



District of Innovation Plan 2017-2018

I. INTRODUCTION

House Bill 1842, passed during the 84th Legislative Session, allows Texas public schools with sufficient academic ratings to obtain exemptions from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code. The allowable exemptions are for those sections of code that do not apply to charter or private schools in an attempt to reduce the extra administrative or operational burdens placed on public schools.

To obtain exemptions, the District must create a Local Innovation Plan detailing the code requirements that inhibit the goals of the District and the benefits to the District expected from the exemption.

II. Term

The term of the plan will begin with the 2017-2018 school year and terminate at the end of the 2021-2022 school year, unless amended, rescinded or renewed by the Innovation Committee and the Board of Trustees. The Innovation Committee will review the plan annually to confirm consistent alignment with the needs of the District. Any recommended plan changes will be posted to the District website for 30 days and require the approval of the Innovation Committee and the Board of Trustees. [Refer to HEB ISD Board Policy AF.](#)

III. Innovation Committee

The Innovation Committee developed this Plan and includes members representing the following:

- Professional Organization Representatives
 - UEA
 - TSTA
 - TCTA
 - ATPE
- Teachers
- Key Community Leaders
- Parents
- Students: 11 & 12th Grade from each High School
- District Administrators

IV. Timeline

September 12, 2016- 6:00pm Board Meeting

- Board approved Resolution for district to consider designation as a District of Innovation.
- Posted notice of Public Hearing to consider whether district should develop an Innovation Plan.

September 26, 2016- 6:00pm Board Meeting

- Public Hearing held at Board Meeting.
- Board appointed Innovation Committee.

October 12, 2016-December 1, 2016-6:00pm Pat May Center

- Innovation Committee meetings held Oct 12, Oct 27, Nov 10, Dec 1

V. Strategic Plan

This Innovation Plan is guided by and aligned with the District's [Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan.](#)

VI. Innovation Plan Items

Class Size in Kindergarten through 4th Grade

TEC Code: § 25.112. CLASS SIZE. (a) Except as otherwise authorized by this section, a school district may not enroll more than 22 students in a kindergarten, first, second, third, or fourth grade class.

§ 25.113 NOTICE OF CLASS SIZE. (a) A campus or district that is granted an exception under Section 25.112(d) from class size limits shall provide written notice of the exception to the parent of or person standing in parental relation to each student affected by the exception.

Rationale for the Exemption:

- The district would no longer have to submit annual class size waivers that are continuously approved by TEA and do multiple communications to parents each six weeks allowing the district to redirect resources more effectively.

Local Guidelines:

- The district will continue to maintain established class size thresholds of kindergarten at 23 students to 1 teacher and Grades 1-4 at 24 students to 1 teacher. The district will provide parents class size notification at the start of school. [Refer to HEB ISD Board Policy EEB.](#)

First Day of Instruction (School Start Date)

TEC Code: Subchapter C – Operation of Schools and School Attendance - §25.0811 First Day of Instruction (a) A school district may not begin instruction before the 4th Monday in August, unless the school operates year-round, or if district has more than 190,000 students: the days are financed by local funds, or the campus is under comprehensive reform, or the majority of the students at the campus(es) are educationally disadvantaged.

Rationale for the Exemption:

- Restricting school start date to the 4th Monday in August operationally challenges HEB ISD because the 75,600 instructional minutes must be calendared between the 4th Monday in August and generally May 28 due to constraints of the venue contract for HS graduation. Flexibility to the start date would allow the district to address the following issues caused by the current calendar constraints:
 1. Increased student regression due to longer summer break.
 2. Lack of flexibility to schedule student breaks or other options during the school year.
 3. Condensed employee work schedules limiting flexibility to schedule holidays, personal days and professional development days impacting employee work / life balance.
 4. Increased teacher absences and related substitute teacher expense.
 5. A lack of true choice for the Calendar Committee in development of the school calendar.

Local Guidelines:

- The district will have the flexibility to designate the first day of school each year. The calendar exemption does not affect the number of contract days for teachers which will remain the same. [Refer to HEB ISD Board Policy EB.](#)

Probationary period for Ch. 21 Contracts

TEC Code: Subchapter C. Sec. §Sec. 21.102. PROBATIONARY CONTRACT. (a) Except as provided by Section [21.202\(b\)](#), a person who is employed as a teacher by a school district for the first time, or who has not been employed by the district for two consecutive school years subsequent to August 28, 1967, shall be employed under a probationary contract. A person who previously was employed as a teacher by a district and, after at least a two-year lapse in district employment returns to district employment, may be employed under a probationary contract... (b) A probationary contract may not be for a term exceeding one school year. The probationary contract may be renewed for two additional one-year periods, for a maximum permissible probationary contract period of three school years, except that the probationary period may not exceed one year for a person who has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment by the district.

(c) An employment contract may not extend the probationary contract period beyond the end of the third consecutive school year of the teacher's employment by the school district unless, during the third year of a teacher's probationary contract, the board of trustees determines that it is doubtful whether the teacher should be given a continuing contract or a term contract. If the board makes that determination, the district may make a probationary contract with the teacher for a term ending with the fourth consecutive school year of the teacher's employment with the district, at which time the district shall:

- (1) terminate the employment of the teacher; or
- (2) employ the teacher under a continuing contract or a term contract as provided by Subchapter D or E, according to district policy.

Rationale for the Exemption:

- The exemption is specifically for teachers who have taught in at least 5 of the last 8 years in public education. In addition to a one-year probationary contract, the district may recommend a second year probationary contract to be approved by the Board of Trustees. An extension to a second-year probationary contract is

to recognize that, at times, even experienced teachers new to the district need more than one year to learn the HEB Teaching and Learning system and the district's Continuous Improvement model. A one-year probationary period may not allow the teacher or the administrator time to evaluate the teacher's capacity or ability to adopt the HEB ISD requirements.

Local Guidelines:

- The district will have the option to recommend a second year probationary contract to teachers who are new to the district, but have taught at least 5 of the last 8 years in public education. There are no changes to first time teacher probationary contract terms only teachers who have taught in public education in at least 5 of the last 8 years. The second-year probationary contract is not automatic, but at the discretion of Human Resources and the campus administrator. [Refer to HEB ISD Board Policy DCA.](#)

Teacher Certification - CTE

TEC Code: Sec. 21.003. CERTIFICATION REQUIRED. (a) A person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern or teacher trainee, librarian, educational aide, administrator, educational diagnostician, or school counselor by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued as provided by Subchapter B.

TEC Code: Sec. 21.044. EDUCATOR PREPARATION (d) In proposing rules under this section, the board shall specify that to obtain a certificate to teach an "applied STEM course," as that term is defined by Section [28.027](#), at a secondary school, a person must:

- (1) pass the certification test administered by the recognized national or international business and industry group that created the curriculum the applied STEM course is based on; and
- (2) have at a minimum:
 - (A) an associate degree from an accredited institution of higher education; and
 - (B) three years of work experience in an occupation for which the applied STEM course is intended to prepare the student.

Rationale for the Exemption:

- The exemption is to specifically allow the district to issue local teaching permits to teachers of non-core and core academic CTE courses without intervention by the Commissioner to review the issued permits. The exemption is to allow the district to establish local requirements including the current requirements in Sec 21.055 for teacher preparation (including all background checks, training and classroom management preparation) to enhance our ability to compete for teaching resources with industry expertise. Additionally, exemption to 21.044 allows for further flexibility to not be limited to only those industry certifications where specific curriculum has been written by an industry group.

Local Guidelines:

- The district will establish local guidelines to have the option to issue local certification for any CTE core academic and non-core class teacher. The district’s local guidelines will maintain the requirements for criminal background checks and classroom management training and preparation, including optional support at the district discretion for a mentor teacher. [Refer to Policy DBA and DK.](#)
- Core Academic CTE Courses are defined by TEA at the link below. The current list as of this plan publication is included below:

[Core Academic CTE Courses are defined by TEA at: Core Academic Career and Technical Education \(CTE\) Courses](#)

8/24/2015

| Course | Credit Satisfied |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Business English | English |
| Digital Electronics | Mathematics |
| Engineering Mathematics | Mathematics |
| Financial Mathematics | Mathematics |
| Mathematical Applications in Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources | Mathematics |
| Statistics and Risk Management | Mathematics |
| Advanced Animal Science | Science |
| Advanced Biotechnology | Science |
| Advanced Plant and Soil Science | Science |
| Anatomy and Physiology | Science |
| Engineering Design and Problem Solving | Science |
| Food Science | Science |
| Forensic Science | Science |
| Medical Microbiology | Science |
| Pathophysiology | Science |
| Principles of Engineering | Science |
| Principles of Technology | Science |
| Scientific Research and Design | Science |

Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator

TEC Code: §37.0012 Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator.

- (a) A person at each campus must be designated to serve as the campus behavior coordinator. The person designated may be the principal of the campus or any other administrator selected by the principal.
- (b) The campus behavior coordinator is primarily responsible for maintaining student discipline and the implementation of this subchapter.
- (c) Except as provided, the specific duties of the coordinator may be established by campus or district policy. Unless superseded by campus or district policy:
 - a. A duty imposed on the principal can be performed by this coordinator
 - b. A power granted to a principal or other administrator under this subchapter may be exercised by the coordinator.
- (d) The coordinator will notify parents/guardian promptly if student is placed into: in or out of school suspension, disciplinary alt. education, expelled or in juvenile justice program.
- (e) Phone and written notification requirements
- (f) Principal to provide notice if coordinator unable or unavailable.

Rationale for the Exemption:

- The exemption is to only allow for the interpretation of the role and responsibilities of a Campus Behavior Coordinator to be fulfilled by multiple administrators as it is unrealistic to have only one person in this role to serve the number of students on our campuses.

Local Guidelines:

- The district will maintain all the duties and responsibilities outlined for a Campus Behavior Coordinator and allows the role to be fulfilled by more than one administrator per campus. [Refer to HEB ISD Board Policy FO.](#)

School District Depositories Contract

TEC Code: Subchapter G. School District Depositories Sec. §45.205
TERM OF CONTRACT. a) Except as provided by Subsection (b), the depository bank when selected shall serve for a term of two years and until its successor is selected and has qualified.

(b) A school district and the district's depository bank may agree to extend a depository contract for two additional two-year terms. An extension under this subsection is not subject to the requirements of Section [45.206](#).

(c) The contract term and any extension must coincide with the school district's fiscal year.

Rationale for the Exemption:

- This exemption is to allow the district's existing bank contract to be extended beyond the total 6-year allowable contract term if the district determines contract pricing remains competitive and there is no operational or financial reason to send the district's banking services out for bid. This exemption lessens the administrative burden related to preparing and reviewing a Request for Proposal (RFP) when there is a limited number of banking institutions available to bid on the district's business. This will further mitigate any impact to employees that would have to change direct deposit instructions each time a new depository occurs and allows the district flexibility with respect to banking relationships.

Local Guidelines:

- The district will only send depository services out to bid if the district determines contract pricing becomes uncompetitive or there is some operational or financial reason to send the district's banking services out for bid. With this exemption in place, none of the additional requirements related to the bid or request for proposal detailed in Sec 45.206 through 45.209 would be applicable. [Refer to HEB ISD Board Policy BDAE.](#)

Energy Efficient Light Bulbs in Instructional Facilities

TEC Code: Subchapter A- School District Fiscal Management Sec. 44.903.
ENERGY-EFFICIENT LIGHT BULBS IN INSTRUCTIONAL FACILITIES.

(a) In this section, "instructional facility" has the meaning assigned by Section [46.001](#).

(b) A school district shall purchase for use in each type of light fixture in an instructional facility the commercially available model of light bulb that:

- (1) uses the fewest watts for the necessary luminous flux or light output;
- (2) is compatible with the light fixture; and
- (3) is the most cost-effective, considering the factors described by Subdivisions (1) and (2).

Rationale for the Exemption:

- Removal of the mandate prevents unnecessary financial obligation to retrofit older bulbs and fixtures for facilities not undergoing renovation.

Local Guidelines:

- The district will continue to consider energy efficiency in purchases of new fixtures and bulbs, but has the ability to perform major lighting upgrades within planned facility renovations. [Refer to HEB ISD Board Policy CL.](#)