

# **SALTILLO ISD**

## **District of Innovation 2022-2027**

### **INTRODUCTION**

During the 84th Legislative Session, HB 1842 was passed. This law allows Texas public schools to become Districts of Innovation which affords them the opportunity to obtain exemptions from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code. Saltillo ISD is again exercising this opportunity to continue the access to more local control by requesting most of the exemptions asked for in the spring of 2017. The Saltillo Independent School District of Innovation Plan has been developed to address State rules and regulations detrimental to small, rural districts with stable student populations. The school calendar (TEC 25.0811) continues to have equal fall and spring semesters on either side of a Christmas Break. Small, rural schools continue to have a difficult time in recruiting teachers, especially those in critical needs and in career and technical subject areas (TEC 21.003).

### **TERM**

Saltillo ISD's Innovation Plan will begin with the 2022-2023 school year and conclude at the end of the 2026-2027 school year unless the plan is terminated or amended by the Saltillo ISD Board of Education in accordance with HB1842. If at any time within this 5-year plan, other areas of exemptions are to be considered, the Board will nominate a new committee to consider new exemptions. Any future amendments will adhere to the same term as the original plan.

### **PROCESS**

On January 28 2019, the Administrative Leadership Team begin researching the benefits of District of Innovation for Saltillo Independent School District.

On February 28, 2019, the Saltillo Independent School District's Board of Trustees initiated the innovation process by passing a Resolution to Adopt a District of Innovation in order to support innovation and local initiatives to improve student learning.

The Administrative Leadership Team met with teacher and department heads initially on March 4, 2019, to discuss and develop the plan. A follow up meeting to finalize the plan was held on March 14, 2019.

On March 28, 2019, the Saltillo ISD Board of Trustees held a public hearing for public discussion on whether the District should develop a local innovation plan for the designation of the district as a District of Innovation. With there being no objection from the hearing, the Board of Trustees appointed the Site Based Decision Making Team to discuss and draft a local innovation plan.

The plan will be posted on the district website for 30 days before being presented to the SBDM Team on April 2, 2019. Saltillo ISD will notify the Texas Commissioner of Education of the District's final District of Innovation Plan. The finalized plan will be submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval on April 29th.

## **RENEWAL PROCESS REQUIREMENT AMENDMENT**

<b>TIMELINE</b>	<b>PROCESS REQUIREMENT</b>	<b>Renewal</b>
December 8, 2021	The district-level committee established under the Texas Education Code (TEC), §11.251, has held a public* meeting to consider the final version of the proposed plan and has approved the plan by a majority vote of the committee member	YES
December 15, 2021	Final version of the proposed plan has been available on the district's website for at least 30 days	YES
December 16, 2021	Board of Trustees review plan District of Innovation Plan amendments	
December 17, 2021	The board of trustees has notified the commissioner of education of the board's intention to vote on adoption of the proposed plan	YES

January 31, 2022	The board of trustees adopts a proposed local innovation plan by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the membership of the board	YES
February 1, 2022	The district notifies the commissioner of approval of the plan along with a list of approved TEC exemptions.	YES
February 8, 2022	Not later than the 15th day after the date on which the board of trustees finalizes a local innovation plan either through adoption, amendment, or renewal, the district shall provide a copy of [link to] the current local innovation plan to the Texas Education Agency for posting on the agency website	YES
	The district shall ensure that a copy of the local innovation plan is posted on the district's website in accordance with the TEC, §12A.0071, for the term of the designation as an innovation district.	Yes

## **SITE BASED DECISION MAKING TEAM**

Daniel White	Parent
Dustin Ray	District Chief of Police
Lizzy Mohl	Parent
Danyiel Metcalf	Business
Kara Novell	Para
Frances Mowatt	SPED Teacher
Johnna West	High School Teacher

Laci Jeter	Junior High Teacher
Esther Womack	Elementary Teacher
Tammy White	Elementary Teacher
Susan Smith	Cafeteria Manager
Tim Lane	Elementary Principal
Joli Maroeny	Assistant Principal
David Stickels	Superintendent
Amanda Scott	Nurse

## **School Start Date – Flexible Calendar**

Exempt from: TEC §25.0811

Relevant Board Policy: EB LEGAL

### **Currently**

A school district may not begin instruction before the fourth Monday in August, unless the school operates year-round.

### **Proposal**

Flexibility of start date would allow the district to determine locally, on an annual basis, what best meets the needs of the students and local community. An early start date permits students an additional week of instruction prior to state assessments and creates a more balanced instructional calendar within the two semesters.



## **Class Size Waiver**

Exemption from: TEC §25.112; TEC §25.113

Related Board Policy: EED LEGAL

### **Currently**

Texas Education Code limits the number of students in Kindergarten through Fourth Grade to 22 students per teacher. Additionally, a campus or district that is granted an exception under Section [25.112\(d\)](#) from class size limits shall provide written notice of the exception to the parent of or person standing in parental relation to each student affected by the exception.

### **Proposal**

As a district we look to provide the best learning environment for our K-4 student's while retaining the ability to manage increases in class size, should this arise. Saltillo ISD intends to remain within the education guidelines with regard to class size ratios, but this must also be balanced with the timing and ability of adding staff, the qualifications of staff available, the makeup and chemistry of the classroom and other classroom influences. This exemption allows Saltillo local control over class size ratios and is not a disregard for the intent of the ratio requirements.

In the event a classroom exceeds the 22 to1 ratio in grades K–4, the class sizes will be reviewed by appropriate district and campus administration and the Board of Trustees will be notified of any K-4 classes that exceed the ratio.

Saltillo ISD will follow our local School Board Policy EHBG(LOCAL) which reads:

The District shall prioritize admission to prekindergarten classes in accordance with the following until the classes reach the maximum allowable enrollment established by the District:

1. Children who reside in the District and meet the state eligibility requirements for enrollment in prekindergarten.
2. Children of District employees who do not reside in the District and meet the state eligibility requirements for enrollment in prekindergarten.

Other than children of nonresident District employees, the District shall not accept transfers for admission into the prekindergarten program.

## **Probationary Contract Extension**

Exemption from: TEC §21.102

Related Board Policy: DCA LEGAL

### **Currently**

For an experienced teacher new to the district, the probationary period 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.

### **Proposal**

Saltillo ISD would like to extend this probationary period. Experienced teachers new to the district that have been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the past eight previous years, may be issued a probationary contract for up to two years. This will allow the district flexibility to fully determine the staff member's effectiveness.

## **Bank Depository Contract**

Exemption from: TEC §45.205, 45.206

Related Board Policy: BDAE

### **Currently**

The District must renew its depository contract every two years, with an option to extend for three additional two-year terms. In accordance with the Texas Education Code, the District must use a uniform bid or proposal blank in the form prescribed by the State Board of Education.

### **Proposed**

The District is seeking an exemption from TEC 45.205 and 45.206 to allow the District's banking contract to be extended beyond the allowable contract term, if the District determines contract-pricing remains competitive and there is no operational or financial reason to send the District's banking services out for bid. This exemption lessens the

administrative burden related to preparing and reviewing a Request for Proposal (RFP) when there is a limited number of banking institutions available to bid on the District's business. The District will only go out for bid if it is determined that contract-pricing is not competitive and there is an operational or financial reason to send the District's banking services out for bid. The District will continue with two-year contracts for our banking depository.

## **Local Role in Teacher and Principal Evaluations**

TEC §21.203, TEC §21.352

TEC §21.203 This requires a written evaluation of each teacher at annual or more frequent intervals. The board must consider the most recent evaluations before making a decision not to renew a teacher's contract if the evaluations are relevant to the reason for the board's action.

TEC §21.352 In appraising teachers, each school district shall use: 1) The appraisal process and performance criteria developed by the commissioner; or 2) An appraisal process and performance criteria: developed by the district and campus level committees established under Section 11.251, containing the items described by Sections 21.351 (a) (1) and (2), and adopted by the board of trustees.

## **Proposal**

The district reserves the option to exercise control over decisions regarding teacher and administrator appraisals. The new statewide systems (T-TESS and T-PESS) are being introduced as a change for evaluating educational professionals for the first time since 1997. This exemption would allow SISD the flexibility to implement T-TESS or T-PESS and/or other locally developed evaluation systems.

## **Local Guidelines**

1. Develop and implement a teacher and administrator appraisal system that seeks to meet the needs of students and faculty and review and adapt this plan annually as needed for student success.
2. The plan may include components of T-TESS and/or T-PESS as well as other locally adopted components.
3. And student performance as a factor in teacher and administrator appraisals.



## **School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) Meetings**

Texas Education Code Section 28.004 requires the school board of each school district to establish a local school health advisory council to assist the district in ensuring that local community values are reflected in the district's health education instruction. Further, the law requires the health advisory council to meet at least four times each year.

### Board Policy (BDF LEGAL) (DCB LOCAL) **Proposal**

Due to the size of the District, Saltillo ISD seeks exemption from the statutory provision requiring the SHAC to meet at least four times each year. This innovation will be implemented by the District as follows.

1. SHAC committee members are aware of the needs of the district's students and are often able to review, advise, and revise plans in fewer than four meetings because of the District's size and the stability of the membership on the SHAC committee
2. This exemption directly supports the District's commitment to health education and instruction without overburdening designated council members
3. The Board will be kept informed following each SHAC meeting.
4. The SISD Board of Trustees and the members of the SHAC committee will determine how often the committee will meet.

## **Teacher Certification Requirements**

Exemption from: TEC §21.003, §21.057

Related Board Policy: DBA Legal

### **Currently**

The Texas Education Code 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. The Education Code also 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 Saltillo ISD students, decisions on certification will be handled locally. An exemption from teacher certification requirements will enable greater flexibility in staffing and utilizing current teachers in an area outside their initial certification and will enrich applicant pools in specific areas of need. The district will have flexibility in hiring hard to fill positions, the ability to hire experts in their field, and the capability to hire those with industry expertise as they are pursuing areas of certification. The Board of Trustees will be notified of any teachers with classroom assignments that are in an uncertified status.