Innovation District Advisory Committee Feedback

- What issues or innovations should we consider to better implement the AISD Strategic Plan and improve educational outcomes?
  - Provide different approaches to the same instruction to serve different student groups. Ability to move students between instructional methods (classic, common core, etc.) & between teachers.
  - Period of language immersion prior to general enrollment where the need exists for students entering with language barriers.
  - Ability to vary class sizes based on student capability. (Needs based) Different class size.
  - Focus efforts on the academic needs of our students versus focusing efforts on state mandated legislation coming out of the capitol by people with limited to no public educational background.
  - Becoming a DIO has the potential to remove local control by Board of Trustees – are you aware of that? If that happens, then TEA can appoint a Board in its place which can mean disaster for our Austin students.
  - As this designation would apply for the entire district and leave the selection of exemptions to be determined for each campus as appropriate, we should opt to accept every exemption allowed.
  - Re: DOI – we need more information on what is currently restricted by the state, complete with the specific education statute.
  - Using online courses to help create individual learning plans for all students
  - At least 1 more in-service day for teachers
  - Utilize industry professionals to teach specific vocational courses
  - 360 degree feedback on teachers/staff, including from students
  - A computer for every child, loaded with e-textbooks
  - Do we have to be an innovation design district to implement a great innovation? Can’t we do this now?
    - More teacher PD (time and money)
    - Teacher pay-for-performance; differentiated pay
    - More technology courses related to the local economy
    - One-to-one devices for every student
    - Flexibility to hire part-time teachers
    - More focus on academics—less on sports and performing arts
    - Hire more qualified, innovative teachers
    - Create a “hub and spoke” facility plan for CTE and core courses
    - SEL report card
    - Lack of specialized courses due to lengthy hiring requirements
    - Lack of opportunities for students to pursue passion and field of interest
    - Time –PD, planning for teachers
      - Flexibility in hiring
      - 90% attendance rule
      - School day
      - Curriculum inflexibility
      - Budget constraints
      - Internship at High School
      - Curriculum flexibility
      - PD
      - Testing out
      - Campus & community planning
• **Which District of Innovation flexibilities (TEC exemptions) could we utilize?**
  - Start times to facilitate busing needs. Budges may allow certain programs only at certain locations (Time shifting)
  - Pairing teachers or aids with programmers or other industry experts who could offer specialized courses (Non-certified Instructors)
  - Allow students to test out of core curriculum to spend seat time in chosen areas of study. Self-study programs.
  - Instructional credit for internships & work experience.
  - The exemptions that limit outside interference from legislatures who have none or limited educational backgrounds
  - All of them, possibly. However, those that leverage flexibility of time and location provide the most opportunities to innovate
  - Are we limited to stationary restrictions, or can we add innovations that are not mentioned in Texas Statute?
  - “Maintain reasonable sizes”, & allow class sizes to swell and shrink to allow teacher flexibility, e.g. planning time, PD time
  - Adjust instructional minutes—allowing online courses
  - Local teacher appraised system, allow innovative feedback system, including peer reviews & 360 degree feedback
  - Start time, seat time
  - However, is there another way to do it? Without going this route?
  - Hiring a part time teacher to teach specialized courses and more diverse subjects (ex. welding, biotech, CSI, architecture, adv. Comp. programming)
  - Allowing students to fulfill mandated minutes by pursuing out-of-class opportunities (ex. internships, volunteering)
  - Length of school day
  - Teacher Certifications
  - Uniform school start date
  - Student flexibility for outside learning opportunities
  - We will see if we need to

• **What barriers or other considerations need to be addressed?**
  - Social Promotion—How to educate diverse groups while keeping students with similar age groups
  - School start dates to facilitate
  - Soft skills need to be part of curriculum
  - Not having a uniform calendar (start date, times) can ruin family vacations & summer camp opportunities. For example, I plan my summer vacation with my sister since our districts end at the same time. Without this, we may not be able to vacation together again.
  - Allowing more students per classroom instead of reducing class size can be hugely detrimental to our students and eventually the graduation rate.
  - The digital learning environment that will be a result of a DOI designation makes teacher obsolete, and places the competency of incompetency of our students in the hands of a software maker, and not educators. Those software makers are not having conversations with teachers even though this directly affects students.
  - It will be important to articulate the purpose—the “why” behind the adoption of exemptions
  - Also, change is always difficult. Having support for teachers will be critical.
  - All provisions must address the racial and socioeconomic segregation at the campus level that is currently found in AISD
  - Can TEA Virtual School “vouchers” be used for accelerative courses
  - Replace textbooks with e-textbooks?
- If we have a great idea, do we have to be an innovative design district to do it?
- Removing certification requirements; gain corporate, community, univ. partnerships
- To devote required minutes for ‘seat time’ to more out of school exp. Time
- Teacher support/fear
- More campus choice could create barriers between campuses/competition/inequity of opportunities
- Austin is a diverse, educated community, but innovation & change are not always embraced by all
- Support of teachers, staff, & community
- Lack of understanding
- Do we need this to make campus changes or can we do this
- Fear of unknown
- Simple solutions to complicated problems