

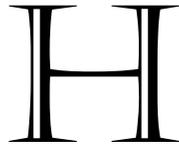
Hamilton ISD

District of Innovation Plan



June 15, 2020

Adopted by Board of Trustees



HAMILTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Mission Statement

The Hamilton ISD is committed to providing all students an individualized education through exemplary instruction which inspires academic success, personal excellence, and responsible citizenship.

Vision

**Learn Today - Lead Tomorrow
#LT2**

District Goals

Hamilton Independent School District will:

- Recruit, train and retain a high quality workforce to support student success.
- Maintain and develop quality facilities that provide a positive learning environment for all students.
- Responsibly optimize financial resources to support district goals and student success in academics and all other programs.
- Meet the educational needs of every student by continually addressing instruction and learning so all students reach their maximum potential.
- Proactively improve communication and perception of Hamilton ISD by engaging the students, community and district employees.

District of Innovation Committee

Clay Tarpley	Superintendent
Louis Lowe	Administrator (retired)
Mona Gloff	Administrator
Jennifer Zschiesche	Administrator
Gina Poe	Administrator
Susan Tober	Educator
Jessica Ruffin	Educator
Patricia Leach	Educator
Tammy Wagner	Educator
Nicki Lamb	Educator
Ashley Southerland	Educator
Cheri Jordan	Educator
Barbara Johnson	Educator
Bridgette Haile	Parent / Business
April Kunkel	Parent / Business
Millie Shinn	Parent
Claire Beckner	Community Member
Tanya Guinn	Parent
Sarah Bauman	Parent / Business
Brandi Murphree	Parent / Business
Deanna Melde	Parent
Shawna McKandless	Parent
Larry Anglin	Business

District of Innovation Plan Timeline

- December 19, 2016** Board discussed and approved a resolution to explore the opportunity to become a District of Innovation.
- January 16, 2017** Board held a public hearing for input on the District of Innovation opportunity.
Board approved a motion to pursue the local District of Innovation plan.
Board appointed the District of Innovation Committee.

January 19, 2017	District of Innovation Committee met to develop local innovation plan.
February 9, 2017	District of Innovation Committee met to develop local innovation plan.
February 17, 2017	District of Innovation plan was presented to Hamilton ISD staff.
February 21, 2017	District of Innovation Plan was posted to district website. Board notified Commissioner of Education of intention to vote on proposed plan.
March 27, 2017	District Site Based Committee held a public hearing where the committee considered the final version of the proposed plan and approved the plan. Board of Trustees approved the District of Innovation Plan.
March 28, 2017	Board of Trustees notified the Commissioner of the approved the District of Innovation Plan and that the Hamilton ISD is a District of Innovation effective immediately.
May 21, 2020	District of Innovation Committee held a public meeting to consider an amendment to the plan.
June 15, 2020	Board of Trustees approved the amended District of Innovation Plan.
June 16, 2020	Board of Trustees notified the Commissioner of the approved the District of Innovation Plan.

Hamilton ISD District of Innovation Plan

Hamilton ISD is utilizing HB 1842, of the 84th Legislative Session, in order to have more local control in certain areas. HB 1842 allows a traditional public school to have the local flexibility necessary to customize student learning experiences. As a school district that puts the needs of students first, Hamilton ISD cherishes the ability to make important educational decisions locally.

In order to best serve our students and align our learning to the Hamilton ISD board goals, we have developed a five-year District of Innovation Plan to provide opportunities that allow the Hamilton ISD Board of Trustees the ability to use their best judgment to make decisions regarding the students of Hamilton ISD.

Term-

The District of Innovation Plan will become effective upon board approval and end at the end of the 2024-2025 school year, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The district will review the plan annually.

The Hamilton ISD seeks relief in the area of:

First Day of Instruction - Board Goal 4 Student's Instructional Needs

Exemption From: TEC §25.0811, EB(LEGAL), EB(LOCAL)

A district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August. A district may not receive a waiver of this requirement.

Proposal:

This flexibility of a start date allows the district to determine locally, on an annual basis, what best meets the needs of the students and local community. This flexibility of the start date also offers the following opportunities:

- a) This will allow the first and second semesters to be somewhat equal in the number of days of instruction.
- b) Students participating in dual enrollment opportunities will work with balanced semesters, which align with our local colleges.
- c) An early start date permits students an additional week of instruction prior to state assessments in December.
- d) This will allow the district time to provide proper remediation to students in summer school.
- e) Students will be afforded opportunities to enroll in summer college sessions with finalized official transcripts and staff will be able to attend summer school classes as well.
- f) This would allow an option to start school with a shorter week, easing the transition back to school for all students.

Procedure:

The district will determine when each school year will begin through the calendar development process.

The Hamilton ISD seeks relief in the area of:

Teacher Certification Requirements - Board Goal 1 Recruit, train, retain workforce

Exemption From: TEC §21.003(a), TEC §21.053,-DBA(LEGAL), DBA(LOCAL)

TEC §21.003 states that 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 from the Texas Education Agency and/or State Board of Educator Certification. This system is burdensome and does not take into account the unique financial and/or instructional needs of the district. TEC §21.053 requires a teacher to present his or her certificate to the district before their employment contract will be binding, and prohibits the district from paying an educator or teacher if the educator does not hold a valid certificate at the time.

Proposal:

The district will maintain its current expectations for employee certification and will make every attempt to hire individuals with appropriate certifications for the position in question. However, when that is not reasonably possible, the district will have the flexibility to hire individuals who are knowledgeable in the area and equipped to effectively perform the duties of the position in question. The district's exemption from TEC 21.003 would allow the district to consider part-time professionals to teach courses, allow industry expert professionals to transition into the teaching profession in Career and Technology and also assist in staffing high need STEM and dual credit course offerings.

Procedure:

- a) For grades 6-12, in all subjects except Special Education and ESL/Bilingual, the campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request for a local certification that will allow a certified teacher to teach a subject in a related field for which he/she is not certified. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses that would qualify the individual to teach the proposed subject for a **local certificate**.
- b) An individual with experience in a Career and Technology field may be eligible to teach a vocational skill or course. An individual may hold a teaching certification in another state for core areas or Career and Technology. An individual may have background, experience, skills or work

related/industry experience to work full-time or part-time in a designated area. The principal shall submit a request to the Superintendent for **local certification**. The principal must specify the reason for the request and document what credentials the individual possesses qualifying this individual to teach the subject.

- c) The Superintendent will approve or deny requests for **local certification**.
- d) The Superintendent will report this action to the Board of Trustees.

The Hamilton ISD seeks relief in the area of:

Teacher and Principal Evaluation - Board Goal 1 Recruit, train, retain workforce

Exemption From: TEC §21.352, DNA(LEGAL), DNA(LOCAL)

The Texas Education Agency introduced a new teacher appraisal system and a new principal appraisal system in 2016-2017 called the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS) and Texas Principal Evaluations Support System (T-PESS), respectively. Hamilton ISD participated in the pilot program in 2015-2016. After two years in the system, administrators and teachers find it cumbersome and not time-effective to promote instructional and professional growth.

TEC §21.352 provides the prescribed appraisal process and performance criteria created by the state of Texas or requires a school district to develop an appraisal process that contains required elements as developed by campus and district committees and is adopted by the board of trustees.

Proposal:

A committee of administrators and teachers would have the option to develop a teacher evaluation system that would be a combination of PDAS, T-TESS, and other best practices to develop a local instrument that fits the needs and goals of Hamilton ISD.

Procedure:

- a) Hamilton ISD will create and utilize a locally developed teacher and principal evaluation tool.
- b) This instrument will be developed with input from central administration, campus administration, and teachers. It will use staff input, PDAS, T-TESS, T-PESS, and any other relevant best practices.
- c) Campus teachers must be formally observed at least every other year, while teachers on probationary contracts must be formally observed each year.
- d) All teachers will have an annual summative conference to discuss the year and to set personal goals and a staff development plan for the coming year.
- e) Principals will continue to be evaluated annually with the locally developed instrument.
- f) These locally developed plans should reflect the strengths, areas of concern, and goals for Hamilton ISD.

The Hamilton ISD seeks relief in the area of:

Probationary Contracts - Board Goal 1 Recruit, train, retain workforce

Board Goal 4 Student's Instructional Needs

Exemption From: TEC §21.102(b), DCA(LEGAL)

TEC § 21.102(b) states that a probationary contract 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 with the district.

Proposal:

This period of time may not be sufficient to evaluate the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom since teacher contract timelines demand that employment decisions must be made prior to the availability of end-of-year classroom and student data. Probationary contracts for a person who has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment with the district may be extended for a second year.

Procedure:

The Superintendent will make contract recommendations to the Board of Trustees as per policy.

The Hamilton ISD seeks relief in the area of:

Teacher Contract Days - Board Goal 1 Recruit, train, retain workforce

Exemption From: TEC §21.401, DC(LEGAL), DEA(LEGAL)

TEC §21.401 requires a contract between the district and an educator must be for a minimum of ten months of service. An educator employed under a ten-month contract must provide a minimum of 187 days of service.

Proposal:

This proposal reduces teacher contract days from 187 with no effect on teacher salaries. This stems from an attempt to provide flexibility to better align teacher service days to instructional days while still giving ample time for professional development. As a result, the district expects the following outcomes:

- a) The proposal will increase the daily rate the district pays teachers.
- b) This proposal could enhance teacher recruitment, therefore putting the district in a more competitive light.
- c) The proposal should improve teacher morale.

Procedure:

The Superintendent will make contract recommendations to the Board of Trustees as per policy.