District of Innovation Committee Members

Troy Roberts - Superintendent
Wes Corzine - Principal
Jill Edwards - Counselor
Erica Stover – Pre K
Karli Walls - Kindergarten
Liz Smith – 1st Grade
Kasha Bills – 1st Grade
Kristi Smith – 2nd Grade
Kathy Collum – 2nd Grade
Courtney Hodges – 3rd Grade
Tina Sloan – 4th Grade
Shelly Barrett – 5th Grade

Marcella Lowe – Special Education
Dustin Hargrove – Coach / Social Studies / PE
Caleb Walls – Athletic Director / Coach / Social Studies
Vinnie Heller – Agricultural Science
Kacee Perez – JH Math
Richard Harvel – HS Math
Rocky Helton – HS social Studies/Yearbook
Mandi Daniels – JH ELAR
Amber Stewart – JH Science
Sarah Robinson – HS Science
Jace Winnett – HS English / Technology
LENGTH OF SCHOOL DAY

Current Law: TEC 25.081 – For each school year each school district must operate so that the district provides for at least 75,600 minutes. A school day consists of 420 minutes of instruction.

_Huckabay ISD Plan:_ Huckabay ISD plans to occasionally, throughout the school year, have school less than 420 minutes per day. Shortening the school day will allow the flexibility to provide accelerated instruction, staff development, and a number of possibilities to best serve the students of Huckabay ISD.

FIRST DAY OF INSTRUCTION

Current Law: TEC 25.0811: Except as provided by this section, a school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.

_Huckabay ISD Plan:_ District leaders will have flexibility in scheduling the start of school enabling them to begin school before the 4th Monday in August, for either the entire district or specific grade levels or student populations.

Starting earlier enables the semesters to be balanced with more uninterrupted instructional time prior to the winter break and standardized testing.

Our semesters will more closely align with community and university calendars providing continuity for our students utilizing these educational settings such as dual credit, internships and industrial certifications.

Starting school earlier than the 4th Monday allows for innovative summer programs to develop, creating a continuity of learning over the summer break.
TEACHER CERTIFICATION

Current Law: TEC 21.003 A person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern or teacher trainee, librarian, educational aide, administrator, educational diagnostician, or school counselor by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued as provided by Subchapter B.

Huckabay ISD Plan: The statutory certification requirements inhibit the District’s ability to hire professionals with industry experience to teach Career and Technical Education (CTE) and/or STEM courses.

Hiring quality industry professionals allows the District the ability to meet the local needs of our students and community.

Local qualifications will allow:

- Recruit persons knowledgeable in a variety of fields and vocations with industry knowledge and real world experiences.
- Offer dual credit in CTE courses.
- Develop relationships with community colleges and university by hiring instructors from these settings.

Local Guidelines:

- The District will establish Local Criteria, such as years’ experience, qualifications, and industry certification to qualify for a local (district) teaching certificate.
- Principals, along with CTE and/or STEM teachers, will submit candidates to the Superintendent with credentials. The Superintendent will determine whether it is in the best interest of the district to certify the individual(s).
- The superintendent will present the candidates to the Board of Trustees for hire or contract as needed.
CLASS SIZE KINDERGARTEN – 4th GRADE

Current Law: TEC Sec. 25.112 Except as otherwise authorized by this section, a school district may not enroll more than 22 students in a kindergarten, first, second, third, or fourth grade class.

Huckabay ISD Plan: The District starts school with staff based on projections of student enrollment. There are times where enrollment may exceed projections.

Being exempt from the inflexible 22-to-1 requirement will allow students to remain in classes.

The District would have an extended time frame to meet the needs of the students regarding budgetary expenses such as hiring another teacher. This would allow for the District time to evaluate the need and if needed, hire the best possible candidate for our students.

Local Guidelines:

- The district will strive to keep class size below 22-to-1 as this is a recognized benefit for our students.
- If the student/teacher ratio in a grade level is to exceed 24-to-1 it will need both teacher and administrative approval.
- If the student/teacher ratio in a grade level is to exceed 25-to-1, the board will be notified as well as each parent.
INTER-DISTRICT TRANSFERS

Current Law: Under Texas Education Code, a district may choose to accept, as transfers, students who are not entitled to enroll in the district. Under TEC 25.036, a transfer is interpreted to be for a period of one school year.

Huckabay ISD Plan: Huckabay ISD maintains a transfer policy under FDA (Local) requiring nonresident students electing to transfer, the ability to file a transfer application with Huckabay ISD each school year. In approving transfer requests, the availability of space and instructional staff, availability of programs and needed services, the student’s disciplinary history records, work habits, and attendance records are also evaluated. Transfer students are expected to follow the attendance requirements, rules and regulations of the District. TEC 25.036 has been interpreted to establish the acceptance of a transfer as a one year commitment by the District. The District is seeking to eliminate the provision of a one year commitment in accepting inter-district transfer applicants.

On rare occasions, student behavior warrants suspension (either in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion. In addition, student attendance may fall below the TEA truancy standard. In these rare cases, Huckabay ISD seeks exemption from the one year transfer commitment.

Local Guidelines

- Nonresident students who have been accepted as inter-district transfer may have such transfer status revoked by the Superintendent at any time during the year if the student is assigned discipline consequences of suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion.
- In addition, students not meeting the State’s 90% attendance standard may also be subject to immediate revocation of the transfer status.
- Parent/Guardian behavior, at extra-curricular activities or with teachers and/or administration can also result in the immediate revocation of a student’s transfer.
TEACHER EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT DAYS

Current law: TEC 21.401(b) states an educator employed under a 10-month contract must provide a minimum of 187 days of service.

Huckabay ISD Plan: Huckabay ISD requests freedom to consider a possible reduction in contract days to better align teacher and student days equated to the 75,600 minute requirement for attendance. This possible reduction must be approved by school administration and will have no negative effect on teacher salaries. This possible reduction is also requested to be considered a recruitment and retention tool for quality teachers.
AREA OF INNOVATION:

Within our current local innovation plan, the District declares exemption from the listed statutory provisions, as well as any implementing rules or regulations promulgated pursuant to those statutory provisions by any state agency or entity, including but not limited to the Commissioner of Education, Texas Education Agency, State Board for Educator Certification, and State Board of Education.

Huckabay ISD has determined a need to apply for an amendment to our District Innovation Plan allowing exemptions for increased flexibility under:

Uniform Group Coverage Plan

1. Texas Education Code: §22.004(i) - Preclusion from providing alternative Uniform Group Coverage Program once the program of coverages under Chapter 1579, Insurance Code is implemented.
   
   Related Board Policies: CRD (LEGAL) and CRD (LOCAL)

School District Depository Contract

2. Texas Education Code: §45.205(b,c) - 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 three additional two-year terms. (c) The contract may be modified for each two-year extension if both parties mutually agree to the terms. An extension under this subsection is not subject to the requirements of Section 45.206.

   Related Board Policy: CAA (LOCAL)

MANNER IN WHICH STATUTE INHIBITS THE GOALS OF THE PLAN:

Uniform Group Coverage Plan

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 Huckabay 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 Huckabay ISD Board of Trustees, who represent community interests in this matter.

Texas Education Code 22.004 is not included any of the prohibited exemptions that can be added to a District’s local innovation plan pursuant to Texas Education Code 12A.004 and the list of the Commissioner's prohibited exemptions.
Innovation Strategies:

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

School District Depository Contract

TEC §45.205 (a,b) states a 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 three additional two-year terms. (c) The contract may be modified for each two-year extension if both parties mutually agree to the terms. An extension under this subsection is not subject to the requirements of Section 45.206.

The current statute does not consider the few limited choices some school districts have when soliciting bids or request for proposals. Updating this process would allow the needed flexibility for Huckabay ISD and secure the District’s ability for more acceptable terms in contracts. The current provision is in direct contradiction to the wishes of the Huckabay ISD Board of Trustees, who represent community interests in this matter.

Texas Education Code 45.205 is not included any of the prohibited exemptions that can be added to a District’s local innovation plan pursuant to Texas Education Code 12A.004 and the list of the Commissioner's prohibited exemptions.

Innovation Strategies:

Increased local control of the school district depository contract will allow the District to be responsive to employee and community needs.
PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

PRECLUSION FROM PROVIDING ALTERNATIVE UNIFORM GROUP COVERAGE

Law: TEC 22.004(i) – a district participating in the uniform group coverage program established under Chapter 1579, Insurance Code, may not make group health coverage available to its employees under this section after the date on which the program of coverages provided under Chapter 1579, Insurance Code, is implemented.

Huckabay ISD Plan: The Board of Trustees and District leaders will increase local control of the group health benefits plan to allow the District to be responsive to employee and community needs.

SCHOOL DISTRICT DEPOSITORIES CONTRACT

Current Law: TEC 22.004(b,c) – 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 three additional two-year terms. (c) The contract may be modified for each two-year extension if both parties mutually agree to the terms. An extension under this subsection is not subject to the requirements of Section 45.206.

Huckabay ISD Plan: The Board of Trustees and District leaders will have flexibility to extend the existing bank contract beyond 6 years (throughout the term of the District of Innovation Plan). The Board of Trustees and the Superintendent retain the option to bid services at any point in order to maintain competitive pricing and/or address operational or financial concern.