



District of Innovation Plan

Hubbard ISD

Strategic Plan Goal 1: Enhance programs to meet individualized student needs

Class Size and Student/Teacher Ratio

Statutes:

§TEC 25.112 – Class Size

§TEC 25.113 – Notification of Waiver

Currently:

§25.112 addresses the number of students that may be in a single kindergarten, first, second, third, or fourth grade class and limits that number to 22. The intent of this statute was to ensure that classrooms maintained a small teacher/student ratio under the belief that smaller classes led to improved achievement for students who benefited from more individualized teacher attention. While a state waiver may address the maximum number of students in K-4 classrooms, these waivers are rarely rejected by TEA; therefore, it represents an unnecessary bureaucratic step. In addition, a letter is required to inform parents of the waiver. In many cases, the class has returned to a smaller student to teacher ratio before the waiver is even approved negating the need for this correspondence. Moreover, hiring staff mid-year disrupts the rapport and relationships built, makes it difficult to find highly qualified teachers, and changes the dynamics of the learners. The statute does not take into consideration the impact of transferring students to new classrooms in the middle of the school year.

Proposed:

It is the philosophy of Hubbard ISD that lower class sizes have a positive impact on Kindergarten -4th grade students; therefore, the district will stay true to the intent of the 22:1 ratio. We believe, however, that appropriate class sizes can be monitored and maintained at the local level without the necessity of waivers from the Texas Education Agency.

- Staffing decisions and teacher needs will be based on projected 22:1 ratios in K-4th grade. Hubbard ISD will continue to begin each school year with enough teachers to establish a homeroom student to teacher ratio of 22:1 per Kindergarten-4th grade class.

By seeking an exception from §25.112 the District would have flexibility for all campuses and classrooms for the duration of the District of Innovation Designation and would not be required to seek waivers annually.

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Strategic Plan Goal 2: Create a school calendar that is instructionally driven

School Start Date

Statute:

§TEC 25.0811 – First Day of Instruction

Currently:

A district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August unless the district operates a year-round system. A district may not receive a waiver of this requirement. Using this year's calendar with August 1, 2017 being a Tuesday, the start date would not occur for students until August 28.

Proposed:

Implementation of this statute will result in the loss of five days of instruction in the first semester. Starting one week earlier in August allows for more instructional time prior to semester exams and more instructional time overall prior to state exams. With the approval of this District of Innovation process we request approval to start sooner than the fourth Monday in August.

Strategic Plan Goal 3: Maintain a quality staff

Certification Required

Statutes:

§TEC 21.003, DK Local, DK Legal, DK Exhibit, DBA Legal

Currently:

In the event a district cannot locate a certified teacher for a position or a teacher is teaching a subject outside of their certification, the district must submit a request to the Texas Education Agency. TEA then approves or denies this request.

Proposed:

The district will continue to make every attempt to hire individuals with appropriate certification; however, the district may locally grant exceptions to certification requirements in order to best meet the needs of Hubbard ISD students. For example, but not limited to, an individual with experience in a CTE field could be eligible to teach an industry recognized skill or course through a local teaching certificate. The principal will submit the request to the superintendent with all the individual's credentials. The superintendent will then approve the request if they feel the individual could be an asset to students.

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Strategic Plan Goal 4: Assurance of a quality staff

Probationary Contracts

Statute:

§21.102 Teacher Employment Contracts

Currently:

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 in Texas for at least five of the previous eight years. This time period is not sufficient to evaluate an employee's effectiveness.

Proposed:

All contract employees new to Hubbard ISD that have been employed in public education in Texas for at least five of the eight previous years, may be issued a probationary contract for up to two full school years from the date of district employment. This will allow the district more time to evaluate a staff member's effectiveness prior to offering a term contract.

Strategic Plan Goal 5: Authentic Evaluation Process

Local Role (Appraisal Process)

Statute:

§TEC 21.352

Currently:

Each school district shall use the appraisal process developed by the commissioner of education (T-TESS) or an appraisal process and performance criteria developed by the district and approved by the commissioner.

Proposed:

The performance of certain certified positions are difficult to fairly evaluate using the current evaluation system (T-TESS). Therefore, a district committee of teachers and administrators will develop alternate appraisals for teachers/certified personnel in Hubbard ISD.

The appraisal instrument used for evaluation of certified personnel will not include a growth measure.

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Strategic Plan Goal 6: Promote a positive image

Campus Behavior Coordinator

Statute:

§TEC 37.0012 – Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator

Currently:

Senate Bill 107 requires the designation of a campus behavior coordinator on each campus.

(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 campus administrator selected by the principal.

(b). The campus behavior coordinator is primarily responsible for maintaining student discipline and the implementation of this subchapter.

Proposed:

The proposal for Hubbard ISD is to seek exemption from the statute requiring each school to have a designated campus behavior coordinator. The relationships that are established between the campus administrator, student and parent are the foundation for promoting and maintaining positive behavior. Utilizing a local process allows the administrator who currently has a relationship with the parent and student to be the person to make parental contact. The administrator notifies the parent of discipline or behavioral concerns, rather than having contact made by a designated behavior coordinator, who may or may not know all the students, providing a more individual and personalized approach.

Strategic Goal 7: Seven Hour School Day or Minimum Minutes of Instruction, School Day

Minutes of Instruction

Statute:

TEC: 25.082(a)

Currently: House Bill 2610 amended the Texas Education Code (TEC) 25.081, by eliminating the required 180 days of instruction and replacing this language with the requirement that schools provide at least 75,600 minutes of instruction annually and 420 minutes of instruction daily. While the bill allowed schools to add minutes as necessary to compensate for minutes of instruction lost due to school closures caused by disaster, flood, extreme weather conditions, fuel curtailment, or another calamity; it eliminated any options to pursue state waivers to reduce the minimum number of minutes per day to provide teachers with professional learning time beyond an early release waiver currently used by the District.

Proposed:

The flexibility to adjust minutes of instruction within a designated school day will assist with personalizing learning to better meet student and staff needs. This flexibility has the added benefit of allowing the possibility of an altered length of a school day, which may include, for example a later

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start/early release time which will accommodate professional learning/collaboration opportunities for teachers. As a component of the annual school district calendar development process, Hubbard ISD will carefully analyze the needs of students and staff to determine which dates should be modified. Modification to the length of certain dates will be recommended when there is a clearly identified purpose, such as professional learning, focused on meeting the needs of students and staff. It is recommended that future District Advisory Team calendar sub-committees fully explore flexibility found within this exemption by reviewing the current practice of modifying the length of school days and fully consider options that will provide the maximum benefits to students, teachers, and families.

This change would also give Hubbard ISD the flexibility to explore creating an alternative education program designed to meet the needs of nontraditional students. This program provides an alternative route to graduation for students who have not been successful in the traditional school setting due to special challenges. These challenges include parenting students, and family hardships created by economic situation that result in the student having to work instead of attending school. These and other life situations leave these students being credit deficient. Therefore, being exempt from the minimum minutes requirement will permit the District to offer alternative programming with fewer minutes that focuses on quality programming designed to fit the needs of these at risk students without having to apply for an annual state waiver.

This exemption could also provide Hubbard ISD a means to accelerate credit attainment, acquiring credits at a faster rate through a new alternative education program.

Strategic Plan Goal 8: Efficiency in decision making

District Advisory Council

Statute: TEC 11.251, TEC 11.252 and TEC 28.004 (d)

Hubbard ISD seeks exemptions from the site-based decision making process and the convening of the school health advisory committee and the many accompanying requirements falling under the governance of those two bodies. The statutory requirements as set forth by the Texas Education Code in Chapter 11 and 28 are burdensome, time consuming, and ultimately cause a disdirections of resources from the primary focus of schools. The education of students. Stakeholders will continue to be involved in the process, but a District Advisory Council that meets the needs of this district, schools and community as opposed to the one based on a broad brush and “one size fits all” model of statutory requirements detailed in TEC 11.251 and TEC 28.004. This will consolidate the number of meetings and the number of committees required by law and will better serve this community.

Proposed:

In place of a Site-based Decision Making Committee and the School Health Advisory Council, a District Advisory Council (DAC) will be established to meet, review, analyze, and respond to both qualitative and quantitative data regarding the District’s success and most importantly, students’ success. This Council will convene at least two times per year to guide the general direction of district resources and

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efforts. This consolidation of committees will yield an opportunity for one council to address multiple needs of the students served by the District as opposed to having multiple committees addressing a more narrow focus of needs. Hubbard ISD views this Council as a more efficient and effective way to serve our students, parents, and community.

Strategic Plan Goal 9: Contract Lengths

Teacher Contract Lengths

Statute: TEC: 21.401 (DC Legal) (DEA Legal)

Current law requires teacher contracts to consist of 187 days. This exemption would change the language to a minimum of 10 months rather than 187 days.

Proposed:

This would give the district the latitude to reduce the number of contract days with no effect on teacher salaries. This reduction in contract days at the current salary schedule would make our salaries more competitive. Teachers would have more flexibility during the summer months to seek out beneficial staff development that relates to their field.