

# Hillsboro ISD District of Innovation Plan

## State certification requirements for teachers and other educators

Texas Education Code §21.003, §21.053

DBA (Legal)

### Rationale:

By exempting the District from this law, the District:

- will have the flexibility to hire experts in their field even if they don't yet have a teaching certificate.
- will have the flexibility in hiring "hard to fill" positions.
- will have the flexibility to hire those with industry expertise (e.g. HB 5 courses).

Innovation: TEC Ch. 12A. 003(b)(1)(E) any other innovations prescribed by the board of trustees  
Exemption from this requirement will enable more students to obtain educational benefits of course offerings in hard-to-fill, high demand dual credit, career and tech, and STEM courses. The district seeks to establish its own local qualification requirements and its own requirements for training of professionals and experts to teach such courses in lieu of the requirements set forth. By obtaining exemptions from existing teacher certification requirements, Hillsboro ISD will have the flexibility to hire community college instructors, university professors, individuals with Master's & Doctoral degrees, or internal applicants seeking assignments outside their traditional certification area.

## Teacher employment contracts

Texas Education Code §21.002

DCA (Legal)

### Rationale:

- Currently legal policy allows experienced teachers new to the district to have a probationary period that may not exceed one year if the person has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the previous eight years.
- This time period is not sufficient to evaluate a teacher's effectiveness in the classroom.
- Relief from this law would allow time to sufficiently determine a staff member's effectiveness.

Innovation: TEC Ch. 12A. 003(b)(1)(E) any other innovations prescribed by the board of trustees.  
Exemption from this requirement will allow ample time for campus administrators to determine the effectiveness of employees who have been a teacher in public education for at least five of the previous eight years thus providing a more stable and effective learning environment for students.

# Hillsboro ISD District of Innovation Plan

## Earliest possible school start date

Texas Education Code §25.0811, §25.0812

EB (Legal)

Rationale: Relief from this statute could potentially allow the following:

- Completion of first semester before Winter Break
- Benefit to instructional pacing
- More instructional days before state assessments
- More options for professional development during the school year
- Full days of professional development opportunities as opposed to half days
- Flexibility with the first day of school
  - Start date will be no sooner than the first Monday in August
  - Preference that students not have a full week the first week of school

Innovation: TEC Ch. 12A. 003(b)(1)(B) Modifications to the school year

The current law that prohibits the district from starting school before the fourth Monday of August forces the district into a calendar that has minimal opportunity for teacher professional development. Starting school even one week earlier can help minimize the negative impacts the district sees in this area. Starting early will allow for creative scheduling that allows for more intentional teacher professional development throughout the school year and also allows students to have a schedule that is more conducive to their learning.

# Hillsboro ISD District of Innovation Plan

Inter-District Transfers	
Texas Education Code §25.036	FDA (Local)
<p>Rationale: Relief from this statute could potentially allow the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rescinding transfers of students who engage in misbehavior and students who do not attend school for 90% of all classes because their choices interfere with our school district's ability to educate our student body in a way that is effective.</li><li>• allow the district Superintendent to rescind a transfer at any time during the school year due to attendance or discipline issues.</li></ul>	
<p>Innovation: TEC Ch. 12A. 003(b)(1)(B) Modifications to district transfer policy</p> <p>The Hillsboro ISD student transfer policy FDA (Local) requires that all nonresident students who wish to transfer must file a transfer application each school year. In approving transfer requests, the availability of space and instructional staff, availability of programs and services, the student's disciplinary history records, work habits, and attendance records are also evaluated. Transfer students are expected to follow the attendance requirements, as well as school rules and regulations of the district. The district is seeking to be exempt from any one-year commitment that might be implied by the provisions of TEC 25.036 when accepting transfer applicants.</p>	

# Hillsboro ISD District of Innovation Plan

## Preclusion from Providing Alternative Uniform Group Coverage Program

Texas Education Code §22.004

CRD (Legal)

Rationale: Relief from this statute could potentially allow the following:

- Flexibility in the design of group health insurance benefits to fit the needs of all Hillsboro ISD employees
- Procuring group health benefits that may provide better coverage for its employees and at a lower cost.

Innovation: TEC Ch. 12A. 003(b)(1)(C) Provisions regarding the district budget and sustainable program funding

Hillsboro ISD values our staff and the quality of the total employment compensation package we can offer. One major benefit of any potential employment opportunity is quality medical insurance at the best possible cost. This exemption allows Hillsboro ISD the opportunity to sample the market for group medical insurance and creates the possibility for flexibility in plan design and focus. The availability of an alternative to the current TRS options will also create a database of medical claims information from our own district employees that can be utilized to drive a targeted wellness program and increase the overall health of our employees and community. Increased local control of the group health benefits plan will allow the District to be responsive to employee and community needs.

# Hillsboro ISD District of Innovation Plan

## Preclusion from Minimum Length of Full Time Educator Contract

Texas Education Code §21.401 (a) (b)

DC (Legal)

Rationale: Relief from this statute would allow the following:

- Alignment of staff time to student instruction time without pay reduction
- Flexibility in district calendar for needs-based staff professional development

Innovation: TEC §21.401 (a) (b)

Currently, the contract between a school district and an educator must be a minimum of 10 months' service and at least 187 days. However, when TEC §25.081 changed the required days of instruction for students from 180 days to 75,600 minutes, the code did allow a reduction of 10-month employee contract days. Hillsboro ISD would like flexibility at the local level to determine the number of days teachers work based on the district's needs assessment. Teachers would work no less than 172 days under this plan and days worked would be based on the student calendar and determined areas for staff development. Allowing flexibility in the number of teacher days will provide better alignment of teacher contract days with the required 75,600 minutes of instruction without reducing teacher pay.

# Hillsboro ISD District of Innovation Plan

Modifications to Removal for Certain Conduct	
Texas Education Code §37.006 (a) (2) (C-2)	FOC(Legal)
<p>Rationale: Relief from this statute would allow the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>flexibility to utilize a graduated sanctions approach that ensures meaningful consequences are tailored to vaping incidents.</li><li>more responsive student discipline system that effectively addresses vaping challenges while maintaining fairness.</li></ul>	
<p>Innovation: TEC Ch. 12A. 003(b) (1)(B) Modifications to Removal for Certain Conduct</p> <p>The current law requires that if a student possesses, uses, sells, gives, or delivers to another person an e-cigarette, the student shall be removed from class and placed in a disciplinary alternative education program. Hillsboro ISD would like the flexibility at the campus level to intervene with less punitive consequences for first offense to maintain academic consistency and allow early intervention efforts. This exemption will only apply to e-cigarette offenses that do not involve THC or other controlled substances or illegal drugs.</p>	