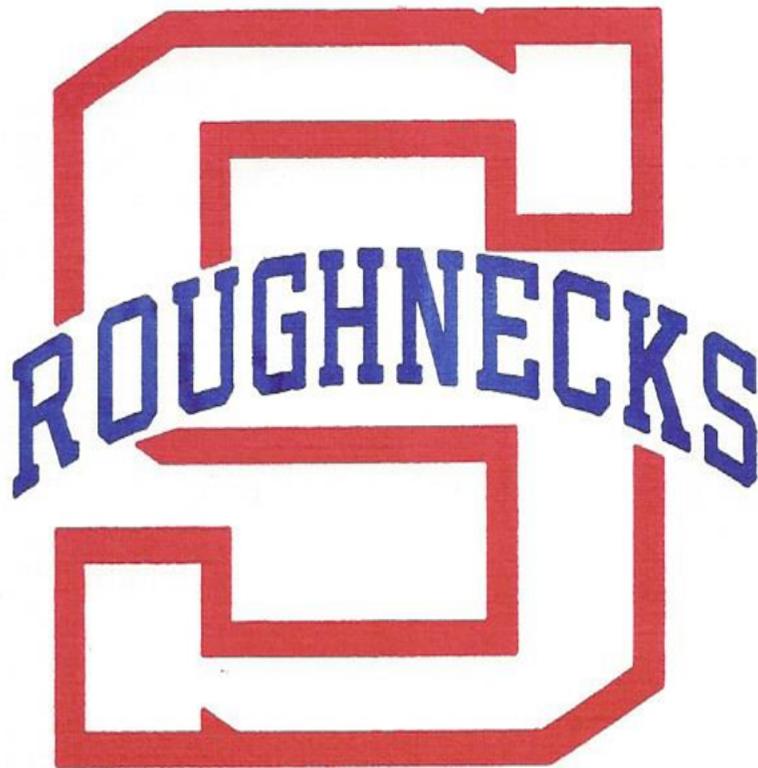


SUNDOWN ISD

DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLAN

2017-2022

2022-2027 - RENEWED



LOVE OTHERS...WORK HARD...EMBRACE EXCELLENCE

Sundown Independent School District

District of Innovation Plan

2017-2022

2022-2027 - *Renewed*

The 84th Texas Legislature passed House Bill 1842 in the spring of 2015, providing public school districts the opportunity to become Districts of Innovation. To qualify, an eligible school district must adopt a five-year innovation plan according to the Texas Education Code.

Sundown ISD is utilizing HB 1842, of the 84th Legislative Session, in order to have more local control in certain areas. HB 1842 allows a traditional public school to have some of the same local flexibility that public charter schools have always been allowed. We feel this is a great opportunity for our local district to tailor a plan based on the needs of our students and community.

Districts of Innovation may be exempt from state statutes to:

- Take greater local control as the decision makers over the educational and instructional model for students;
- Increase freedom and flexibility, with accountability, relative to state mandates that govern educational programming; and
- Increase empowerment and encourage innovative thinking.

This plan will be in effect for the 2022-2023 school year through the 2027-2028 school year. This plan may be amended at any time by the committee with approval of the Board of Trustees.

District of Innovation Planning Committee

2017-2022

<u>Member Name</u>	<u>District/Community Role</u>
Scott Marshall	Superintendent
Brent Evans	High School Principal
Eddie Carter	Middle School Principal
Jason Powell	Elementary Principal
Cam Buchanan	Social Studies Department Chair
Leah Chenault	Math Department Chair
Lisa Dalton	Science Department Chair
Elise Marshall	ELA Department Chair
Curtis Schrader	Community Member
Lacy McAdams	SISD Parent
Danny Randolph	SISD School Board Member

Sundown ISD District of Innovation Timeline:

- January 9, 2017** -Initial meeting with district leadership team to discuss District of Innovation (DOI) advantages and potential members of the DOI committee
- January 16, 2017** - Board of Trustees adopted resolution to initiate District of Innovation Plan
-Board of Trustees held public hearing regarding DOI
-Board of Trustees approved members of the DOI Committee
- January 19, 2017** -1st meeting of DOI Committee to discuss District of Innovation Plan
- January 25, 2017** -2nd meeting of DOI Committee to finalize District of Innovation Plan
- February 15, 2017** -District Site-Based Committee meeting
- February 16, 2017** -Board of Trustees held 2nd public hearing regarding DOI
- February 16, 2017** -Post DOI Plan on website for 30 days
- March 20, 2017** -Board notifies Texas Commissioner of Education of intention to vote on plan
- March 21, 2017** -Recommend final plan to Board of Trustees for approval
- March 22, 2017** -Board of Trustees formally notifies Texas Commissioner of Education of approved plan
- June 23, 2017** -Update all policy changes with TASB

Renewal:

- March 2, 2022** -1st review of DOI plan
- April 6, 2022** -2nd review of DOI plan / approved by District Site-Based Committee
- April 7, 2022** -Letter to the Commissioner of Education via email
- April 8, 2022** -Posted on website
- May 16, 2022** -Approved by the Board of Trustees

Sundown ISD Board of Trustees

2017-2022

<u>Member Name</u>	<u>Board Position</u>
Doug Precure	President
Joe Hinson	Vice-President
Delwin Britton	Secretary
Danny Randolph	Member
Loralee VanWettering	Member
Fernando Sanchez	Member
Wayne Haggerton	Member

2022-2027

<u>Member Name</u>	<u>Board Position</u>
Delwin Britton	President
Ricky King	Vice-President
Fernando Sanchez	Secretary
Patrick Davis	Member
Joe Don Elam	Member
Joe Hinson	Member
R.D. Motheral	Member

Sundown ISD DWDMC

(District Wide Decision Making Committee)

2017-2022

<u>Member Name</u>	<u>Member Category</u>
Cameron Buchanan	High School Teacher
Leah Chenault	High School Teacher
Paul Darden	High School Teacher – At Large Representative
Michael VanWettering	High School Teacher – At Large Representative
Stormy Conway	Middle School Teacher
Elise Marshall	Middle School Teacher
Michelle Carter	Elementary Teacher
Shelley Carter	Elementary Teacher
Stacey Buchanan	Elementary Teacher – At Large Representative
Kathy Palmer	Special Programs
Elizabeth Arellano	High School Student
Conal Buchanan	High School Student
Evalina Kenley	Auxiliary Staff
Danny Randolph	SISD School Board Member
Dorothy Richardson	Business Member
Curtis Schrader	Community Member
Ashley Bufe	Parent Representative – Elementary
Lisa Taggart	Parent Representative – Middle School
Lee Torrez	Parent Representative – High School
Scott Marshall	Superintendent
Brent Evans	High School Principal
Eddie Carter	Middle School Principal
Jason Powell	Elementary Principal

Sundown ISD DWDMC

(District Wide Decision Making Committee)

2022-2027

<u>Member Name</u>	<u>Member Category</u>
Cameron Buchanan	High School Teacher
Cindy Newsom	High School Teacher
Melissa Bratcher	High School Teacher – At Large Representative
Toni Garcia	Middle School Teacher
Brandon Ros	Middle School Teacher
Britni Bermea	Elementary Teacher
Kaylee Woolsey	Elementary Teacher
Abel Perez	Elementary Teacher – At Large Representative
Misty Ross	Special Programs
Alice Melendez	High School Student
Brooklyn Webb	High School Student
Becky Paiz	Auxiliary Staff
Joe Don Elam	SISD School Board Member
Tracy Jenkins	Business Member
Billy Hernandez	Community Member
Haley Serna	Parent Representative – Elementary
Ashlei Clark	Parent Representative – Middle School
Jorge Lopez	Parent Representative – High School
Brent Evans	Superintendent
Jeremy Griffith	High School Principal
Miguel Salazar	Middle School Principal
Jason Powell	Elementary Principal

Innovations

Sundown ISD, in conjunction with the District of Innovation Committee, proposes the following flexibilities with the Texas Education Code to provide the best educational opportunities for students at Sundown ISD.

School Start Date

(EB Legal) (Texas Education Code 25.0811)

Currently

A District may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August unless the district operates a year-round system. A District may not receive a waiver for the requirement.

SISD Proposed

The flexibility of a locally approved start date allows the district to determine, on an annual basis, what best meets the needs of the students and local community. The flexibility of this start date also offers the following opportunities:

- Balancing the number of semester days while still finishing the first semester before the holiday break in December.
- An early start date permits students an additional week of instruction prior to state assessments.
- Students participating in Dual Enrollment opportunities will work with balanced semesters, which align with our local colleges.
- This would allow an option to start semesters with a shorter week, easing the transition for students entering elementary, middle school, and high school.
- Creates flexibility for the district to pursue other calendar options best suited for our identified populations.

SISD Guidelines

The district will determine, on an annual basis, when each school year will begin.

Inter-District Transfers

(FDA LOCAL) (Texas Education Code 25.036)

Currently

Currently, under Texas Education Code 25.036, a district may choose to accept, as transfers, students who are not entitled to enroll in the district, but TEC 25.036, has been interpreted to require a transfer to be for a period of one school year.

SISD Proposed

Sundown ISD maintains a transfer policy under FDA (Local) requiring nonresident students wishing to transfer to file a transfer application each school year. In approving transfer requests, the availability of space and instructional staff, availability of programs and services, the student's disciplinary history records, work habits, and attendance records are also evaluated. Transfer students are expected to follow the attendance requirements, rules, and regulations of the district. TEC 25.036 has been interpreted to establish the acceptance of a transfer as a one-year commitment by the district. The district is seeking to eliminate the provision of a one-year commitment in accepting transfer applicants. On rare occasions, student behavior warrants suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion. In addition, student attendance may fall below the TEA truancy standard. In these rare cases, and following reasonable corrective measures, Sundown ISD seeks exemption from the one-year transfer commitment.

SISD Guidelines

Nonresident students who have been accepted as inter-district transfer students may have such transfer status revoked by the superintendent at any time during the year if the student is assigned discipline consequences of suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion. In addition, students not meeting the State's 90% attendance standard may also be subject to immediate revocation of the transfer status.

Teacher Certification

(DK LEGAL, LOCAL) (Texas Education Code 21.003)

Currently

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 the Texas Education Agency. TEA then approves or denies this request. In certain circumstances, a district can use a local one-year permit.

SISD Proposed

In order to best serve Sundown ISD students, decisions on certification will be handled locally. Based on local need, this exemption from teacher certification requirements will enable greater flexibility in staffing and will enrich applicant pools in specific areas of need. The district's exemption from TEC 21.003 would allow the district to consider part-time professionals to teach courses, allow industry expert professionals to transition into the teaching profession in Career and Technology, and also assist in staffing high need STEM and dual credit course offerings. Out-of-state certified teachers could be considered for positions upon a local review of experience, education, and credentials. Often there are experienced certified teachers in our district that could teach a course outside of their certification area due to their education, background, and/or experience. Local decisions outside of state certification requirements would allow innovation and flexibility in scheduling to meet student needs.

SISD Guidelines

The campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request to allow a certified teacher to teach a subject and/or grade level out of their field. The principal must specify the reason for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses qualifying this individual to teach the subject.

An individual with experience in a Career and Technology field may be eligible to teach a vocational skill or course. An individual may hold a teaching certification in another state for Core areas or Career and Technology. An individual may have background, experience, skills, or work related/industry experience to work full time or part time in a designated area. The principal will submit a request to the superintendent for local certification. The principal must specify the reason for the request and document what credentials the individual possesses qualifying this individual to teach the subject.

The superintendent will approve or deny requests for local certification.

Bank Depository Contract

(TEC 45.205, TEC 45.206)

Currently

The District must renew its depository contract every two years. The two-year contract term begins and ends in odd-numbered years. 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.

SISD Proposed

Sundown ISD is seeking 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.

SISD Guidelines

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 School Health Advisory Council and Health Education Instruction

(TEC 28.004) (FFA Local)

Currently

TEC 28.004 of the Education Code requires that the SHAC meet four times annually.

Proposed

In a small district, the same staff members are required to sit on several different committees thus limiting their ability to effectively serve on those that meet at the same time, or require several meetings throughout the year. Additionally, the members of the SHAC will have a much more intimate relationship with the needs and goals of this committee due to the small number of students it serves, thus not requiring four meetings throughout the year to update its plan and vision. While Sundown ISD believes the health and welfare of all students is of the utmost importance, the district feels that this proposed exemption allows the SHAC to meet the needs of the district's students, as well as the values that are to be promoted within the community without having to meet four times a year. The district shall also be exempt from other meeting requirements such as recording and posting the recordings and/or minutes of the meetings.

SISD Guidelines

Sundown ISD proposes to meet at least once a year, with other meetings scheduled as needed. The SHAC will make an annual report to the Board each spring.

Certified Teachers in DAEP (Discipline Alternative Education Program)

(TEC 37.008 (a)(7))

Currently

TEC 37.008(a)(7) requires that the DAEP employ only certified teachers.

Proposed

Sundown ISD historically has had a limited number of students assigned to DAEP. Currently, classroom teachers provide work for any student they have in DAEP. DAEP is located on campus away from the other students; however, the students are close enough that classroom teachers regularly check on their students and provide assistance as is needed.

SISD Guidelines

Sundown ISD will look to employ certified substitutes for the DAEP; however, when one is unavailable, campus administrators will ensure the staff of the DAEP has the support of students' classroom teachers to properly supervise the students assigned to the program.

Number of College Days Attendance Rule

TEC 25.087 (b-2)) (FEC Legal)

Currently

State law allows a school district to excuse a student from attending school to visit an institution of higher education accredited by a generally recognized accrediting organization during the student's junior and senior years of high school for the purpose of determining the student's interest in attending the institution of higher education, provided that: (1) the district may not excuse for this purpose more than two days during the student's junior year and two days during

the student's senior year; and (2) the district adopts: (A) a policy to determine when an absence will be excused for this purpose; and (B) a procedure to verify the student's visit at the institution of higher education.

SISD Proposal

Sundown ISD is a rural school district and limiting students to 2 days does not allow for students to travel round trip as well as visit a campus when the campus is over 350+ miles away.

SISD Guidelines

Sundown ISD will waive the 2-day limit per year and adopt a policy allowing seniors and juniors to 3 days per year for campus visits.