



# Hardin-Jefferson Independent School District

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Shannon Holmes, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

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To: All Local Media Partners

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Additional information can be obtained from Dr. Shannon Holmes – (409) 981-6400

The Hardin-Jefferson ISD Board of Trustees unanimously approved a motion to pursue a District of Innovation designation at its August 15, 2016 meeting.

The District of Innovation (DOI) designation was created by Texas House Bill 1842, which Texas lawmakers passed in 2015. The bill allows school districts to adopt a local innovation plan that outlines more flexible operating models, including some exemptions from state regulations previously offered only to charter schools. Districts with the DOI designation can avoid requirements such as uniform school start date, minimum instructional time, and restrictions on teacher certifications.

The HJISD Trustees appointed a committee of teachers, parents, community members, and administrators to review the process and to create an action plan. “Our goal is to have an action plan in place at some point this fall, with implementation this spring,” superintendent Dr. Shannon Holmes said.

“We feel that local control of the educational process is very important,” said board president Michelle Yentzen. “In order for our board to make decisions that are responsive to the unique needs of our district and community, we need the flexibility that the District of Innovation designation provides. Our goal is not to simply get rid of some paperwork and state requirements, we are looking for areas where we can change our operations so that we can offer a better educational experience to our students and our community.”

In order to qualify for a DOI status, school districts must maintain high academic standards, gather local input, and adopt a plan of innovation. More information on Districts of Innovation can be found on the Texas Education Agency website.

[http://tea.texas.gov/Texas\\_Schools/General\\_Information/Innovation/Districts\\_of\\_Innovation/](http://tea.texas.gov/Texas_Schools/General_Information/Innovation/Districts_of_Innovation/)