

HEREFORD

Independent School District

Committed to Children
Dedicated to Excellence

INTRODUCTION

The 84th Legislative session, through House Bill 1842, created “Districts of Innovation” in Chapter 12 A of the Texas Education Code. The new law allows independent school districts, such as Hereford ISD to access many of the flexibilities available to Texas’ open enrollment charter schools. To take advantage of these new opportunities a school district’s board of trustees must adopt an “innovation plan.” Only districts with acceptable performance ratings are eligible to be a District of Innovation.

Hereford ISD seeks exemption from the following permissible provisions of the TEC as allowed in the statute:

- *Teacher Certification*
- *School Start and End Date*
- *Probationary Contracts*
- *Minimum Minutes of Instruction*

TIMELINE

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| Petition approved by District Leadership Team | January 16, 2017 |
| Public Hearing | January 23, 2017 |
| Appoint Innovative Plan Committee | January 23, 2017 |
| Develop Innovative Plan | January 24 - February 16, 2017 |
| District Leadership Team Final Approval | February 16, 2017 |
| Notification to TEA Commissioner | February 16, 2017 |
| 30 day Public Review (Website Posting) | February 16 – March 20, 2017 |
| Board of Trustees Final Approval | March 27, 2017 |
| Notification of Approval, Publish | March 27, 2017 |

Hereford ISD District of Innovation

Teacher Certification

Exemption from: TEC §21.003(a); TEC §21.057

Related Board Policies: DBA Legal

TEC §21.003(a) states a person may not be employed as a teacher by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued by the appropriate state agency. 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 request emergency certification for the Texas Education Agency and/or State Board for Educator Certification.

TEC §21.057 requires that a school district provide parental notification if the district assigns an inappropriately certified or uncertified teacher to the same classroom for more than 30 consecutive instructional days.

INNOVATION:

HEREFORD ISD will continue to seek highly qualified, certified educators for each position.

- a. To best serve students, decision on teacher qualifications will be made locally by the supervisor and the Chief Human Resources Officer.*
- b. Allow District Teaching Permit (local certification) based on skills and experiences outside the traditional teacher certification pathway. An individual with certain qualifications who is not certified as a teacher can be eligible to teach in hard to fill positions including but not limited to:
 - a. Advanced courses to be taught by individuals qualified to teach at the college and university level*
 - b. Math and Science*
 - c. Career & Technical Education (CTE) courses**
- c. Qualifications that will be used to determine eligibility for local certification:
 - a. Professional work experience*
 - b. Formal training and education in the content area*
 - c. Active, relevant professional industry certification or registration*
 - d. Combination of work experience, training and education*
 - e. Demonstrate successful experience working with students**
- d. The Superintendent or Chief Human Resource Officer will then approve the request if they believe the individual possesses the knowledge, skills and experience required of the position and feel the individual could be an asset to students. Employment is based upon Board approval.*
- e. An employee working under a District Teaching Permit (local certification) will receive a Non Chapter 21 contract and will be paid in accordance with district guidelines.*
- f. An employee working under a District Teaching Permit (local certification) will be appraised under the same teacher appraisal system as required of all certified teachers.*
- g. A teacher certification waiver, state permit applications, notifications, or other paperwork will not be submitted to Texas Education Agency or other district stakeholders.*
- h. An employee working under a District Teaching Permit (local certification) will adhere to the same professional standard, ethics and requirements of all certified teachers.*

School Start and End Date

Exemption from: TEC §25.0811; TEC §25.0812

Related Board Policies: EB Legal

TEC §25.0811 states a school district may not begin student instruction before the 4th Monday of August. TEC §25.0812 states a school district may not schedule the last day of school for students for a school year before May 15th.

INNOVATION:

- a. HISD will assess the local needs of our community, emphasis active learning, college readiness and social and emotional needs of our students when developing the school calendar.*
- b. Flexibility to locally set a school date and end date*
- c. Begin instruction no earlier than the 2nd Monday of August and end the school year prior to June 1st.*
- d. An earlier start date provides for staff development and holidays to be spaced throughout the school year and the possibility of aligning student holidays with traditional business holidays.*
- e. The first and second semester to be closer in number of days of instruction which will improve active learning by balancing the amount of instructional time in each semester.*

Probationary Contracts – Experienced Teachers New to the District

Exemption from: TEC §21.102(b)

Related Board Policies: DCA Legal

TEC §21.102(b) states the probationary period may not exceed one year for a person who has been employed as a teaching in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment by the district.

INNOVATION:

- a. Hereford ISD may issue an annual probationary contract for up to two years for new employees that are experienced teachers, counselors, nurses or administrators that have been employed in public education for at least five of the last eight previous years.*
- b. Allows the district more time to evaluate staff member's effectiveness and provide opportunities of growth.*

Minimum Minutes of Instruction

Exemption from: TEC §25.081

Related Board Policies: EB Legal

TEC §25.081 requires each school day must be 420 minutes long in order to count for ADA calculations and funding purposes and to accumulate instructional minutes toward the 75,600 minutes of instruction required for students annually.

INNOVATION:

- a. Hereford ISD will meet or exceed the 75,600 minutes/year of instruction.*
- b. Hereford ISD does not have any intention to shorten the school day on a regular basis or without specific purpose (i.e. bad weather, professional development, early dismissal for events of community interest, etc.)*
- c. Shortened days would be planned ahead of time and noted in the district calendar, which is approved by the Board of Trustees, published, and distributed to stakeholders in advance of the school year and continuously published using school media.*