

Rising Star Independent School District

District Innovation Plan

March 2017 - March 2022

HB 1842, of the 84th Legislative Session, allows Texas districts to provide more local control in certain operations that are currently under the control of the Texas Education Agency. This plan is designed to permit greater District flexibility to meet the needs of the students of Rising Star Independent School District.

This plan may be amended by the approval of the Committee with the approval of the Board of Trustees.

School Beginning / Ending Dates: EB(LEGAL), EB (LOCAL) TEC 25.0811, TEC 25.0812

Current Law: Texas Education code Section 25.0811 prohibits schools from starting before the fourth Monday in August. Section 25.0812 prohibits the last day of school from occurring before May 15.

Plan:

Flexibility of beginning and ending school dates allows the District to better meet local student, staff, and community needs. Adjustments to the school calendar may be made locally, keeping in mind that 75,600 minutes must be maintained.

Teacher Contract Service Days: DC (LEGAL), DEA (LEGAL) TEC 21.401

Current Law: State law defines a teacher contract as a ten month period with a minimum of 187 days.

Plan:

This plan reduces teacher contract days from 187 to 182 with no effect on teacher salaries. RSISD is a small district and funds are not readily available to provide its teachers with raises in their salaries. This plan would encourage any new hires and certainly boost morale for those who have been faithful employees for many years.

RSISD anticipates a reduction of work days to apply to At- Will employees as well.

Teacher Certification: DK (LEGAL), DK (LOCAL), DK (EXHIBIT) TEC 21.002, TEC 21.003

Current Law: Under current law, districts which are unable to find a certified teacher for a position must submit a request to the Texas Education Agency. Then TEA either approves or denies the request.

Plan:

Serving the students of the District is a primary concern. RSISD is located in a rural community with a population of 835. In particular, teachers of languages other than English have been almost impossible to find. The District may face other teacher shortages in high demand areas such as math, science, and career and technology in the future. Rising Star ISD strives to hire certified teachers for every content area, but that is not always possible. Local certification will

allow more flexibility in the decisions that must be made. RSISD will establish its own local certifications, with uncertified individuals employed at-will.

The District may also allow a certified teacher to teach outside his or her field of certification provided the principal and the Board agree that the teacher would be able to meet the needs of the students.

Probationary Contracts: DCA (LEGAL), TEC 21.102, TEC 21.102(c)

Current Law: The probationary period for new teachers to a district may not exceed one year if the teacher has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the previous eight years.

Plan:

All teachers new to the District who have been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the previous eight years, or who are returning to Rising Star ISD may be issued at the discretion of the District a probationary contract for up to two years. This will afford time to evaluate employees more effectively.