



MONTAGUE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Montague ISD District of Innovation Plan 2022-2027

Introduction

During the 84th Legislative Session, HB1842 passed. This bill allows Texas public schools to become Districts of Innovation, which would allow them to obtain exemptions from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code. Montague ISD is exercising this opportunity to gain more local control and will request the following exemptions from the Texas Education Code.

Term

Montague ISD's Innovation Plan will begin in April 2022 and conclude in April 2027 school year unless the plan is terminated or amended by the Montague ISD Board 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 of the original plan.

Innovations

#1 - Kindergarten – Grade 4 Class Size

(TEC 25.112a-g) (TEC 25.113a-b) (EEB LEGAL)

Statutes that relate to this goal

TEC 25.112 requires districts to maintain a class size of 22 students or less for Kindergarten – 4th Grade classes. When any class exceeds this limit, the district must complete and file a waiver with the Texas Education Agency.

TEC 25.113 requires districts to notify parents of waivers or exemptions top class size limits.

Innovation Strategies:

1. At the beginning of each school year, Montague ISD will meet the suggested student to teacher ratio of 22:1 per K-4 homeroom class. In the event that any class size exceeds this ration during the school year, the superintendent will report this information to the Board of Trustees and to the parents of the affected students. The determination of whether to add another teacher to bring the class

under the 22:1 mandate will be made by the administration and this recommendation will be reported to the Board of Trustees.

2. A TEA waiver will not be filed when a K-4th classroom exceeds the 22:1 ratio.

#2 - School Start Date

(TEC 25.0811a) (EB LEGAL)

Statutes that relate to this goal

TEC 25.0811 states that a school district may not begin student instruction before the 4th Monday of August.

The current process allows no flexibility in the design of annual calendars to fit the needs of the community or the wished of the local Board of Trustees who represent community interests in this matter.

Innovation Strategies:

1. Montague ISD students will begin instruction no earlier than the second week of August. This change will create better flexibility in the creation of the district calendar as well as allowing more opportunities in scheduling meaningful and balanced staff development days.
2. The earlier start date will allow the district to move instructional days that occur after state mandated testing dates to the front of the school year.
3. The earlier start date will provide more balance to the first 3 six weeks grading periods.

#3 - Teacher Contract Days

(DC Legal) (Ed. Code 21.401)

Statutes that relate to this goal

Current education law defines a teacher contract as a ten- month contract equivalent to 187 days.

Innovation Strategies:

1. TEC 25.081 changed student instructional days to minutes. However, TEC 21.401 has not been adjusted to change teacher contracts from days to minutes. Changes in the number of days required to fulfill the contract will not alter the teacher pay scale. Teacher daily rate will be adjusted to maintain current salary.

2. This proposal reduces teacher contract days from 187 with no effect on teacher salaries. This stems from an attempt to provide flexibility to better align teacher service days to instructional days.
 - This proposal will increase the daily rate the district pays teachers.
 - This proposal should enhance teacher recruitment, therefore putting the district on a more level playing field with larger districts.
 - This proposal will improve teacher morale.
 - This proposal will provide teachers more opportunities during the year to seek out beneficial staff development that relates to their field.

#4 - Transfer Students

(FDA Local) (Ed. Code 25.036)

Statutes that relate to this goal

State law allows a student to transfer annually from the child's school district of residence to another district in the state if both the receiving district and the applicant parent or guardian jointly approve and timely agree in writing to the transfer. In approving transfer requests, the availability of space and instructional staff, availability of programs and services, the student's disciplinary history, academic performance, and attendance records are also evaluated. Under Texas Education Code 25.036, a transfer is interpreted to be for a period of one school year.

Innovation Strategies:

1. The district is seeking exemption from the one- year commitment in accepting a transfer student allowing the district to rescind a transfer at any time during the school year if the student violates district expectations of attendance, discipline, academic achievement, and/or falsifying documentation.
2. This flexibility would allow the district to have the option of immediate revocation of a student's transfer status by the Superintendent or designee at any time during the school year.