Rotan Independent School District
Local Innovation Plan

Background

The 84th Legislature passed House Bill 1842 which allows school districts to declare exemption from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code by becoming a designated District of Innovation. Rotan ISD Board of Trustees meet on Monday September 12, 2016 in a regular scheduled board meeting to consider Rotan ISD becoming a District of Innovation and . The Rotan ISD Board of Trustees unanimously passed a resolution to consider developing a Local Innovation Plan. The board also approved a ten person committee to research and develop a Local Innovation Plan.

Rotan ISD Board of Trustees

Scott Van Poppel-	*President*
Britt Sipe-	*Vice-President*
Chuck Flanagan	*Secretary*
JD Elrod	*Member*
David Posey	*Member*
Clinton Williams	*Member*
Robin Pruitt	*Member*

Local Innovation Committee

Chris Van Poppel-	*Parent*
Britt Sipe-	*School Board Member*
Julie Gruben-	*Elementary Teacher*
Cody Weathersby-	*Secondary Teacher*
Larry Reid-	*Athletic Director*
Randy Hodges-	*IT Director*
Katrina Jarvis-	*Counselor*
Brad Hayhurst-	*District Assistant Principal*
Jody Helms-	*District Principal*
Greg Decker-	*Superintendent*

District of Innovation Timeline

Monday, September 12, 2016: Board Meeting to consider Resolution to pursue a Local Innovation Plan. Approved a Motion to pass a Resolution and selected a Innovation Committee

Monday, September 26, 2016: Innovation Committee Meeting

Monday, October 3, 2016: District Wide Faculty Meeting

Monday, October 3, 2016: Innovation Committee Meeting

Tuesday, October 4, 2016: Present Plan to District Improvement Committee

Tuesday, October 4, 2016: Post Rotan ISD Innovation Plan

Monday, October 12, 2016: Public Meeting to discuss District of Innovation

Monday, November 7, 2016: Board Meeting to Approve the Innovation Plan

TEXAS EDUCATION CODE EXEMPTIONS

1. ***Uniform Start Date (TEC 25.0811)***

   a. *State Law currently Prohibits school districts from starting class before the fourth Monday of August, unless they are year-around district.*

   b. *Proposed:*

      i. *To allow for a calendar that fits the local needs of our community which will be determined on an annual basis. Rotan ISD will evaluate student, school, community needs, and college start dates for dual credit classes.*

      ii. *This exemption will also allow school district to start early to assure that each of the semester are balanced in instructional days.*

2. ***Teacher Certification (TEC 21.003, 21.004, 21.053, and 21.057)***

    a. *State Law states a person may not be employed as a teacher by a district unless the person holds an appropriate certification or permit issued by the appropriate state agency. In the event a district can not locate a certified teacher for a position or a teaching a subject outside their certification, the district must submit a request to TEA. TEA then approves or denies the request.*

    b. *Proposed: In order to best serve Rotan ISD students, decisions on certifications will be handled locally.*

        i. *The Campus Principal may submit to the Superintendent a request to all certified teacher to teach a subject(s) out of their certification field. The Principal must provide reasoning for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses which qualify this individual to teach this subject.*

        ii. *An individual with experience in CTE field could be eligible to teach a vocational skill or course through a local teaching certificate. The Principal will submit a request to the Superintendent with all the individuals credentials. The Superintendent will then approve the request if they feel the individual could be asset to the students. The Superintendent will then report this action to the Board of Trustees prior to the individual beginning employment. The local certificates will require an employee agreement rather than a contract.*

        iii. *This process will allow more flexibility in our scheduling and more options for students in class offerings.*

3. ***90 Percent Attendance Rule (TEC 25.092)***

    a. *State Law mandates that a student may not be given credit or final grade for a class unless the student is in attendance for at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. In addition, if a student is in attendance greater than 75 percent*

and less than 90 percent may 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.

b. *Proposed:*

   i. *The District should have the option to set their own requirement. Local district need flexibility to set attendance requirement which reflect their specific situations and expectations.*

   ii. *Abstaining from the requirement means the district won't have to penalize students who miss class due extra/co-curricular activities, academic activities, or other extenuating circumstances. The flexibility can allow for local boards to set higher expectations for attendance while promoting student engagement, as well as social and emotional development, by encouraging more student to participate in extracurricular activities.*

4. Length of School day (TEC 25.081)

a. *State Law currently requires that all school days must be 420 minutes long each day in order to count for ADA calculations and funding purposes, and accumulate instructional minutes towards the 75,600 minutes required annually. It requires a school district to file a waiver to exempt the 420 minute rule. Each district can request 6 waivers per school year.*

b. *Proposed:*

   i. *Exemption from the 420 minute day requirement would allow Rotan ISD the flexibiltiy needed to alter the school day schedule on selected day whenever it was locally determined as necessary or beneficial to the district and its stakeholders.*

   ii. *Exempting completely from the 420 minute requirement would give a significant amount of local control over scheduling (above and beyond the 6 day maximum as needed) without the fear of diminishing state funding or losing credit for instructional time that might cause the district to fall out of compliance with annual minute requirements. This would allow the district the flexibility to schedule non-instructional day into the schedule to allow for teacher professional development and data inventories.*

iii. *Rotan ISD does not have any intention to shorten the school day on a regular basis, or without specific purpose. To the greatest extent possible, early release days would be planned ahead of time and noted in the district calendar, which is approved by the Rotan ISD Board of Trustees and published to all stakeholders in advance of the school year.*

5. ***Submitting Waivers for Kindergarten - Grade 4 Class Size (EEB Legal), (TEC 25.111), (TEC 25.112), (TEC 25.113)***

   a. *State Law requires district to keep class sizes to 22 students to 1 teacher in kindergarten through grade 4 When the class exceeds this limit, the district must complete a waiver with TEA.*

   b. *Proposed:*

      i. *While Rotan ISD believes that small class size play a positive role in the classroom, it must be balanced with the logistics of the timing of adding staff, and the best teacher to student ratio that can be achieved given the total number of students. Master teachers, who are highly trained in student engagement strategies, are equally as successful with larger class size environment. Often it is not the number of students in the classroom that influence student learning, it is the teacher in the classroom that impact the students learning.*

         1. *Rotan ISD will attempt to keep all core K-4 classrooms to a 22:1 ratio. However, in the event the class size exceeds this ratio, the superintendent will report to the Board of Trustees.*

         2. *This will give Rotan ISD flexibility without filing a TEA Waiver when a K-4 classroom exceeds the 22:1 ratio.*