

# HOLLAND

## INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLAN  
2023 - 2028



# **Holland ISD**

## **District of Innovation Plan**

### **Introduction**

House Bill 1842, passed during the 84th Legislative Session, allows Texas public schools with sufficient academic ratings to become a District of Innovation. Holland ISD will obtain exemptions from certain regulations of the Texas Education Code. On January 23, 2019, the Holland ISD Board of Trustees passed a resolution to initiate the process to become a District of Innovation (DOI). The purpose of passing the resolution is to increase local control over Holland ISD operations and the district's goals by supporting innovation and local initiatives to improve educational opportunities for the benefit of our students, staff, and community.

### **Original Term of Plan**

The plan will begin April 10, 2019, and end July 31, 2023, unless terminated, amended, or renewed by the board of trustees in accordance with the law. The Committee will continually monitor the effectiveness of the Plan and recommend to the Board any suggested amendments.

The Renewed plan will begin April 12, 2023, and end April 12, 2028, unless terminated, amended, or renewed by the board of trustees in accordance with the law. The Committee will continually monitor the effectiveness of the Plan and recommend to the Board any suggested amendments.

## **Holland Independent School District Site-Based Decision Making/DOI Committee for Renewal**

|                                            |                                                                               |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Superintendent                             | Jennisty Thomason                                                             |
| Elementary Principal                       | Heather Dunnam                                                                |
| Middle School Principal                    | Gracie Schlickeisen                                                           |
| High School Principal                      | Matt McCray                                                                   |
| Director of Special Populations & Programs | Lori Kinard                                                                   |
| Elementary Teachers                        | Shelley Lum, Kaycee Christian,<br>Amanda Chaney, Sara Wendler, Karen<br>Scott |
| Middle School Teachers                     | Samantha Freytag, Kelly Taisler,<br>Elizabeth Avalos                          |
| High School Teachers                       | Amber Coppin, Ashlee Tanguay                                                  |
| Paraprofessional                           | Randi Daniell-Alcozer                                                         |
| Specialized Staff                          | Cynthia Pajestka                                                              |
| Local Government Representative            | Sandra Dickey                                                                 |
| Parents                                    | Bobby Joe Motloch, Heidi Wiedmeier                                            |
| Community Members                          | Mary Hawes, Nissa Walker                                                      |
| Business Members                           | Stephanie Gacke, Lauren Patterson                                             |

### **District of Innovation Timeline (Original Timeline Through Renewal)**

|                   |                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| January 23, 2019  | The Board of Trustees voted to adopt the Resolution to Consider Designation as District of Innovation                                                         |
| February 13, 2019 | The board held a public hearing to consider whether the district should become a District of Innovation                                                       |
| February 13, 2019 | The Board appoints the Site-Based Decision Making Committee to develop a local District of Innovation Plan                                                    |
| February 20, 2019 | Site-Based Meeting to create District of Innovation plan                                                                                                      |
| February 27, 2019 | Site-Based Meeting to create District of Innovation plan                                                                                                      |
| March 6, 2019     | Site-Based Meeting to create District of Innovation plan                                                                                                      |
| March 6, 2019     | Final Draft posted onto the district website for public review and comment (30 days)                                                                          |
| April 4, 2019     | Site Site-Based Committee had a unanimous vote at public meeting to recommend District of Innovation Plan to Holland ISD Board of Trustees                    |
| April 5, 2019     | Notify TEA of proposed District of Innovation Plan                                                                                                            |
| April 10, 2019    | The Board of Trustees approved the District of Innovation Plan                                                                                                |
| May 10, 2022      | Site-Based Committee had a unanimous vote at public meeting to recommend an amendment to the District of Innovation Plan to the Holland ISD Board of Trustees |
| June 8, 2022      | The Board of Trustees will consider approving the amended District of Innovation Plan                                                                         |

### **Renewal Timeline**

|                   |                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| February 8, 2023  | The Board voted to begin the DOI renewal process and appointed the Site-Based Committee to create the revised DOI Plan |
| February 22, 2023 | Site-Based Committee Meeting to revise the DOI Plan                                                                    |
| February 27, 2023 | Final Draft posted on district website for public review and comment (30 days)                                         |
| March 29, 2023    | Site-Based Committee Meeting to discuss feedback and vote on the final revised DOI Plan                                |

|                 |                                                    |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| April 5, 2023   | Notify TEA of intention to renew                   |
| October 1, 2025 | Site-Based Committee approved plan with amendments |
| October 8, 2025 | The Board voted to approve amendments to DOI Plan  |

## Innovations

Holland ISD proposes flexibility and seeks an exemption in the following areas:

### 1. **First Day of Instruction** (TEC 25.0811)

- A. State law currently prohibits school districts from starting class before the fourth Monday in August
- B. Rationale for Exemption
  - More professional development opportunities during the school year for teachers
  - Balances grading periods for more equity in instruction of scope and sequence
  - Balance the amount of instructional time/days per semester.
  - Additional instructional days prior to required state assessments (E.O.C./S.T.A.A.R.)
  - Allow an option to start school with a shorter week, easing the transition back to school for all students
  - The calendar would be more aligned with college schedules, allowing students to enroll in summer courses that start in early June
- C. Proposed Innovation
  - The Holland ISD Site Based Committee will continue the current calendar recommendation process to meet the needs of the district.

### 2. **Teacher Certification** (TEC 21.003)(TEC 21.053)(TEC 21.057)

- A. TEC 21.003 and TEC 21.053 restrict the district's ability to hire educators outside the SBEC-approved certification fields, and TEC 21.057 requires written notice to parents if an uncertified teacher is assigned to a classroom for more than 30 consecutive instructional days.
- A. Rationale for Exemption

- In an effort to provide HISD students with educational opportunities that best serve our community, decisions pertaining to teacher certification will be handled locally.
- With the current teacher shortage, this exemption from teacher certification requirements will enable greater flexibility in staffing and will enrich applicant pools in specific areas of need.
- The law limits the district's ability to hire non-certified instructors for Career and Technical Education courses.
- Small school districts' schedules need flexibility in order to avoid the disruption of an instructional path.

#### C. Proposed Innovation

- The District will make every attempt to hire individuals with appropriate core content course certification for the position in question; however, where that is not reasonably possible, the District will have the flexibility to hire a certified individual who is knowledgeable in the area and equipped to effectively perform the duties of the position in question.
- The campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request for local certification that will allow an already certified teacher to teach where he/she is not certified. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials or life experience the teacher possesses that would qualify this individual to teach the proposed subject.
- An individual with experience in the content of an elective course could be eligible to teach a vocational skill or elective course through a local teaching certificate. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials or life experience the teacher possesses that would qualify this individual to teach the proposed subject. The superintendent, after consultation with the campus principal, will examine the candidate's professional work experience, formal training and education, relevant licensure, certification, or registration related to the subject matter he or she will be teaching.
- The district will establish local requirements such as years of experience, qualifications, and industry certifications.
- The teacher must complete classroom management training along with any other continuing education requirements prior to teaching in the classroom, and will be assigned a state-certified teacher as a mentor
- Teacher certification waiver requests, state permit applications, or other paperwork will not be submitted to the Texas Education Agency. The District will ensure that all individuals assigned to teach have the knowledge and resources necessary to be successful.

- The superintendent will approve or deny the request for local certification and notify the board at the next meeting if a teacher is teaching under local certification. Written notification of parents will be required.
- TEA DOI Restrictions Regarding Certification:

| Academic Year | DOI Restrictions                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2025-2026     | District maintains currently approved DOI plan which may include exemptions from 21.003                                                                                                         |
| 2026-2027     | District can no longer include K-5 reading and mathematics teachers in DOI plan exemptions from 21.003                                                                                          |
| 2027-2028     | District can no longer include all foundational subject teachers (i.e., reading/English language arts, math, science, and social studies) in any grade level in DOI plan exemptions from 21.003 |

Note, districts with the appropriate and allowable approved exemptions in their plans maintain certification flexibility for non-foundation subjects, allowing career and technical education (CTE) and other enrichment subject teachers to continue serving in assignments.

### 3. **Mentor Teachers** (TEC 21.458)

- A. The commissioner shall adopt rules necessary to administer this section, including rules concerning the duties and qualifications of a teacher who serves as a mentor and the number of classroom teachers that may be assigned to a mentor. The rules concerning qualifications require that to serve as a mentor a teacher must: complete a research-based mentor and induction training program approved by the commissioner; complete a mentor training program provided by the district; have at least three complete years of teaching experience with a superior record of assisting students, as a whole, in achieving improvement in student performance; and demonstrate interpersonal skills, instructional effectiveness, and leadership skills.
- B. Rationale for Exemption
  - Flexibility to determine the number of classroom teachers that may be assigned to a mentor, training requirements, and qualifications for mentors.
  - It is very important that mentors be effective classroom teachers who can support new teachers in their first years in the profession. Being exempt from this requirement would increase the pool of teachers from which the district could draw for our mentoring program.
- C. Proposed Intervention
  - The district is seeking exemption from this requirement and instead will use existing established mentor procedures.

#### **4. Transfer Students** (TEC 25.036)

- A. Texas law allows a district to accept students as transfers who are not eligible to enroll in the district. TEC 25.036 requires the school district to enroll a student as a transfer for a period of one school year. Holland ISD maintains a transfer policy under FDA (Local) requiring non-resident students wishing to transfer to file a transfer application each school year. Before approving a transfer request, the availability of space, availability of instructional staff, availability of programs and services, disciplinary records, work habits, and attendance records will be evaluated for each student. Transfer students are expected to follow the attendance requirements, rules, and regulations of the district
- B. Rationale for Exemption
  - On rare occasions, student behavior warrants in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, placement in a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP), or expulsion
  - The district's efforts to improve the attendance rate could be negatively impacted by transfer students with poor attendance
  - A transfer student's enrollment of one year could negatively impact campus culture due to behavior or attendance concerns
- C. Proposed Innovation
  - The district is seeking an exemption from the one-year commitment in accepting transfer applicants
  - Transfer students may have transfer status revoked by the superintendent at any time during the year if the student is assigned disciplinary consequences of in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, placement in DAEP, or expulsion
  - Students not meeting the state's attendance and/or truancy standard may also be subjected to immediate revocation of the transfer status

#### **5. Posting of Syllabi or Instructional Plan** (TEC 26.0062)

- A. Senate Bill 12 of the 89th Legislature requires Instructional plans or course syllabi for each class offered in the District for a semester to

be posted on the District's internet website.

B. Rationale for Exemption

- Teachers continuously develop and refine lesson plans to meet student learning needs.
- Parents retain full rights to review teaching materials, textbooks, and instructional aids upon request.
- Posting every plan online is redundant and shifts staff time away from instruction toward clerical tasks of collecting, formatting, and uploading.

C. Proposed Innovation

- The district is seeking exemption from this requirement and instead will continue to communicate syllabi and instructional plans as they always have.

## **6. Probationary Contracts** (TEC 21.102)

A. Texas law states that a probationary contract 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 with the district.

B. Rationale for Exemption

- Holland ISD believes one year is not always a sufficient amount of time to evaluate a teacher's effectiveness in the classroom and the appropriate fit for the campus and the district. Administrators make contract recommendations in the early spring each year, which is prior to some observations and summative conferences. Administrators will have the right to recommend renewing the probationary contract beyond the initial year.

C. Proposed Innovation

- The District seeks to apply a three-year probationary contract for all new contracted employees, regardless of prior years of experience.

## **7. Parent Conferences** (TEC 28.022(a))

A. Senate Bill 12 (89th Legislature) requires each parent to be provided at least two opportunities for in-person conferences with their child's teacher during each school year.

B. Rationale for Exemption

- Parents already receive frequent progress reports and can access

student grades daily through the Parent Portal.

- Teachers maintain consistent communication and provide conference opportunities as needed to support student success.
- Requiring another professional development day solely for mandated conferences is burdensome and unnecessary
- Parents can request a parent conference at any time throughout the school year

C. Proposed Innovation

- The district is seeking exemption from this requirement and instead will continue to provide parents with timely communication and access to conferences when needed/requested.

## **8. Grievance Policy (TEC § 26.011; TEC Chapter 26A)**

A. The Texas Education Code and the Texas Constitution require school boards to establish procedures for parents to file complaints if they believe their student's rights have been denied.

B. Rationale for Exemption

- Holland ISD will continue to follow its established grievance policy with clear procedures and timelines outlined in local Board policy.
- Policies ensure:
  - i. Thorough documentation at each step (forms, communications, investigations, findings, resolutions, corrective actions).
  - ii. Records are maintained at the district level for transparency, accountability, and compliance.
- The District is committed to:
  - i. Monitoring the legality and appropriateness of all decisions.
  - ii. Hearing and resolving complaints quickly and efficiently.
  - iii. Taking corrective action when necessary
- Timely filing of grievances is essential for the most effective resolution.

C. Proposed Innovation

- The district is seeking exemption from the new statewide grievance policy in order to maintain local control of grievance procedures and address concerns in an orderly, responsive, and efficient manner, and will continue to use its current grievance policy.

## **9. Local School Library Advisory Council (TEC § 33.025)**

- A. Current law requires the school district to establish a School Library Advisory Council at any campus where either 10% of parents or 50 parents (whichever is fewer) submit a written request for such a council. The council would then be tasked with reviewing library materials, providing input on the selection and removal of resources, making recommendations to ensure materials are age-appropriate and aligned with community values, reviewing all books and other materials objected to by any District parent, and advising on such objections.
- B. Rationale for Exemption
  - Holland ISD already has board-approved procedures for selecting, reviewing, and reconsidering library materials.
  - Processes are led by certified educators and staff in alignment with TEA guidance.
  - Parental access and involvement are already ensured with access to student library checkout records, formal challenge procedures for reconsideration of materials, and opportunities to bring concerns to teachers, administrators, or the Board through grievance processes and open forums.
- C. Proposed Innovation
  - Holland ISD seeks exemption from TEC §33.025, which mandates creation of a School Library Advisory Council (SLAC) upon petition and instead will continue using board-approved procedures.

## **10. Acquisition of Library Materials** (TEC § 33.026)

- A. Current law outlines specific procedures school districts must follow before acquiring library materials. The law requires that materials be reviewed and approved in advance by a certified school librarian and verified for compliance with age-appropriateness, educational suitability, and community standards. It mandates a multi-step vetting process, documentation of acquisition decisions, and the public posting of selected materials for 30 days before they are made available to students. It requires the Board of Trustees to approve every library book or other resource material acquired by or donated to the District.
- B. Rationale for Exemption
  - Current policies ensure transparency, appropriateness, and educational value and are fully compliant with Texas law and TEA guidance.
  - State-mandated process under §33.026 causes delays in providing

timely instructional/enrichment resources, creates bureaucratic barriers for library and professional staff, and adds an administrative burden that diverts time from instructional support

- Holland ISD supports transparency and parental engagement, but local safeguards already provide this.

C. Proposed Innovation

- Holland ISD seeks exemption from this requirement and instead will continue to use the established board-approved policy for acquiring library materials.

## **11. Parent Notification of Student's Checking Out Library Materials** (TEC 33.024)

A. EFB (LEGAL)/Senate Bill 13 from the 89th Legislature requires districts using learning management systems or online portals to provide parents with a record of their child's library checkouts, including title, author, genre, and return date.

B. Rationale for Exemption

- Daily reporting creates an undue burden, shifting staff time from instruction to clerical work.
- Holland ISD currently supports transparency by providing a report upon parent request, ensuring parents maintain full access to their child's library records.
- Library software companies may upgrade their learning management system services to provide real-time parent notification features. Once this occurs, the district will reevaluate this exemption with the DOI plan.

C. Proposed Innovation

- Holland ISD seeks exemption from this requirement and instead will continue to provide transparency and access as we currently do.

## **12. School Board Approval for All Library Materials** (TEC 33.026)

A. Senate Bill 13 (89th Legislature) requires all library materials and acquisitions to be publicly listed for 30 days before the school board can approve them.

B. Rationale for Exemption

- This mandate places an undue burden on trustees, requiring significant unpaid time to review every acquisition.

- Parents maintain full access and may challenge materials under Policy EFB.
  - Board and staff time is preserved for governance and instruction rather than clerical review.
- C. Holland ISD seeks exemption from the requirement that the Board must formally approve all library materials after the 30-day posting period and instead will continue to utilize its current processes for approving library materials.