic performance rating must be at least acceptable. Once formally approved, an innovation plan is effective for five years. The plan may be amended, rescinded, or renewed in the same way it was developed and approved at any time.

Each school district may pursue designation as a District of Innovation for different reasons. As a District of Innovation, Flour Bluff ISD will be able to increase flexibility necessary to personalize the learning experiences of our students. We also believe Flour Bluff ISD must have the ability to make important educational decisions for our students at the local level. As we developed our District of Innovation Plan, our community has been involved throughout the process, giving ongoing feedback on what they want for their children in order to prepare them to be positive contributors to the world.

Process

April 25, 2019—Meeting of the Board of Trustees
The Board of Trustees heard a presentation on District of Innovation.

July 25, 2019—Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Board of Trustees signed the resolution to proceed

August 1, 2019—Public Meeting
A public meeting was held to get feedback from the community

August 29, 2019—Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Board of Trustees approved to pursue the District of Innovation designation and delegated the Superintendent to appoint a committee

September 12, 2019—First Meeting of the District of Innovation Committee

October 1, 2019—Second Meeting of the District of Innovation Committee

October 8, 2019- Flour Bluff ISD District of Innovation Plan was posted to www.flourbluffschools.net website and will be posted for at least 30 days.

October 8, 2019- Official notification to the Texas Education Agency that Flour Bluff ISD is in the process of becoming a District of Innovation.
November 13, 2019—Third Meeting of the District of Innovation Committee and Public Meeting. Approved by a Majority of Flour Bluff ISD’s District of Innovation Plan Committee.

December 12, 2019- Board of Trustees approved the DOI Plan for Flour Bluff Independent School District.

2019-2020 District of Innovation Committee

Dr. David Freeman            Superintendent
Dr. Allison Schaum           Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
Dr. Linda Barganski          Director of Federal and State Programs
Edgar Van Geem               Director of Special Education
Jeanette Revels              Director of Human Resources
Kim Sneed                    Public Information Coordinator
Chris Steinbruck             Athletic Director
Tracy Erickson               High School Administrator
Kelly Boswell                Junior High Administrator
Dr. Sal Alvarado             Intermediate Administrator
Dr. Nikol Youngberg          Elementary Administrator
Shea Hernandez               Primary Administrator
Amy Seeds                   Early Childhood Administrator
Kristin Sanderford          Secondary Special Education Counselor
Beth Huckabee               High School Teacher
Maria McDonel               Junior High Teacher
George Henderson            Junior High Teacher
Micki Beauregard            Intermediate Teacher
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Misty Beckwith</td>
<td>Elementary Teacher</td>
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<td>Donna Kesselring</td>
<td>Primary Teacher</td>
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<td>Christina Martinez</td>
<td>Early Childhood Center Teacher</td>
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<td>Cheryl Hooper</td>
<td>High School Parent</td>
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<td>Michelle Ewing</td>
<td>Jr. High Parent</td>
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<td>Natalie Barganski</td>
<td>Intermediate Parent</td>
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<td>Leann Minners</td>
<td>Elementary Parent</td>
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<td>Katie Hoover</td>
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<td>Tamara Blair</td>
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<td>Jennifer Welp</td>
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<td>Nicole Peters</td>
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<td>Dr. Alicia Needham</td>
<td>Community Member</td>
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<td>Lynn Kaylor</td>
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<td>Kelly Martin</td>
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<td>Dr. Laurie Turner</td>
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<td>Monette Bright</td>
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<td>Christy Zamora</td>
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<td>Javier Wiley</td>
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Requested Exemptions

Uniform School Start Date
(EB LEGAL) (Ed. Code 25.0811)

Currently
Students may not begin school before the 4th Monday of August. For many years this was the rule; however, districts had the option of applying for a waiver to start earlier. Many districts applied for the waiver and would begin the 3rd Monday, some even going as early as the 2nd Monday. The Texas tourism groups lobbied to have this stopped because they believed it was detrimental to the tourism business. Therefore, several years ago the legislature took away all waivers and dictated that districts may not begin until the 4th Monday, with no exceptions.

Proposed
This flexibility of start date allows the district to determine locally, on an annual basis, what best meets the needs of the students and local community. This empowers us to personalize learning, increase college and career readiness and balance the amount of instructional time per semester. In addition, by having the flexibility in the start and end of the school year, students will be able to enroll in college courses that start in early June, thereby increasing college and career readiness. Removing the uniform start date could also let the Flour Bluff ISD start classes as a short week, easing the transition for students entering kindergarten, middle school, and high school. This will also allow for more flexible professional development opportunities for our staff.

Class Size Ratio
(EEB LEGAL) (Ed. Code 25.112, and 25.113)

Currently
Kindergarten – 4th Grade classes are to be kept at a 22 student to 1 teacher ratio according to state law. When a class exceeds this limit, the district must complete a waiver with the Texas Education Agency. These waivers are never rejected by TEA. Along with the waiver, it is required that a letter is sent home to each parent in the section that exceeds the 22:1 ratio, informing them the waiver has been submitted. Many times, soon after the waiver is submitted, students move out of the district and we are below the 22:1 ratio.
Proposed
Flour Bluff ISD, believes that small class size plays a positive role in the classroom. This must be balanced with the logistics of the timing of adding staff and the best teacher-to-student ratio that can be achieved given the total number of students. Many times, it is not the number of the students but the makeup and chemistry of the classroom which influence the learning environment. Most importantly, research clearly shows it is the teacher in the classroom that has the greatest impact on student learning, not absolute class size. In the event that class size exceeds the 22:1 ratio for Kindergarten-4th grade classes, a TEA waiver will not be necessary, but the superintendent will report to the Board of Trustees for approval. Flour Bluff ISD will not allow a ratio greater than 23:1 in Kindergarten-4th grades.