



Santo ISD

District of Innovation Plan

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School Start and End Dates

TEC §25.0811; §25.0812

Current TEA Guidelines and Limitations

Student instruction cannot start before the fourth Monday of August. Waivers are no longer allowed to alter start date. This change occurred through the lobby of tourism groups which argued the loss of business due to local control of school calendars.

Santo ISD's Innovative Plan

To meet local community needs, Santo ISD will offer a more balanced calendar through the design of the instructional periods, start dates and end dates. Instruction will not begin before the second Monday of August and will not end prior to May 15. This will allow the first semester to end before holiday break and achieve more balanced six-week grading periods/semester schedules.

Teacher Contract Day Requirements

TEC §21.401(b)

Current TEA Guidelines and Limitations

TEC Chapter 21 defines a teacher contract as a ten month contract equivalent to 187 days. Since the number of school days required of students has been potentially lessened due to the current 75,600 minute school-year, the 187 day requirement for teachers is now seemingly arbitrary.

Santo ISD's Innovative Plan

The plan would allow the local Board of Trustees control over the teacher contract days. Teachers and staff on 10-month contracts will be required to work a minimum of 7 days beyond the scheduled student calendar instructional days. Staff development will include professional development and workdays for teachers. The change will enhance teacher recruitment, retention, and morale.

This will go into effect immediately upon approval of this plan for contracts in the 2019-2020 school year.

Teacher Certifications

TEC §21.003(a); TEC§ 21.057

Current TEA Guidelines and Limitations

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 his or her certification, the district must request emergency certification from the Texas Education Agency and/or State Board of 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.

Santo ISD's Innovative Plan

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. By obtaining exemption from existing teacher certification requirements, the District will have the flexibility to hire applicants seeking assignments outside of their traditional certification area. This will enrich applicant pools in specific content areas and allow the district to consider a broader pool of qualified applicants.

The district's exemption from TEC 21.3 would afford the District the flexibility to hire professionals in certain trades or vocations to teach the crafts of those trades or vocations (such as welding, fine arts, health sciences,

law, etc.), allowing industry experts to transition into the teaching profession in Career and Technology and assist in staffing high need STEM course offerings. The district will establish its own local qualification requirements to ensure an instructor is deemed qualified in their field. Further, the district will establish requirements for training of professionals and experts to teach such courses in lieu of the requirements set forth in law. Parental notification of “inappropriately certified or uncertified teachers” under TEC 21.057 would no longer be required. The final determination of employment shall be determined by the Superintendent and Board of Trustees.

- For grades 6-12, in all subjects except Special Education and ESL/Bilingual, the campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request for an annual *SISD Out-of-Field Certification* that will allow a certified teacher to teach a subject in a related field for which he/she is not certified for up to 2 periods. 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 an *SISD Out-of-Field Certification*.
- 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 qualify the individual to teach the subject.
- The Superintendent will approve or deny requests for *SISD CTE Experience Certification*.
- The Superintendent will report this action to the Board of Trustees and ensure the individual has been properly background checked and received classroom management training prior to entering the classroom.

Probationary Contracts

TEC 21.102(b)

Current TEA Guidelines and Limitations

TEC §21.102(b) states a probationary contract may not be for a term exceeding one school year. The probationary contract may be renewed for two additional one-year periods, for a maximum permissible probationary contract period of three school years, except that the probationary period 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 by the district.

Santo ISD's Innovative Plan

Current legal policy dictates experienced teachers new to the district will be placed on a 1-year probationary contract if the person has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the previous eight years. Santo ISD desires the option to renew the probationary contract two additional years for any teacher who is new to the district and has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of eight years preceding employment by the District.

Year-long Transfer Student Commitment

TEC 25.036

Current TEA Guidelines and Limitations

Santo ISD maintains a transfer policy under FDA LOCAL requiring nonresident students wishing to transfer to file an application each school year. In approving transfer requests, the availability of space and instructional staff and the student's disciplinary history, academic records, and attendance records are evaluated. Transfer

students are expected to follow the attendance requirements, rules and regulations of the District. Violation of the terms of the agreement may result in a transfer request not being approved the following year. TEC 25.036 has been interpreted to establish the acceptance of a transfer as a one year commitment by the District.

Santo ISD's Innovative Plan

The District is seeking to eliminate the provision of a one-year commitment in accepting transfer applications. The District will reserve the right to revoke/rescind the transfer of a student at any time during the year based on established district criteria. Campus principals will refer requests to rescind transfer students to the superintendent who will make the final decision to retain or rescind a transfer student.

School District Depository Contract

TEC Subchapter G §45.206

Current TEA Guidelines and Limitations

TEC Subchapter G 45.206 states (A) Except as provided by Subsection (b), the depository bank when selected shall serve for a term of two years and until its successor is selected and has qualified. (B) A school district and the district's depository bank may agree to extend a depository contract for two additional two-year-terms. An extension under this subsection is not subject to the requirements of Section 45.206. (C) The contract term and any extension must coincide with the school district's fiscal year.

Santo ISD's Innovative Plan

The exemption from current statutes would allow the district's existing bank contract to be extended beyond the total 6 year allowable contract term if the district determines current contract pricing remains competitive and there is no operational or financial reason to send the district's banking services out to bid. This exemption would lessen the administrative burden related to preparing and reviewing a Request for Proposal (RFP) when there are no other banking institutions within district boundaries available to bid on the district's business. In addition, this fosters goodwill in our rural community and is convenient for our employees to have a local banking option in our small town.

Student Growth & Progress Measure in Appraisals

TEC §21.352, TEC §21.354, TEC §21.3541

Current TEA Guidelines and Limitations

The listed statutes/codes require student academic growth or progress as a mandatory component of the teacher and administrator appraisal.

Santo ISD's Innovative Plan

Santo ISD adopted and continues to evolve a locally-developed teacher appraisal system that fits the needs of our district that includes some T-TESS components but not the student growth or progress measure.

DAEP

TEC §37.008(7)

Current TEA Guidelines and Limitations

TEC §37.008(7) states that a DAEP employs only teachers who meet all certification requirements established under Subchapter B, Chapter 21.

Santo ISD's Innovative Plan

The district assigns few students to DAEP each year. All academic coursework/resources are provided by his/her teacher of record for each course, negating the need for an additional certified teacher. The campus

administrator will ensure that non-certified DAEP staff have the support necessary to properly supervise the students assigned to the program and will lend assistance of teachers with specific certification as needed.

Retire/Rehire Minimum Salary

TEC §21.402

Current TEA Guidelines and Limitations

Currently all districts, when hiring a retired teacher must pay their salary based upon TEA minimum salary pay scale; in addition, the districts are required to pay a TRS surcharge. "Teacher" refers to classroom teacher, full-time speech pathologist, full-time librarian, fulltime school counselor, full-time school nurse.

Santo ISD's Innovative Plan

Santo ISD would like the flexibility to hire eligible retired teachers and pay them a negotiated salary which may drop below the TEA minimum pay scale while also paying the required TRS surcharge.

Statutory Compliance Training Requirement

TEC §21.451

Current TEA Guidelines and Limitations

Texas Education Code states a)The staff development provided by a school district to an educator other than a principal must be: (1) conducted in accordance with standards developed by the district; and (2) designed to improve education in the district.

Santo ISD's Innovative Plan

Santo ISD staff is well trained to identify social indicators such as sexual harassment, bullying, and suicide. In addition, the faculty/staff clearly understand the requirements of FERPA. Mandating these trainings in these areas annually only serves to add redundancy to start-of-school work that can be better utilized in preparing for the students to return.

The district will set up and maintain a database for all employees with 2018-19 as the baseline. Employees will participate in formal Statutory Compliance Training every five years in the following areas as mandated by law:

1. ADA Compliance for Online Content
2. Anaphylaxis & Epinephrine Overview (coming 2019-2020 school year)
3. Bloodborne Pathogens
4. Bullying Prevention
5. Child Abuse & Maltreatment
6. Copyright
7. FERPA: Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act
8. Internet Safety
9. Section 504
10. Sexual Harassment
11. Suicide Prevention & Intervention
12. Teen Dating Violence & Abuse
13. Texas Educator's Code of Ethics

All teachers, faculty, and staff new to the district will complete the compliance training during the first year of employment in the district. District and campus administrators may assign compliance training to an employee or group of employees as needed during the five-year cycle. Workers in specified groups (i.e. those who handle food or bodily fluids) are not exempt from annual trainings mandated for their specific job types.