

**Santa Anna ISD**  
**District of Innovation Plan (HB 1842)**  
**2017-2018**

Santa Anna 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 some of the same local flexibility that public charter schools have always been allowed. We feel this is a great opportunity for our local district to tailor plans based on the needs of our students and community. This plan will be in effect for the 2017-2018 school year through the 2021-2022 school year. This plan may be amended at any time by the committee with approval of the Board of Trustees.

**Term**

The term of the District of Innovation plan, as constituted by the Texas Education Agency, will be five years. Therefore, this plan will begin with the 2017-2018 school year and conclude at the end of the 2021-2022 school year unless terminated by the Board of Trustees. The District Improvement Committee will annually monitor the Local Innovation Plan and provide feedback to the Board on the effectiveness of the plan.

**District of Innovation Committee:**

On Monday, February 27, the Santa Anna ISD Board of Trustees approved the following persons as the District of Innovation Committee.

|                  |                       |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| David Robinett   | Superintendent        |
| Laurie Hunter    | High School Principal |
| Aletha Patterson | Elementary Principal  |
| Kristi Herrod    | School Counselor      |
| Vicki Calfa      | Parent Representative |
| Kelly Karthaus   | Parent Representative |
| Janice Fellers   | Board Member          |
| Tom McVey        | Athletic Director     |
| Robert Smith     | High School Teacher   |
| Julie Rae        | Elementary Teacher    |
| Janice Modawell  | Community Member      |
| Larry Bostick    | Technology Director   |

## Timeline:

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| Resolution to the Board of Trustees            | January 23, 2017       |
| Preliminary Committee Meeting                  | February 16, 2017      |
| Public Hearing                                 | February 27, 2017      |
| D.A.C. Committee Meeting                       | February 28, 2017      |
| Post Plan Online (30 Days Before Vote)         | March 1, 2017          |
| Notification of Commissioner of Intent to Vote | March 1, 2017          |
| D.A.C. Public meeting/vote                     | March 31/April 3, 2017 |
| Board Approval of Plan                         | March 31/April 3, 2017 |

## Innovations:

### **§25.0811 Uniform School Start Date**

*A district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August unless the district operates a year-round system. A district may not receive a waiver for this requirement.*

#### ***Proposed***

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

- An improved balanced instructional calendar because currently we have 77 days in the fall and 94 days in the spring for the 2016-17 school year. With starting school 5 days earlier, our instructional calendar would be 82 days in the fall and 89 days in the spring.
- Students participating in Dual Enrollment opportunities will work with balanced semesters, which align with our local colleges.
- An early start date permits students an additional week of instruction prior to state assessments.
- 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.
- Creates Flexibility for District to pursue other calendar options for identified populations.

#### ***Local Guidelines***

The district will determine, on an annual basis, when each school year will begin.

### **§21.003 Certification**

*TEC 21.003(a) states 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. TEC21.057 requires districts to provide written notice to parents when an inappropriately certified or uncertified teacher is assigned to the same classroom for more than 30 consecutive instructional days during the same school year.*

#### ***Proposed***

In order to best serve Santa Anna ISD students, decisions on certification will be handled locally. With the current teacher shortage, this exemption from teacher certification requirements will enable greater flexibility in staffing and will enrich applicant pools in specific areas of need. 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 to the teaching profession in Career and Technology and also assist in staffing high need STEM and dual credit course offerings. Out of state certified teachers could be considered for positions upon a local review of experience, education and credentials. Often there are experienced certified teachers in our district that could teach a course outside of their certification area due to their education, background and/or experience. Local decisions outside of state certification requirements would allow innovation and flexibility in scheduling to meet student needs.

***Local Guidelines***

- a) The campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request to allow a certified teacher to teach a subject and/or grade level out of their field. The principal must specify the reason for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses qualifying this individual to teach the subject.
- 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 will 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.

**§21.102(b) Employment Contracts**

*Currently, experienced teachers new to the district have a probationary period that may not exceed one year if the person has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the previous eight years.*

***Proposed***

Under current guidelines, probationary periods for newly hired teachers and counselors who have been in public education for at least five of the previous eight years cannot exceed one year. This limited time period is insufficient in some cases to fully determine the staff member's effectiveness. Relief from Texas Education Code 21.102(b) will permit the district the option to issue a probationary contract for a period of up to two years for experienced teachers and counselors newly hired in Santa Anna ISD.

***Local Guidelines***

At the time of contract recommendation consideration, newly hired teachers and counselors with the district, who have been employed in public education for at least five of the eight previous years and have completed their first probationary year with the district, may receive a probationary contract for the second year in order to continue to evaluate the staff member's effectiveness.

**§25.036 Inter-District Transfers**

*Currently, under Texas Education Code 25.036, a district may choose to accept, as transfers, students who are not entitled to enroll in the district, but TEC 25.036, has been interpreted to require a transfer to be for a period of one school year.*

### ***Proposed***

Santa Anna ISD maintains a transfer policy under FDA (Local) requiring nonresident students wishing to transfer to file a transfer application each school year. In approving transfer requests, the availability of space and instructional staff, availability of programs and 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 transfer applicants. On rare occasions, student behavior warrants suspension (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, Santa Anna 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.

### **Summary:**

The District of Innovation Plan is an important step forward to ensure Santa Anna ISD develops and supports our students, employees and families in a more personalized, more effective and strategically aligned way. Moving our system toward the more personalized environment our students deserve will enable us to better prepare them according to their individualized needs and their unique passions, gifts, and talents. Through HB 1842, Santa Anna ISD will be positioned to leverage increased flexibility to make the best decisions for our children because we will be able to make them locally.