April 6, 2017

Mr. Michael Morath  
Commissioner of Education  
Texas Education Agency  
1701 N. Congress Avenue  
Austin, Texas 78701

Re: Skidmore-Tynan Independent School District – District of Innovation Plan

Dear Commissioner Morath,

Skidmore-Tynan Independent School District has been engaged in the process of developing a local version of the District of Innovation Plan in accordance with House Bill 1842 which was enacted by the 84th Texas Legislature. This letter serves as notification that our Board of Trustees intend to vote on a proposed local innovation plan.

On February 13, 2017, the Board of Trustees for Skidmore-Tynan ISD unanimously approved a resolution to hold a public hearing to consider whether the District should develop a local innovation plan for the designation of the District as a District of Innovation. A public hearing was held on March 6, 2017. On the same date, the Board of Trustees unanimously approved and then appointed a committee of teachers, administrators, and parents to further develop a local innovation plan. The local innovation plan was posted on the District’s web page for the required 30 days.

The innovation plan committee, which includes the District’s Improvement Committee and the Superintendent’s Advisory Council, met on April 5, 2017 to discuss a local innovation plan for the District. The committee, with a majority vote, approved a final version of the plan. The Board of Trustees anticipates voting on the recommended local innovation plan at their regularly scheduled meeting on April 10, 2017.

Please let me know if you need additional information or further clarification.

Sincerely,

Randy Hoyer, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
randy.hoyer@stbobcats.net
361-287-3426
Skidmore-Tynan Independent School District

District of Innovation Plan

Approved by the District of Innovation Committee, April 5, 2017
Final Board Approval to be determined on April 10, 2017

House Bill 1842, passed by the 84th Texas Legislature, 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. Under House Bill 1842, school districts may identify certain requirements imposed by the Texas Education Code which "inhibit the goals of the plan and from which the District should be exempted on adoption of the plan."

Skidmore-Tynan ISD seeks to create flexibility and opportunities for students in order to personalize and maximize learning at all levels of the District. The selection of exemptions contained within this plan were carefully chosen based on the needs of the District. Skidmore-Tynan ISD seeks exemptions from the following provisions of the Texas Education Code:

- Uniform Start Date
- Minimum Minutes of Instruction
- Teacher Certification
- Probationary Contracts
- Teacher Mentors

Uniform School Start Date
Exemption – TEC 25.0811 and 25.0812
Under current statute, students in Texas public schools may not begin school before the 4th Monday in August. The start and end date for the school year prevents school districts from building school calendars that meet the needs of all students. In addition, with a flexible start and end date to the school year, S-T ISD could offer greater opportunities for professional development for teachers, increased opportunities to provide remediation and/or enrichment for students, and a way to balance instructional time within semesters.

Minimum Minutes of Instruction – 75,600 Minutes Each School Year/420 Minutes Each School Day
Exemption – TEC 25.081
Current statute eliminated the required 180 days of instruction, replacing the number of days with 75,600 minutes of instruction for the school year and no less than 420 minutes of instruction during the school day. With an exemption from the 420 minute day, the District would be able to create flexible schedules within the school year and the instructional day in order to personalize student learning, further meet student needs, and create opportunities for teachers to collaborate on student work.
Teacher Certification and Field-Based Experience Requirement
Exemption – TEC 21.003 and 21.051
Under current statute, teacher certification requirements inhibit S-T ISD's ability
to hire highly-skilled individuals to teach career and technical education courses,
course taught in languages other than English, and high-demand dual credit
courses. The limited number of teachers available for these courses restricts
course offerings in the district. The District seeks to establish its own local
qualification requirements to teach such courses in lieu of the certification
requirements set forth in law.

Probationary Contracts
Exemption – TEC 21.102
Currently, probationary contract periods for newly hired teachers who have
worked in public education for at least five of the last eight years cannot exceed
one year. In certain situations, this limitation prevents the school district from fully
determining a teacher's effectiveness in the classroom. The preferred option for
probationary contracts for experienced teachers, librarians, counselors, or nurses
new to the school district is up to two years.

Teacher Mentors
Exemption – TEC 21.458
Current statute requires mentor teachers assigned to new teachers to have three
or more years of experience. This statute limits the number of teachers who are
allowed to serve as mentors and potentially restricts teachers with exceptional
skill or experience in the subject matter, who have less than three years of
experience, from working with beginning teachers in a mentor capacity.

District of Innovation Timeline

February 13, 2017
Board of Trustees approves a resolution to hold a public hearing to
discuss a local innovation plan which complies with House Bill 1842.

March 6, 2017
Board of Trustees conducts a public hearing to discuss provisions of a
local innovation plan.
Board of Trustees approves formation of a committee of teachers,
administrators, and parents to further develop a local innovation plan.
The local innovation plan is posted on the District's web page for the
required 30 days.

April 6, 2017
Notification of the Board of Trustees intent to vote on adoption of the
proposed local innovation plan sent to Commissioner of Education.

April 10, 2017
Board of Trustees votes to approve District of Innovation Plan.

At S-T
Higher Expectations Result In Higher Achievement
For All Students
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RESOLUTION TO CONSIDER DESIGNATION AS DISTRICT OF INNOVATION

WHEREAS Education Code 12A.001 provides that a district is eligible for designation as a district of innovation if the district's most recent performance rating under Section 39.054 reflects at least acceptable performance, and that consideration of designation as a district of innovation may be initiated by a resolution adopted by the board of trustees of the district; and

WHEREAS the Skidmore-Tynan Independent School District's most recent performance rating under Education Code 39.054 reflects at least acceptable performance.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of Skidmore-Tynan Independent School District by adoption of this resolution initiates the process under Education Code Chapter 12A to become a District of Innovation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that after this resolution is signed by the Board, a public hearing shall be held within 30 days to consider whether the District should develop a local innovation plan for the designation of the District as a district of innovation and that within 30 days of the public hearing the Board of Trustees of Skidmore-Tynan Independent School District shall appoint an innovation plan committee to develop a local innovation plan or decline to pursue designation as a district of innovation.

Adopted this 13th day of February, 2017, by the Board of Trustees.

[Signatures]

Presiding Officer

Secretary
### District of Innovation Committee Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Campus</th>
<th>Position/Role</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Randy Hoyer</td>
<td>S-T ISD</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
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<td>Dustin Barton</td>
<td>S-T ISD</td>
<td>Assistant Superintendent</td>
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<td>Emilia Dominguez</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>Principal</td>
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<td>Domingo Garcia</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
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<td>Christi Munson</td>
<td>High School</td>
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<td>Paula Gabriel</td>
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<td>Robert Elizalde</td>
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<td>Michele Hardcastle</td>
<td>Junior High</td>
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<td>Debbie Adamez</td>
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<td>Kandy Hennig</td>
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<td>Frances Hudson</td>
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<td>Jennifer Blount</td>
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<td>Victoria Cochran</td>
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<td>Beth Gonzales</td>
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<td>Barbara Seger</td>
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<td>Robert Trevino</td>
<td>Community</td>
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