

Avery ISD



DISTRICT OF INNOVATION Plan

June 27, 2017 – June 26, 2022

Avery ISD District of Innovation Plan

2017-2022

HB 1842 allows traditional public schools to have some of the same flexibility that public, open enrollment charter schools have through local decision-making. Utilizing HB 1842, passed during the 84th Legislative Session, Avery ISD seeks to gain more local control as outlined in this plan. The following exceptions to the Texas Education Code will constitute AISD's initial District of Innovation Plan, for the length of 5 years. This plan will become effective starting the 2017-2018 school year and will be reviewed annually. This plan may be revised at any point in which legislation alters our need for DOI or an additional exception of the Texas Education Code becomes a local need as defined by the AISD DOI plan.

The District of Innovation Planning Team:

Kelly Burns	Superintendent
Amanda Baird	Director of Business Operations
Audrey Shumate	Elementary Principal
Daniel Pritchett	Secondary Principal
Brent Jackson	Counselor
Jeannie Beaman	Technology Director
Laura Brooks	Elementary Teacher
Deanna Harper	Elementary Teacher
Lindsey McEwin	Elementary Teacher
Rachel Klemme	Elementary Teacher
Amanda Pirkey	Elementary Paraprofessional
Bret Myers	Middle School Teacher
Carla Henson	Middle School Teacher
Janet Fain	Middle School Teacher
April Martin	High School Teacher
Kelley Raulston	High School Teacher
Jimmie Tucek	High School Teacher
Shelby Lewis	High School Teacher
Christy Williams	High School Teacher
Michelle Ackley	Parent
Lori Puckett	Parent
Talisha Alsup	Parent
Lana Lamon	Parent
Phyllis Stanley	Community Member, VFD

Avery ISD wanted this plan to be teacher and staff driven from the onset. The process began with all employees having the opportunity to be a part of the Steering Committee to shape the district's plan. No employee was turned away who wanted to participate in this process. Teachers and staff were placed in balanced groups to conduct research into the areas chosen to be included in the plan as well as plan implementation. The District of Innovation Plan provides the opportunity for Avery ISD to make decisions ultimately impacting students and having a lasting, positive effect while best serving the interests of the community.

Areas addressed:

Chapter 21: Teacher Certification, Probationary Contracts

Chapter 25: Transfer of Student, School Start Date, Length of School Day

Chapter 37: Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator

TIMELINE:

Resolution of the Board of Trustees	February 23, 2017
Steering Committee Meetings (4)	February 16, 2017
	February 22, 2017
	March 3, 2017
	March 10, 2017
Public Hearing and Board Appointed Committee	March 23, 2017
Committee Meeting to Review Proposed Plan	April 19, 2017
Resolution to Notify Commissioner	April 24, 2017
Proposed Plan Published to Website	April 25, 2017
District of Innovation Planning Team Approval of Plan	April 24, 2017
Amended Plan Published on Website	May 23, 2017
Notification of Amended Plan Sent to Commissioner	May 23, 2017
Board Approval of Plan	June 27, 2017

1) CHAPTER 21: Subchapter A – Certification Required

Sec. 21.003. CERTIFICATION REQUIRED. (a) **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.

Sec. 21.053. PRESENTATION AND RECORDING OF CERTIFICATES. (a) **A person who desires to teach in a public school shall present the person's certificate** for filing with the employing district **before the person's contract with the board of trustees of the district is binding.**

(b) **An educator who does not hold a valid certificate may not be paid for teaching or work done before the effective date of issuance of a valid certificate.**

Sec. 21.057. PARENTAL NOTIFICATION. (a) **A school district that assigns an inappropriately certified or uncertified teacher to the same classroom for more than 30 consecutive instructional days during the same school year shall provide written notice of the assignment to a parent or guardian of each student in that classroom.**

TEC Code Implications

Avery ISD has been adversely affected by the current teacher shortage. We are in the northeast region of the state and closely border Oklahoma and in driving distance of Arkansas. Being a rural district in which we are, by far, the largest employer sometimes proves difficult to hire fully Texas certified individuals who are also quality people to serve our students and community.

Innovation Strategy

In order to best serve Avery ISD, certification decisions will be made locally. Greater flexibility in staffing allows AISD to broaden applicant pools in specific areas of need. Industry experts and business professionals would be given greater opportunity to transition into teaching, especially in the areas of Career and Technology and STEM. Part-time professionals could also be utilized to enhance our course offerings. Teachers holding certificates from other states would be considered for positions. This would also allow teachers to teach a course outside their certification area without having to require a certification addendum. Local decisions concerning certification requirements allow the district greater flexibility in scheduling and course offerings leading to greater innovation to meet student needs.

Action for Success

- A. Campus principals may submit requests to the superintendent to allow a certified teacher to teach subjects and/or grade levels outside their field of certification. The principal must specify reasoning for the request and documentation of credentials the teacher possesses qualifying him/her for the proposed position. Emergency or financial situations creating the need must also be noted.
- B. Campus principals may submit requests to the superintendent for local certification of uncertified individuals. The principal must specify reasoning for the request and documentation of credentials the individual possesses qualifying him/her for the proposed position. Emergency or financial situations creating the need must also be noted.
- C. Superintendent will approve/deny requests for local certification and will submit approved requests to the Board of Trustees for approval prior to the individual beginning employment.
- D. Local teaching certificates will be issued for one year and on an at-will basis. Teacher certification waiver, state permit applications, or other paperwork will not be submitted to the Texas Education Agency.
- E. Uncertified teachers will be provided teacher mentoring, increased observations and feedback, professional development, instructional resources, and/or other supports as needed.

2) CHAPTER 21: Subchapter C – Probationary Contract

Sec. 21.102. PROBATIONARY CONTRACT. (a) Except as provided by Section [21.202](#) (b), a person who is employed as a teacher by a school district for the first time, or who has not been employed by the district for two consecutive school years subsequent to August 28, 1967, shall be employed under a probationary contract. A person who previously was employed as a teacher by a district and, after at least a two-year lapse in district employment returns to district employment, may be employed under a probationary contract.

(b) 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.**

TEC Code Implications

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 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 Avery ISD.

Innovation Strategy

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. In determining an employee who will receive a second-year probationary contract, the District will review:

- Employees most recent evaluation conducted by AISD
- Employees record of attendance
- District staffing patterns and needs

3) CHAPTER 25: Subchapter B – Transfer of Student

Sec. 25.036. TRANSFER OF STUDENT. (a) Any child, other than a high school graduate, who is younger than 21 years of age and eligible for enrollment on September 1 of any school year may transfer **annually** from the child's school district of residence to another district in this state if both the receiving district and the applicant parent or guardian or person having lawful control of the child jointly approve and timely agree in writing to the transfer.

(b) A transfer agreement under this section shall be filed and preserved as a receiving district record for audit purposes of the agency.

TEC Code Implications

TEC Code 25.036 states that students transfer annually. Flexibility in decision-making dealing with transfer students allows the district an increased opportunity to create and maintain a safe and effective educational setting for all students.

Innovation Strategy

The district will reserve the right to revoke the transfer of a student at any time during the year based on behavior, excessive tardies, late pick-up, attendance, or not remaining in good academic standing. Revocation of transfers for the above reasons is final and may not be appealed.

Action for Success

The campus principal will notify student and parents of any issues as they arrive in order to be proactive and give both the parent and student a chance to change any negative behavior affecting to these issues. In extreme cases of misbehavior, such as but not limited to assaults against another student or staff, revocation of transfer may occur immediately in order to maintain an effective and safe educational setting.

4) CHAPTER 25: Subchapter C – First Day of Instruction

Sec. 25.0811. FIRST DAY OF INSTRUCTION. (a) 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.

TEC Code Implications

TEC Code 25.0811 dictates the fourth Monday in August as the earliest start date possible. This limits the number of days prior to state assessments, causes unbalanced semesters, increased alignment for dual credit courses, and leads to front loading professional development, and staff and students' inability to enroll in summer college courses.

Innovation Strategy

Local control in the annual determination of the first day of instruction would allow Avery ISD to best meet the needs of our students and community. This flexibility allows us to more effectively balance semesters, and have more instructional days prior to state assessments. In addition, students and staff wishing to enroll in summer courses will be able to do so with little or no overlap ultimately increasing college and career readiness. The District will serve a minimum of 75,600 minutes of instruction as required by law.

Action for Success

Calendars will be created with the following areas in mind:

- ✓ Balancing instructional time by semester
- ✓ Start date for students would be no earlier than the second Monday in August.
- ✓ Increased instructional days prior to state assessments
- ✓ Innovative professional development planning throughout the school year

5) CHAPTER 25: Subchapter C – Length of School Day

Sec. 25.081. OPERATION OF SCHOOLS. (a) Except as authorized under Subsection (b) of this section, Section [25.084](#), or Section [29.0821](#), for each school year each school district must operate so that the district provides for at least 75,600 minutes of instruction, including intermissions and recesses, for students.

(e) **For purposes of this code, a reference to a day of instruction means 420 minutes of instruction.**

Sec. 25.082. SCHOOL DAY. (a) A school day shall be at least seven hours each day, including intermissions and recesses.

TEC Code Implications

TEC Code 25.081 and 25.082 allow for a school day to be defined as at least 420 minutes or seven hours. Little flexibility is allowed under the current statute. With the inclusion of the 75,600 minutes of instruction now defining the school year, minimum daily minutes decreases flexibility as originally intended.

Innovation Strategy

The added flexibility of not defining a school day, but instead recording total minutes, allows many innovative strategies to provide flexible learning environments. Such strategies include: enhanced opportunities for acceleration and enrichment, additional instructional opportunities outside the traditional school day such as dual credit, additional online instructional opportunities outside the traditional school day which could be counted toward funding purposes leading to increased college and career readiness and less need for summer school and remediation, incorporation of innovative teacher planning schedules and parent conference scheduling throughout the year, more opportunities for increased community and stakeholder involvement in extracurricular activities, and additional flexibility during decision-making in inclement weather would ensure keeping student and staff safety at the forefront in those situations. The District will not serve less than the required 75,600 minutes of instruction.

Action for Success

Currently, our instructional day runs a total of 455 minutes. To better meet the needs of our students and community, student achievement, college and career readiness, teachers' professional needs, parent and community involvement, and student and staff safety will guide decisions when planning shorter instructional days throughout the school year.

6) CHAPTER 37: Subchapter A – Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator

Sec. 37.0012. DESIGNATION OF CAMPUS BEHAVIOR COORDINATOR. (a) A person at each campus must be designated to serve as the campus behavior coordinator. The person designated may be the principal of the campus or any other campus administrator selected by the principal.

(b) The campus behavior coordinator is primarily responsible for maintaining student discipline and the implementation of this subchapter.

(c) Except as provided by this chapter, the specific duties of the campus behavior coordinator may be established by campus or district policy. Unless otherwise provided by campus or district policy:

(1) a duty imposed on a campus principal or other campus administrator under this subchapter shall be performed by the campus behavior coordinator; and

(2) a power granted to a campus principal or other campus administrator under this subchapter may be exercised by the campus behavior coordinator.

(d) The campus behavior coordinator shall promptly notify a student's parent or guardian as provided by this subsection if under this subchapter the student is placed into in-school or out-of-school suspension, placed in a disciplinary alternative education program, expelled, or placed in a juvenile justice alternative education program or is taken into custody by a law enforcement officer. A campus behavior coordinator must comply with this subsection by:

(1) promptly contacting the parent or guardian by telephone or in person; and

(2) making a good faith effort to provide written notice of the disciplinary action to the student, on the day the action is taken, for delivery to the student's parent or guardian.

(e) If a parent or guardian entitled to notice under Subsection (d) has not been reached by telephone or in person by 5 p.m. of the first business day after the day the disciplinary action is taken, a campus behavior coordinator shall mail written notice of the action to the parent or guardian at the parent's or guardian's last known address.

(f) If a campus behavior coordinator is unable or not available to promptly provide notice under Subsection (d), the principal or other designee shall provide the notice.

TEC Code Implications

TEC Code 37.0012 requires a designation of a campus behavior coordinator. Avery ISD has principals already assigned these duties, so the designation is both redundant and unnecessary.

Innovation Strategy

Avery ISD's principals assume full responsibility for behavior on their campuses. Board policy and procedural handbooks address principal's responsibilities, therefore deeming this mandate redundant.

Action for Success

Avery ISD's principals will assume all disciplinary responsibility of their campus(es) and ensure a progressive student discipline plan is in place and equitably applied to all students.

Revised June 27, 2017