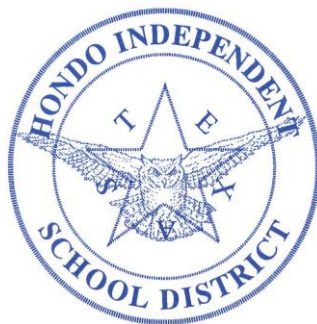


HONDO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



Hondo ISD Innovation Plan

Introduction

House Bill 1842, passed during the 84th Legislative Session, permits Texas public school districts to become Districts of Innovation and to obtain exemption from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code. On January 16, 2017, the Hondo Independent School District Board of Trustees passed a Resolution to initiate the process of designation as a District of Innovation in order

- to increase local control over District operations and
- support innovation to improve educational outcomes

On February 20, 2017, the board of trustees conducted a public hearing and appointed a local Innovation Committee comprised of district administrators, teachers and parents.

Innovation Committee

Hondo High School

Jennifer Blue
Sandra Eddy
Gabrielle Haby
Robert Knight
Araceli Mora

McDowell Middle School

Scott Backus
Tracy Berger
Tim Graff
Warren Haby
Tammy Neuman

Woolls Intermediate School

Steve Ayers
Charmagne Barber
Marilyn Graff
Norma Hecker
Krystal Marchese

Meyer Elementary School

Cecelia Brooks
Michelle McKenzie
Tina Mumme
Misty Ptasnik
Terry Ramirez
Shauna Weynand

Administrative & Central Office Staff

Cynthia Gann
Stephanie Laughinghouse
Rose Mary Mares
Mary Jo Peters
A'Lann Truelock

Additional Members

Bobby Ainsley
Linda Ulbrich
Shannon Windrow

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HONDO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

District of Innovation Timeline

January 16, 2017	Board of Trustees approved resolution to develop innovation plan
February 20, 2017	Board of Trustees held a public hearing in accordance with the statute
February 20, 2017	Board of Trustees appointed a committee to develop a local innovation plan
February 22, 2017	District of Innovation committee held initial meeting
February 27, 2017	District of Innovation Committee held an open meeting for all district staff
March 2, 2017	District of Innovation committee met to review first draft of plan
March 6, 2017	District of Innovation committee met to review updated draft of plan; approved draft to present to Board of Trustees
March 7, 2017	Provide draft of plan for review by Board of Trustees
March 7, 2017	Post proposed plan on the district's website for 30 days for staff, parent, and community review
March 10, 2017	Notify Texas Commissioner of Education of intention to vote on adoption of proposed plan
March 27, 2017	Provide update to Board of Trustees
April 24, 2017	Board of Trustees to formally approve the innovation plan
April 25, 2017	Formal notification to Texas Commissioner of Education of plan adoption

HONDO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Term

The term of the Hondo ISD Innovation Plan is for five years, beginning at the start of the 2017-18 school year and ending at the end of the 2021-22 school year. A local innovation plan may be amended, rescinded, or renewed if the action is approved by a vote of the district-level committee and the board of trustees in the same manner as required for initial adoption of a local innovation plan. The Committee will continually monitor the effectiveness of the Plan and recommend to the Board any modifications to the Plan.

Innovations

Probationary Contracts

(TEC §21.102) (DCA Legal)

Texas Education Code states that experienced teachers new to the district 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.

In order to support teacher growth and gather performance data, a one-year time period is not always sufficient to evaluate a teacher's effectiveness in the classroom, especially since teacher contract timelines demand that employment decisions must be made prior to the availability of end-of-year classroom and student data and state assessment results.

Experienced teachers new to Hondo ISD that have been employed in public education for at least five of the previous eight years may be issued a probationary contract for up to two years from the date of district employment to fairly assess an employee's performance.

Teacher Certification

(TEC §21.003, §21.044, §21.053) (DBA Legal)

In order to increase the amount of course offerings and utilize creative instructional methods, the district will require flexibility in the area of teacher certification requirements. The teacher certification requirements in the aforementioned statutes inhibit the district's ability to hire highly-skilled individuals to teach dual credit and career and technical education (CTE) courses. The availability of teachers who are certified to teach these courses is limited, which limits opportunities for student course offerings. In circumstances when a certified educator is not found for an offered class, the campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request for local certification that may allow a non-certified yet highly qualified professional to teach OR a certified educator to teach a subject in a related field for which she or he is not credentialed by the state. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what qualifications the individual possesses to teach the proposed subject.

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HONDO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

School Calendar

(TEC §25.0811) (EB Legal)

Under current Texas state law, “a school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August” (TEC 25.0811).

The school start date should be determined locally by the district, and on an annual basis, by considering what is best for the students and the community. Having the ability to modify the start date of school also allows the district the flexibility to balance semester days, and align classes to college courses.

Class Size Waiver

(TEC §§25.111, 25.112, §25.113) (EEB Legal)

State law requires that a school district may not enroll more than 22 students in a kindergarten, first, second, third, or fourth grade class. If classes are going to exceed this cap, a waiver is required from the Texas Education Agency. If approved, the district must notify parents by specifying the class for which an exception from the limit was granted.

While Hondo ISD recognizes that small classes play a positive role in the classroom, research shows that it is the teacher in the classroom that has the greatest impact on student learning. The elementary and intermediate campuses employ different instructional strategies that allow for small group instruction. This exemption does not disregard the intent of the class size ratio requirement, but rather, allows Hondo ISD the local control to determine class size.

Summary

The District of Innovation committee developed the plan to provide an opportunity for the Hondo Independent School District to make local decisions about the most appropriate way to educate our students. We are thankful to the Hondo ISD Board of Trustees for making this process possible.

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