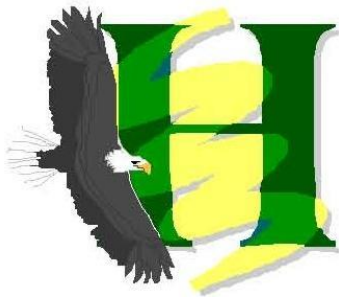


**Hunt ISD**  
**District of Innovation Plan**  
**August 1, 2024 – July 31, 2029**



**Advisory Committee Members:**

Luci Harmon – Superintendent

Tammy Brown – Student Services Director

Sarah Nichols - Principal

Cindy Lambert – Special Education Director

Jenna Lair - Teacher/Parent

Tara Guevara - Teacher/Parent

Joanie Bulkley - Teacher/Parent

Holly Enke - Teacher

Faith Bradberry- Teacher

Mary Liz Eastland - Business/Community

Kate Tullman - Parent

Hilda Flores - Parent

Bridget Symm - Business/Community

Kristin Phillips - Parent

## **Mission Statement**

Educating the next generation to be responsible citizens and leaders through quality instruction, positive examples, and mentoring opportunities.

## **Vision Statement**

Dedicated to Students, Committed to Excellence

## **District Goals**

Goal 1 – (G1) Implement all resources necessary to increase 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading and math outcomes to 100% at or above grade level.

Goal 2 – (G2) Adapt and prepare for changing technology through infrastructure, classroom instruction, and student preparation.

Goal 3 – (G3) Maintain a strong fund balance and to adopt and live within a balanced budget.

## **Introduction**

House Bill 1842, passed during the 84th Legislative Session, permits Texas public school districts to become Districts of Innovation and to obtain exemptions from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code that are available to open charter enrollment schools. This designation provides more local control to districts to determine how exactly to best utilize the designation to better serve students.

## **Term**

The term of the Plan is for the 2024-2025, 2025-2026, 2026-2027, 2027-2028, and 2028-2029 school years unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. This plan may be amended, rescinded, or renewed if approved by vote of the Advisory Committee and the Board of Trustees.

### District of Innovation Plan Timeline

Date	Action
March 18, 2024	District advisory committee constructs the District of Innovation Plan
March 18, 2024	District posts District of Innovation Plan on the district website
March 18, 2024	District Advisory Committee holds public meeting and passes the plan by majority vote
April 22, 2024	District of Innovation Plan is sent to TEA Commissioner
April 16, 2024	HISD Board of Trustees approves the District of Innovation Plan
April 22, 2024	District sends link to the plan on the website to TEA for inclusion on the TEA website

## **FIRST DAY OF INSTRUCTION**

(Texas Education Code §25.0811)

### **Currently**

The Texas Education Code states a school district may not begin student instruction before the fourth Monday of August. The current process allows no flexibility in the design and balancing of instructional semesters to meet the needs of students or the wishes of the local board of trustees, who represent community interests in this matter.

### **Proposed**

Current education code specifies that the first day of school will be the fourth Monday in August each school year. In some years, starting on the fourth Monday would make it difficult to complete all 75,600 instructional minutes before Memorial Day without lengthening the school day. HISD Board of Trustees, staff members, and parents believe it is in the best interest of the students to maintain the current school day length and instead adjust the start date. Therefore, Hunt ISD will have a school start date of the Wednesday before the fourth Monday if needed to allow for a school end date before Memorial Day.

### **Rationale**

This innovation allows Hunt ISD to adopt an earlier start date. With the earlier start date, Hunt ISD intends to:

- Meet the required instructional minutes without lengthening the school day,
- Align the HISD calendar with the holiday calendar of other local districts,
- End the school year before Memorial Day,
- Adopt a late August start date and complete the school year before Memorial Day to support our local summer businesses in the summer preservation movement.

## **TEACHER CERTIFICATION**

(Texas Education Code §21.044, Texas Education Code §21.003)

### **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**

Hunt ISD is committed to placing a quality, certified educator in every classroom. To best serve Hunt ISD students, decisions on certification will be handled locally. The current state teacher certification requirements inhibit the District's ability to acquire teachers who teach hard-to-fill positions such as: foreign language classes and high school math, science, and career & technology (CTE) courses. By obtaining exemption from existing teacher certification requirements, the District will have the flexibility to use certified teachers outside of their current certification area instead of being forced to opt for distance learning courses.

### **Rationale**

This innovation will give the flexibility that a small district needs to fill all teaching vacancies. In the absence of certified teachers, Hunt ISD has been forced to use distance learning options. With the ability to make local decisions about certification, Hunt ISD will be able to:

- Fill all teaching vacancies,
- Offer in-person learning with a certified teacher working directly with the students for all courses,
- Enrich applicant pools in specific content areas,
- Expand offerings to allow a full spectrum of courses for the students.

## **INTER-DISTRICT TRANSFERS**

(Texas Education Code §25.036)

### **Currently**

Under Texas Education Code §25.036, a district may choose to accept, as transfers, students who are not entitled to enroll in the district, but TEC §25.036, has been interpreted to require a transfer to be for a period of one school year.

### **Proposed**

Hunt ISD maintains a transfer policy under FDA (Local) requiring nonresident students wishing to transfer to 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 evaluated. Transfer students are expected to follow the attendance requirements, rules, and regulations of the district. TEC 25.036 has been interpreted to establish the acceptance of a transfer as a one-year commitment by the district. The district is seeking to eliminate the provision of a one-year commitment in accepting transfer applicants. On rare occasions, student behavior warrants suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion. In addition, student attendance may fall below the TEA truancy standard. In these rare cases, Hunt ISD seeks exemption from the one-year transfer commitment. Nonresident students who have been accepted as inter-district transfer students may have such transfer status revoked by the Superintendent at any time during the year if the student is assigned discipline consequences of suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion. In addition, students not meeting the State's 90% attendance standard may also be subject to immediate revocation of the transfer status.

### **Rationale**

This innovation gives Hunt ISD the local control needed to ensure high quality of inter-district transfers. Revocation of transfer status for a student that does not meet district standards will allow Hunt ISD to:

- Maintain high quality student population,
- Enhance teacher retention,
- Enhance teacher recruitment,
- Enhance district culture,
- Enhance the classroom learning environment.

## **TEACHER CONTRACT DAYS**

(DCB Legal, ECB Local, TEC 21.401)

### **Currently**

Education law in Chapter 21 defines a teacher contract as a 10-month contract equivalent to 187 days. Sec. 21.401. MINIMUM SERVICE REQUIRED. (a) A contract between a school district and an educator must be for a minimum of 10 months service. (b) Except as provided by Subsection (c-1), an educator employed under a 10-month contract must provide a minimum of 187 days of service. (c) The commissioner, as provided by Section 25.081(b), may reduce the number of days of service required by this section. A reduction by the commissioner does not reduce an educator's salary.

### **Proposed**

Hunt ISD will have the ability to reduce teacher contract days from 187 to a decreased length with no effect on teacher salaries. This would better align the teacher days to 75,600 minutes required of students.

### **Rationale**

This innovation allows Hunt ISD to change the number of teacher days annually to best fit district and student needs. With the ability to change the number of teacher contract days, Hunt ISD intends to:

- Enhance teacher recruitment,
- Enhance teacher retention,
- Enhance staff morale,
- Increase student achievement.