



Hays CISD District of Innovation Plan Effective December 17, 2023 – December 17, 2028

District Goals:

1. Hays CISD believes in the achievement of every student. The District will evaluate and address the individual needs of each student. Student performance will be evaluated in academics, college readiness, and career development. Our staff believes in the education of the whole child and knows that success is based on more than the results of a single test.
2. Hays CISD is dedicated to the safety social and emotional well-being of students and staff. A safe environment must include secure facilities, staff and student training, and our adopted standard response protocol. The district will partner with local and state entities to assure preparedness. Specific areas to be addressed are campus access, detecting and reporting possible threats, and building an environment of trust between adults and all students. Our Emergency Operations Plan is updated annually and followed throughout the district.
3. Hays CISD is dedicated to treating all stakeholders with respect and dignity. Cultivating great community and staff relations requires empathy, visibility, trust, and communication. Communication through all appropriate avenues is a priority, and staff will receive training in these areas. Our district is committed to increasing client engagement both internally and externally.

Proposed Innovation:

First Day of Instruction






TEC Code Requiring Exemption:

TEC §25.0811: A school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.



Innovation for HaysCISD:

District Goals 1 of 2



An exemption to this statute will provide the opportunity to develop a school calendar that positively impacts students by:

-  Balancing the disparity in the number of instructional days in each semester
-  Ending the first semester by Christmas break so that final exams for high school students do not extend beyond the break
-  Matching HaysCISD semesters to coincide with the calendar of colleges from which students are taking dual credit courses
-  Providing flexibility for students to enroll in summer school, internships, employment, and professional certification experiences
-  Allowing for more instruction time prior to state-mandated testing and retesting, as well as AP and SAT testing

This exemption will also support teacher growth by:

-  Supporting the adult learning model by providing ongoing professional development throughout the year
-  Allowing staff to prepare for the school year by decreasing the amount of professional development in August

Implementation Considerations:

-  The HaysCISD calendar committee will convene annually to collaboratively develop and recommend a district calendar that is designed to promote the effective delivery of classroom instruction and school/district operations.
-  Teacher contracts will remain at 187 days.

Proposed Innovation:

CTE Teacher Certification

TEC Code Requiring Exemption:




TEC §21.003: Requires that a person may not be employed as a teacher by a district unless the person holds an appropriate certification or permit issued by the State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC).


Innovation for HaysCISD:

District Goal 1





HaysCISD seeks to hire certified and highly qualified individuals for every teaching position. Currently, in the event the district cannot locate a certified teacher for a CTE position, the district must submit a request to the Texas Education Agency. TEA will then either approve or deny the request. At this time, non-certified professionals cannot be hired or paid without SBEC certification on file.

Because of the nature of Career and Technical Education courses at Hays HS, Johnson HS, and Lehman HS, the current certification requirements restrict the district's ability to hire CTE professionals with the most applicable experience and qualifications. Flexibility to establish local teacher certification requirements when hiring CTE teachers will allow the district to:

-  Select from a larger and more experienced candidate pool for CTE courses
-  Establish requirements for professionals transitioning to CTE education from other careers
-  Hire CTE teaching staff with industry-standard professional certifications, or those not currently certified in accordance with TEA standards

-  Utilize the talents and skills of those in our community who would benefit the CTE needs of our students.

Implementation Considerations:

-  Exemption from TEC 21.003 is limited to provide hiring flexibility in the specific instructional area of Career and Technical Education only. All other instructional staff are required to hold valid SBEC certificates and will receive Chapter 21 contracts in accordance with policy and law.
-  HaysCISD will develop minimum required qualifications for individuals hired for such positions and will outline required professional development in the areas of student management, instructional strategies, curriculum, and parent engagement.
-  HaysCISD will utilize the standard teacher salary schedule for CTE instructors.
-  Parents will be notified when students are instructed by personnel without SBEC certification. Notification will include industry certifications held by the CTE instructor.

Amendment 3 to Hays CISD District of Innovation Plan

Adopted following the process timeline: April 20, 2020

AREA OF INNOVATION

With regard to each area of innovation, the District declares exemption from the listed statutory provisions, as well as any implementing rules or regulations promulgated pursuant to those statutory provisions by any state agency or entity, including but not limited to the Commissioner of Education, Texas Education Agency, State Board for Educator Certification, and State Board of Education.

Preclusion from providing alternative Uniform Group Coverage Program once the program of coverages under Chapter 1579, Insurance Code is implemented.

Exemption from: TEC §22.004(i)

Related Board Policies: HCISD CRD (LEGAL) and CRD (LOCAL)

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan

TEC §22.004 (i) states that a school district may not make group health coverage available to its employees pursuant to TEC 22.004(b) after the date a District implements the program of coverages provided under Chapter 1579 of the Texas Insurance Code. The current process allows no flexibility in the design of group health insurance benefits to fit the needs of all Hays Consolidated ISD employees. This provision also prohibits the District from procuring group health insurance benefits that may provide better coverages for its employees and at a

lower cost. This provision is in direct contradiction to the wishes of the local Board of Trustees who represent community interests in this matter.

Innovation for HaysCISD:

Increased local control of the group health benefits plan to allow the District to be responsive to employee and community needs.

On January 27, 2020, the Board of Trustees adopted findings declaring that Texas Education Code 22.004 is not in any of the prohibited exemptions that can be included in a District's local innovation plan pursuant to Texas Education Code 12A.004 and the list of the Commissioner's prohibited exemptions in Texas Administrative Code Title 19, Chapter 102, subchapter JJ, Section 102.1309.

Amendments 4-7 to Hays CISD District of Innovation Plan

Adopted following the process timeline: March 27, 2023

Amendment 4

Exemption from the due process including the notice and hearing to suspend a teacher without pay pending discharge of the teacher's employment. The timeline associated with suspending a teacher's pay pending a recommendation for termination can be unreasonable.

Related Statute: The board of trustees may suspend a teacher without pay for a period not to extend beyond the end of the school year pending discharge of the teacher. TEC §21.104(b) - In lieu of discharge or pending discharge, a school district may suspend a teacher without pay for good cause as specified by Subsection (a) for a period not to extend beyond the end of the current school year.

Related Board Policies: DFAA, DFBA

Innovation for HaysCISD: Increased control to suspend pay of an employee pending discharge that has already admitted or been convicted of a crime.

Amendment 5

Exempt the District from state law regarding the maximum length of time an experienced teacher may be employed on a probationary contract. At the recommendation of the Superintendent, a probationary contract may be renewed for up to two additional one-year periods 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.

Related Statute: TEC §21.102(b) - 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.

Related Board Policy: DCA

Innovation for HaysCISD: This innovation provides an extended period of time for an employee to remain employed on a probationary contract not to exceed two additional one-year periods as campus administration and district support personnel have an extended opportunity to evaluate academic performance in accordance with district adopted assessments and evaluation tools.

Amendment 6

Exemption from the requirement to have Kinder - 3rd grade teachers and elementary principals attend a reading academy by the end of their first year. The district will ensure that teachers will complete the academies within 2 years of being hired or within 3 years in extenuating circumstances. This statute creates overwhelming requirements in the employee's first year.

Related Statute: TEC §28.0062(2)(A) - School districts and open enrollment charter schools must ensure that not later than the 2022- 2023 school year, each classroom teacher in kindergarten or first, second, or third grade and each principal at a campus with kindergarten or first, second, or third grade has attended a reading academy.

Related Board Policy: DMA

Innovation for HaysCISD: The innovation provides the district Kinder-3rd grade employees an extended period of time to complete required reading academy.

Amendment 7

Expand the current certification exemption to include highly qualified out-of-state applicants. This option would be exercised by the Superintendent or designee when a highly qualified individual is coming from out of state and has yet to be certified by the State of Texas.

Related Statute: TEC §21.003 - Requires that a person may not be employed as a teacher by a district unless the person holds an appropriate certification or permit issued by the State Board of Educator Certification.

Related Board Policies: DBA, DK

Innovation for HaysCISD: This innovation allows flexibility in hiring qualified out of state teachers to teach in their certified area while working on earning their Texas State Board of Education Certification.

Amendment 8

Exempt the district from TEC § 21.404 to enable teachers who wish to volunteer to cover classes during conference or planning periods in exchange for monetary compensation to be able to do as part of the district's strategic efforts to provide class coverage when a substitute cannot be secured. The district would ask teachers who are interested in volunteering to do this to register their interest on a form prior to the school year. This list would be provided to principals as a list of volunteers. At any time, a teacher can decline an opportunity if they would rather plan. The intent is to provide the teacher an option and choice at any time.

Related Statute: TEC § 21.404 prohibits a district from assigning teaching duties during a teacher's planning period, even if the teacher agrees to the duties. The commissioner reasoned that a district can't contract for teaching duties in exchange for monetary compensation outside of a Chapter 21 contract (Bledsoe v. Huntington Indep. Sch. Distr., Tex. Comm'r of Educ. Decision No. 033-R10-1103 (Sept. 18, 2014)).

Related Board Policies: DL

Innovation for Hays CISD: This innovation allows flexibility in coverage for classes during planning periods by certified teachers on a voluntary basis when the district has made a good effort to secure a guest teacher and was unsuccessful in doing so.