

Stockdale ISD Innovation Plan **Renewal**

Adopted by Stockdale ISD Board on **June 29, 2021**

Innovations

1. District-Level and Site Based Decision-Making

[TEC §11.251, §11.252, and §11.253]

[BQ(LEGAL), BQ(LOCAL), BQA(LEGAL), BQA(LOCAL), BQB(LEGAL), BQB(LOCAL)]

Current limitations:

Stockdale ISD has one elementary, one junior high, and one high school. The planning and decision making process overlaps across the district and campuses. Some staff, parents/family, community, and business members serve on multiple committees within the district. The requirements in content and format of the improvement plans have become a bureaucratic process that takes away from meeting the needs of all students without a more meaningful plan to implement and evaluate on a regular basis.

Innovation Strategy:

Stockdale ISD will continue to complete a comprehensive needs assessment (CNA) at the campus level and will be used to create one district CNA. An Administration PLC has been established and will meet regularly, review, analyze, and respond to both qualitative and quantitative data regarding the district's and campuses' success with a focus on student achievement. This will allow the district to create one district improvement plan to include all campuses with a bottom up instructional focus instead of a top down administrative approach. The elementary campus will still have a campus improvement plan that addresses all Elements for Title I Schoolwide Program requirements; however, all other improvement plan components will be in the district improvement plan. The districtwide education improvement committee will continue to meet to oversee the implementation of the district improvement plan throughout the year.

2. Probationary Contract

[TEC §21.102]

[DCA (LEGAL)]

Current Limitation:

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. This period of time is not 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.

Innovation Strategy:

For experienced teachers, counselors, librarians, or nurses new to Stockdale ISD that have been employed in public education for at least five of the eight previous years, the probationary period when becoming employed by Stockdale ISD shall be for a period of two full years with probationary contracts issued for each of the two years. Partial years would not count toward the full year requirement.

3. Certification Required and Certification of Educators

[TEC §21.003, §21.053, and §21.057]

[DK(LEGAL), DK(LOCAL), DK(EXHIBIT)]

Current limitations:

Stockdale ISD has limited flexibility in scheduling and course offerings to students when the district is not able to employ an educator if he/she does not hold the appropriate certificate or permit issued by SBEC. Additional paperwork for non-certified teachers must be distributed to notify parents. The district has had few or no applications submitted to hire certain subject areas due to location of the district. The current Career and Technical Education (CTE) certification requirements hinder the district's ability to hire professionals with industry experience in order to provide more students the opportunity to take CTE courses and promote each student's ability to obtain professional certifications. **The current non-CTE electives certification requirements also limit the district's ability to offer a variety of electives for local credit.** The current statutes do not take into consideration the distinctive financial, personnel, and/or instructional needs of the district.

Innovation Strategy:

Stockdale ISD will take into consideration the needs of the students to allow for flexibility in scheduling and course offerings by controlling certification decisions within the district.

For non-CTE subjects in grades PK-12, the campus principal must submit a request to the superintendent for local certification. The written request will specify the reason and document the credentials/experiences in a related field of the current certification. This will allow a certified teacher to teach one subject in a related field of their current certification. The related fields will be the core content areas of English, fine arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. The teacher will collaborate with certified teachers in the same related field if possible.

The teacher will have at least one opportunity per semester to attempt and pass the appropriate certification test in their uncertified area.

For CTE subjects and non-CTE electives in grades 6-12, the district seeks to establish its own local qualification requirements for such courses in lieu of the requirements set forth in statute. Also, if a teacher meets the applicable local certification requirements, the teacher will not be required to present certification before being hired. The advantages for the district to have flexibility to control certification decisions locally include the following:

- Greater number of CTE course offerings **and non-CTE elective choices** resulting in more opportunities for students.
- Realistic requirements for **CTE** professionals transitioning from industry to teaching.
- Ability to employ part-time professionals to teach CTE courses.
- Industry certified and/or trade professionals to teach specialized certification courses.
- **Realistic requirements to recruit, support, and retain faculty and staff as outlined in the Stockdale ISD Strategic Priorities.**

The campus principal must submit a request to the superintendent for local certification. The written request will specify the reason and document the credentials/experiences that would qualify the individual to teach the proposed CTE course **or non-CTE elective**. The superintendent must approve all requests. The district will not be required to provide parental notification as long as the teacher meets the above applicable **non-CTE** or CTE requirements.

4. First Day of Instruction

[TEC §25.0811]

[EB (LEGAL)]

Current Limitation:

TEC §25.0811 states that the first day of instruction for students may not begin before the fourth Monday in August. The current process allows no flexibility in the design and balancing of instructional semesters to meet the needs of students or wishes of the local board of trustees, who represent community interests in this matter.

Innovation Strategies:

- A. Stockdale ISD proposes to have the flexibility to begin instruction no earlier than the 2nd Monday of August for students. Teachers will report for duty no earlier than the 1st Monday of August. This change will create better flexibility in the creating of the district calendar as well as allowing more opportunities in scheduling meaningful and balanced staff development days.
- B. The start date will allow the district to provide more instructional days before state assessments.
- C. This will give Stockdale ISD flexibility to better align calendars and balance instructional days during the first and second semester of instruction. This will also allow the district to better align its starting date to accommodate the start and end date of colleges in which the district uses for dual credit courses. The flexibility will also allow the schools to look at starting classes as a short week which can ease the transition for students entering kindergarten, junior high, and high school.
- D. This strategy will provide for more concentrated professional development in key areas during instruction instead of planning before needs are realized.

5. School Day Interruptions

[TEC §25.083(a)]

[EC (LEGAL)]

Current limitations:

TEC §25.083(a) currently required the Board of Trustees to adopt and strictly enforce a policy limiting interruptions of classes during the school day for nonacademic activities such as announcements to once during the school day except in the case of an emergency. While the district agrees that maximizing class time is crucial, this requirement is not practical. The district will continue to minimize classroom disruptions to the greatest extent possible.

Innovation Strategy:

Stockdale ISD would like to have the flexibility to make reasonable announcements as needed during class time for picture days, field trips, academic and extra-curricular send-offs beyond district competition, and other days that are not routine.

6. a.) School District Depositories – Term of Contract

[TEC §45.205]

[BDAE(LEGAL), BDAE(LOCAL)]

b.) School District Depositories

[TEC §45.206]

[BDAE (LEGAL)]

Current limitations:

Districts are required to bid depository banking services at a minimum of every six years. There is only one bank in Stockdale with the next closest banks about 15 miles away either in Nixon or Floresville. There are a limited number of banking entities with the interest in serving and/or the ability to serve the financial needs of the District. In addition, the required bid process uses the time and efforts of our one business manager that is better spent on other activities given our limited ability to change banks.

Innovation Strategy:

Stockdale ISD will continue to review banking services every 2 years, monitor the availability of services and pricing that the one local bank and other surrounding banks may offer, and bid for services as needed to support the District's financial needs.

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

[TEC §22.004(i)]

[CRD (LEGAL) and CRD (LOCAL)]

Current Limitation:

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 Stockdale 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.

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.

Innovation Strategies:

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