



DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLAN

Developed and Approved: November 2016 - April 2017

Amended and Renewed: August 8, 2022

Expires: August 7, 2027

Our Vision

Building a better world through the power of learning

Our Mission

McGregor ISD will inspire and educate students to be productive contributors in a global society

**The Bulldog Way
Students First**

Introduction

House Bill (HB) 1842, passed during the 84th Legislative Session, permits Texas public school districts to become Districts of Innovation and to obtain exemption from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code.

Potential benefits of being a District of Innovation include:

- Flexibility: Districts will have the flexibility to implement practices similar to charter schools, including exemptions from certain mandates including the uniform school start date and required minutes of instruction.
- Local control: Districts decide which flexibilities best suit their local needs.
- Autonomy: Districts must submit a district of innovation plan to the commissioner of education, but approval is not required.

McGregor ISD’s original District of Innovation Plan (DOI) was valid for five (5) years. On March 17, 2022, the MISD Board of Trustees, at a regularly scheduled Board meeting, voted to begin the DOI renewal process and approved the formation of a DOI Committee. The committee considered input from all stakeholders to update the district’s DOI plan.

The updated DOI Plan is intended to enhance the educational environment in McGregor ISD. The SBDM Committee that developed this plan is substantially composed of teachers. The ultimate goals of the plan are to advance innovative curriculum, instructional methods, community participation, governance of campuses, and parental involvement by eliminating onerous compliance requirements and focusing district resources on what matters most.

District Advisory Committee Members

James Lenamon.....	Superintendent
David Everett.....	Assistant Superintendent
Kelly Tharpe	Assistant Superintendent
Billie Hamilton.....	McGregor Primary Teacher
Rikki Minnix	McGregor Primary Teacher
Jessica Austin.....	McGregor Elementary Teacher
Janna Oxford.....	McGregor Elementary Teacher
MaryEllen Maddox	HG Isbill Junior High Teacher
Tammy Humphrey.....	HG Isbill Junior High Teacher
Claudia Parrott	McGregor High School Teacher
Dana Cervenka	McGregor High School Teacher
Kaleigh Montes.....	Business Representative
Jacaranda Vigil	Business Representative
Alex Garcia.....	Community Representative
Kevin Evans	Community Representative
April Rosier	Parent Representative
Staci Bottoms.....	Parent Representative

Term

The term of the plan is for five years beginning August 8, 2022, and ending August 7, 2027, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The committee will monitor the effectiveness of the plan and recommend to the Board any suggested modifications.

Timeline

January 28, 2022 - February 11, 2022

- DOI Thought Exchange asking responders what exemptions should be considered
- 37 parents, staff members, and community members responded with concerns to be addressed including
 - Academic calendar issues
 - Difficulty in filling teaching positions
 - The removal of redundant bureaucratic rules that diminish staff morale
 - The importance of local planning as opposed to state compliance activities

March 17, 2022

- MISD Board of Trustees voted to begin the DOI renewal process
- MISD Board of Trustees approved the formation of a DOI Planning Committee

March 21, 2022

- MISD Administrator meeting to review plan changes based on Thought Exchange results

March 30, 2022

- DOI Committee reviewed plan changes based on Thought Exchange results and administrator input

March 31, 2022

- Revised District of Innovation Plan was posted the MISD website

July 21, 2022

- Committee met for final review of the District of Innovation Plan

July 22, 2022

- MISD notified TEA of its intent to renew its DOI status

August 8, 2022

- Public hearing held prior to School Board meeting
- DOI Committee representative reported the boards approval of the plan
- Board of Trustees voted to approve the revised District of Innovation Plan

Exemptions

McGregor ISD will consider ALL permitted exemptions as described in the District of Innovation legislation (TAC 102) of 2015. The following items identify exemptions that the District will seek immediately. McGregor ISD reserves the right to examine and approve exemptions in all areas identified in statute or Commissioner rules.

PROBATIONARY CONTRACTS FOR TEACHERS	
Statutory Citation	TEC 21.102(b)(c)
Proposed Plan	<p>McGregor ISD will be exempt from the limit on the maximum number of years an experienced teacher, new to the district, may be extended a probationary contract as outlined in TEC 21.102 (b) and (c).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For the first year teacher (and teachers with less than five years experience) the district will continue to offer probationary contracts for a period of three years.• For experienced teachers (those with more than five years experience in the past eight years) the district may extend the one year probationary contract for a maximum period of three years. <p>Current mandates only allow for one year on a probationary contract for an experienced teacher, defined as one who has taught five of the last eight years, who is new to the district. This exemption will allow MISD greater flexibility to determine if the new/experienced teacher will be effective in the classroom. A teacher may be offered a term contract or have their employment terminated earlier with administrative recommendation and board approval. This exemption is for teachers hired beginning January 1, 2017, and does not apply to staff members hired before this date.</p>

TEACHER CERTIFICATION & INSTRUCTIONAL ASSIGNMENT

Statutory Citation	TEC 21.003 TEC 21.051 TEC 21.053 TEC 21.057
Proposed Plan	<p>McGregor ISD will be exempt from the requirements which limit the district's ability to hire the best candidate for a job based solely on certification issues or which limit the district's ability to assign staff to meet local needs.</p> <p>There are rare instances when an uncertified person is the best individual for the job. There are professionals from various academic or vocational fields that can be the best candidate to teach a particular course even if they are not yet certified to teach. MISD will continue to seek and employ fully certified teachers.</p> <p>Current requirements sometimes limit the ability of MISD to staff hard-to-fill positions. While MISD will continue to seek and employ fully certified teachers, exemptions from these requirements will allow the district to meet its staffing needs. Examples of these exemptions include, but are not limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allow an elementary certified teacher with expertise in early grades (e.g. 1st/2nd grade) to teach kindergarten.• Allow a teacher certified to teach through 6th grade to teach courses in grades seven and/or eight.• Allow a teacher certified to teach elementary reading to be the reading teacher of record for middle and/or high school students.• Allow a teacher certified in middle school and/or high school mathematics to teach elementary grades such as fourth and/or fifth.• Allow a teacher to teach one or two classes out of their certified field in an area or areas that the teacher has college course work and/or expertise.• Allow for greater flexibility in determining appropriate CTE experience in order to teach a CTE course.

CLASS SIZE, CLASS SIZE RATIO, AND PARENTAL NOTIFICATION

Statutory Citation	TEC 25.112 TEC 25.113
Proposed Plan	<p>McGregor ISD will be exempt from the 22:1 class size requirement.</p> <p>After the district has made a good faith effort to maintain the required 22:1 ratio in grades K-4, the district should not be required to seek an expedited waiver through the Commissioner’s waivers process. McGregor ISD will continue to strive to meet the required 22:1 class size ratio for grades K-4. MISD central office administrators, campus administrators, and teachers will determine if classes exceeding the 22:1 ratio should be divided or allowed to exceed the TEC limit. The exemption will allow MISD flexibility and eliminate the requirement to seek an expedited waiver from the Texas Education Agency.</p> <p>McGregor ISD will be exempt from the requirement to notify parents when class sizes exceed the 22:1 requirement.</p> <p>Parents who want information concerning their child’s class size may ask for it at any time. In many cases, these required notifications cause unnecessary friction between parents and the school. As stated in the intent to seek exemption from the 22:1 requirement, MISD has no intention to exceed the state mandated limit. However, in the event that the 23rd student moves into the district, and absent a parent request for the information, the district should not be required to post a notification.</p>

SCHOOL CALENDAR

Statutory Citation	TEC 25.0811 TEC 25.0812
Proposed Plan	<p>McGregor ISD will be exempt from the first day of instruction requirements listed in TEC 25.0811 and the last day of instruction requirements listed in TEC 25.0812.</p> <p>Current law mandates a school start date of the 4th Monday of August or later. This requirement creates unequal semesters, poor decisions on scheduled holidays, and a school year that ends in June. McGregor ISD, using educator and community input, should be allowed to develop a school calendar that best meets the needs of our students, parents, staff, and community. Multiple calendar options will be developed for consideration. The calendars will be presented to district staff for a vote. The calendar with the majority vote will be presented to the Board of Trustees for their review and consideration. Final calendar approval, including when the MISD school year begins and ends, will be made by the locally elected MISD Board of Trustees.</p>

ABSENCES FOR COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY DAYS

Statutory Citation	TEC 25.087 (b2)(1)(2)
Proposed Plan	<p>McGregor ISD will be exempt from the two day excused absence limit for students visiting institutions of higher education.</p> <p>The two day limit does not allow students a visit to out-of-state or some in-state colleges and universities. MISD will establish the number of days a student may receive an excused absence while visiting a college or university.</p>

MINIMUM ATTENDANCE FOR CLASS CREDIT OR FINAL GRADE

Statutory Citation	TEC 25.092
Proposed Plan	<p>McGregor ISD will be exempt from attendance requirements for course credit. The District will encourage students to attend their assigned campus but will take advantage of innovative learning opportunities to accommodate the needs of students. Exceptions to the attendance requirement will be considered in the following instances:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Earning credit due to events beyond the control of the student including, but not limited to, family-related hardships and personal health-related situations that impact the student's ability to attend school. The Attendance Review Committee will consider each situation on a case-by-case basis.2. Absences for academic-related purposes are eligible for consideration if the student meets UIL passing standards for the class in which they will be absent. The Attendance Review Committee will consider each situation on a case-by-case basis while reviewing the academic benefit of the requested absence. Documentation shall be required for each approved absence. Examples of such documentation include verification of service/work from a supervisor, artifacts from innovative learning experiences, etc...

DESIGNATION OF CAMPUS BEHAVIOR COORDINATOR

Statutory Citation	TEC 37.0012
Proposed Plan	<p>McGregor ISD will be exempt from the requirement to designate a campus behavior coordinator for each campus.</p> <p>The requirements in TEC 37.002 are redundant. MISD utilizes a multi-administrator approach for student discipline. The campus principals and assistant principals already serve as "behavior coordinators" and it is unnecessary to designate one of them as such.</p>

SCHOOL DISTRICT DEPOSITORY CONTRACT (BDAE LEGAL & LOCAL)

Statutory Citation	TEC Section 45.206
Proposed Plan	McGregor ISD will be exempt from the requirement to seek a Request for Proposal to extend the depository contract beyond the eight-year allowable time period so long as the District determines that the existing contract is competitive and that there is no reason to rebid for banking services. This exemption will lessen the administrative burden in preparing/reviewing RFPs, allow the District to maintain an established relationship with a local bank, and reduce the potential for banking errors.

TRANSFER STUDENTS FULL-YEAR REQUIREMENT

Statutory Citation	TEC Section 25.036
Proposed Plan	<p>McGregor ISD will be exempt from the one-year commitment in accepting transfer applicants based on the following guidelines:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The District may immediately revoke a student’s transfer for any lawful reason including notification that the transfer is not authorized by law or any disciplinary infraction or condition for which revocation is permitted.2. Transfer students must follow all District rules and regulations. Failure to do so may result in revocation of transfer. Any student conduct that could result in DAEP placement may result in revocation of transfer status.3. Acceptance as a transfer student is a privilege. Transfer status may be revoked for any of the following reasons, without limitations:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student’s attendance has fallen below 95% in any semester• Student has earned repeated failing grades in any class• Student has repeated minor violations of the Code of Conduct• Student has engaged in gang-related activity• Student has repeatedly engaged in behavior that hinders the learning of others• Student’s conduct is disruptive to the educational process of the District• Student’s vaccination record is out of compliance with state law• A district administrator determines that a false statement was submitted on any part of the transfer application• Student withdrew from MISD for any period of time or enrolled in another public or private school

SCHOOL HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL

Statutory Citation	TEC 28.004
Proposed Plan	<p>McGregor ISD will be exempt from the requirement to hold a minimum of four meetings per year.</p> <p>The MISD SHAC committee shall meet at least once per year. The district's size and the stability of the membership of the SHAC committee ensures that committee members are aware of the needs of the district's students and are often able to review, advise, and revise plans in fewer than four meetings. The MISD Board of Trustees and the members of the SHAC committee should determine how often the committee should meet.</p>

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Statutory Citation	TEC 21.451
Proposed Plan	<p>McGregor ISD will be exempt from mandated professional development requirements that hinder the District's ability to provide timely professional development activities to employees based on newly emerging issues, data, and student needs. The district will determine the areas of need, content, duration, and frequency of professional development for all staff members.</p>

DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLAN & STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Statutory Citation	TEC 11.252
Proposed Plan	<p>McGregor ISD will be exempt from improvement planning process that, under current requirements, have shifted the process into a bureaucratic process that minimizes the importance of thoughtful planning and implementation.</p> <p>Items listed in TEC 11.252 that are of a compliance nature will not be implemented and will be replaced by strategic planning components including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reviewing student performance data from a wide-variety of sources• Identifying strengths and weaknesses in student and program performance• Developing improvement activities that are aligned with the District's Strategic Plan• Reporting to the Board on progress toward meeting the Strategic Plan requirements• Modifying instruction and programs based on student performance data