

# **KLONDIKE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## **LOCAL INNOVATION PLAN**

### **Background & Timeline**

The 84<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature passed House Bill 1842, which allows public school districts to declare exemptions from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code (TEC) by becoming a designated District of Innovation. On February 13, 2017, during their regularly scheduled board meeting the Klondike ISD Board of Trustees unanimously pass a resolution to approve considering Klondike ISD as a District of Innovation and a public hearing was held during the same meeting.

The Board of Trustees appointed a five person Local Innovation Committee (LIC) to research, discuss and develop the Local Innovation Plan.

Committee members: Steve McLaren, Superintendent – Chair  
Tony Bushong, Principal  
Julie Dossey, Counselor  
Cynthia Clark, HS Teacher  
Angela Enns, JH Teacher  
Hailey White, Sp. Ed. Teacher

The committee met on the following dates: February 10, 2017 and February 14, 2017.

The LIC reviewed provisions in Texas Education code that apply to HB1842 and identified those exemptions that will provide for greater local control and more flexibility therefore benefitting the students of Klondike ISD. It is the belief of the committee that we work with our students and community on a daily basis and are in the best position to make decisions for our students and community. A plan we believe will allow us to do just that. Our committee voted unanimously on February 14, 2017 to post the following plan on-line, for 30 days, for comments and feedback.

Please direct any comments or questions to [steve.mclaren@klondikeisd.net](mailto:steve.mclaren@klondikeisd.net).

### **1. Uniform start Date (TEC §25.0811)**

State law currently prohibits school districts from starting classes before the fourth Monday in August, unless they are a year round district.

#### Innovation Strategies

The flexibility of the start date allows the district to determine locally what best meets the needs of the students, the school, and the community. In addition, this allows us to better align with the start date of the college that our student use to earn dual credits. Approximately 90% of our juniors and seniors take dual credit classes.

In addition, the ability to change the school start date can help balance the amount of days in each semester. Flexibility to begin instruction earlier in the calendar year will enable the District to improve active learning by balancing the amount of instructional time in the semesters, allow teachers to better pace and deliver instruction before and after the winter break.

In addition, by having the flexibility to start and end the school year earlier, students will be able to enroll in college courses that start in June, thereby increasing college and career readiness.

### **2. Class sizes and Student-Teacher Ratios (TEC §25.112, §25.113)**

State law requires districts to maintain an average student-teacher ratio at most of 20-1 for average daily attendance. In Kindergarten through fourth grade, the class student-teacher ratio must not exceed 22-1. Districts are also required to notify parents of waivers or exceptions submitted to TEA due to class size limits.

#### Innovation Strategies

At the beginning of each school year, the goal of Klondike ISD will be to meet the suggested student to teacher ratio of 22:1 ratio per K-4<sup>th</sup> grade. In the event that any class size exceeds this ratio during the school year, the superintendent will report this information to the Klondike 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 principal and superintendent. This recommendation will be reported to the Klondike Board of Trustees. A waiver will not be filed with TEA.

### **3. 90% Attendance Rule (TEC §25.092)**

State law mandates a student may not be given credit or a final grade for a class unless the student is in attendance for at least 90% of the days the class is offered. In addition, if a student is in attendance greater than 75% and less than 90% may by be given credit or a final grade for the class if the student completes a plan approved by the campus administrator and meets the instructional requirements for the class.

#### Innovation Strategies

The 90% rule is an arbitrary percentage. Districts should have the option to set their own requirement. Local districts need the flexibility to set attendance requirements that reflect their specific situations and expectations.

If Klondike ISD is to be able to implement innovative instructional methods such as online classes, dual credit classes and other educational activities as approved by the administration, it will need an exemption from the 90% “seat time” attendance rule.

#### **4. Teacher Certifications (TEC §21.003, §21.053, §21.057)**

State law states that a person may not be employed as a teacher by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued by the appropriate state agency. In the event a district cannot locate a certified teacher for a position or a teacher is teaching a subject outside of their certification, the district must submit a request to TEA. TEA then approves or denies this request.

##### Innovation Strategies

In order to best serve KISD students, decisions on certification will be handled locally.

- A. The principal may submit to the superintendent a request to allow a certified teacher to instruct and supervise students out of their certified field. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses in which would qualify this individual to this subject. Background checks will be conducted and fingerprints required.
  
- B. An individual with experience in a CTE field could be eligible to teach a vocational skill or course through a local teaching certificate. The principal will submit the request to the superintendent with all the individual's credentials. The superintendent will then approve the request if they feel the individual could be an asset to the students. The superintendent will then report his actions to the Board of Trustees prior to the individual beginning any employment. Local teaching certificates will be for one year. The employee will be at will. Background checks will be conducted and fingerprints required.
  
- C. This proposal will provide more flexibility in our scheduling and more options for our students in class offerings. We envision classrooms with multiple subjects being taught through multiple formats, in which the "teacher" will become a facilitator in student learning.