



# **Victoria Independent School District**

Administration Report  
December 2019

## **Purpose Statement:**

- Keep the Board and stakeholders apprised and connected to the work of administration
- Radical Transparency
- From the Boardroom to the Classroom
- Keep us open and learning together
- Continuous Improvement

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### **2. Office of Administration - Page 10**

- Central Supply & Purchasing
- Child Nutrition
- Maintenance
- Student Services
- Transportation

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- Communications
- Technology

## **CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

**2020-2021 CALENDAR TASK FORCE** – A Task Force was developed to create options for the 2020-2021 school year. The 2020-2021 Calendar Task Force meeting occurred on November 13, 2019. VISD District Education Committee Members were invited to participate along with Campus Principals. A representative from elementary, middle and high school participated in the meeting to develop a calendar that meets the needs of students and staff in VISD.

Some important information for consideration came from HB 3 requiring an option stating school districts wishing to participate in the Extended School Year resources available must have a calendar that maximizes the use of 180 days. The 75,600 minutes standard still applies, and TEA also requires a calendar with 180 days. There is still more to learn about this new legislative mandate as we pursue the development of next year's calendar.

The Calendar Task Force has put forward two calendars (Calendar A and Calendar B). The first day of school on calendar A is August 12, 2020 with school ending with an early release day on May 27, 2021. Calendar A also provides a time off for full week at Thanksgiving, two weeks at Christmas, a week for Spring Break, and holidays for students and teachers on Labor Day, Veteran's Day, MLK Day, President's Day, Good Friday and everyone is out before Memorial Day. The first day of school on calendar B is August 19, 2020 with school ending with an early release on May 28, 2021. Calendar B also provides time off on three days at Thanksgiving, two weeks at Christmas, a week for Spring Break, and holidays for students and teachers on Labor Day, Veteran's Day, MLK Day, Good Friday and everyone is out before Memorial Day.

Many thanks to the Calendar Task Force members who helped to develop these calendars. Given the parameters and state mandates, it is quite a challenge and the task force worked diligently to bring forward two great options that allow for school to end before Memorial Day.

VISD Administration has asked that District Education Committee members along with Campus principals and Department Leaders review these calendars with campus staff during December. Campuses and staff will provide feedback on their preference before the Christmas break to Dr. Carroll. Dr. Carroll will bring the preferred calendar back for Cabinet level review in early January and a recommendation will be brought forward to the Board of Trustees at the January 16, 2020 Board Meeting.

**VISD COURSE CHANGES** – All curriculum decisions, including but not limited to, the elimination or addition of programs and courses and extensive content alteration shall be subject to Board approval. Since the curriculum is a system decision, curriculum proposals from employees shall be presented first to central administration. If a proposal is accepted, it shall then be presented to the Board. EH(LOCAL)  
As VISD Administration prepares for the process of course selection for our secondary students, several changes are being recommended as follows:

1. High School Additions
  - a) Algebraic Reasoning - Algebraic Reasoning builds on what students have learned in Algebra 1 and introduces the functions found in Algebra 2. In Algebraic reasoning, students will broaden their knowledge of functions and relationships (linear, quadratic, square root, rational, cube root, exponential, absolute value, and logarithmic). This course better serves as a bridge for

those students who need to take Algebra 2 their senior year. Previously, VISD offered Advanced Quantitative Reasoning (AQR) as this bridge to Algebra 2.

Early this semester, math teachers and instructional coaches reviewed our high school math offerings and course sequence. The standards for AQR were reviewed for course alignment and preparing students for post-secondary success. It was determined that the standards for Algebraic Reasoning (TEA added course in 2015-16) better serve as a bridge for students who need to take Algebra 2 their senior year. Since Algebra 2 is the foundation for TSI and future college math courses, it will better prepare the students for success after high school. Prior to making this course change, high schools comparable in size and demographics were contacted to discuss their math offering and course sequence. These schools also made the change from AQR to Algebraic Reasoning to better meet the needs of their students.

b) Dual Enrollment through OnRamps University of Texas to include:

- Statistics
- English III
- US History
- Chemistry
- Arts and Entertainment Technologies

VISD Administration is opening the opportunity of Dual Enrollment in addition to Dual Credit and Advanced Placement Courses, in hopes of targeting a population that may not be inclined to try this level of coursework. While there are many benefits to pursuing dual enrollment courses, major points to consider are: students are not required to be TSI-complete, there are no additional fees for textbooks, and students may opt out of the college credit on their transcript. Dual enrollment is a low-risk option for students who have been afraid to challenge themselves with advanced college courses.

c) Principles of Business, Marketing and Finance—We have previously offered this course up to the 2019-2020 school year. In reviewing the Programs of Study by TEA, our local labor market data and discussing the course with industry and post-secondary advisors, this course will satisfy the need as a foundational course for our students who are pursuing opportunities in the business cluster.

d) Principles of Education and Training-- We have previously offered this course. In reviewing the Programs of Study by TEA, our local labor market data and discussing the course with industry and post-secondary advisors, this course will satisfy the need for a foundational course for our students who are pursuing opportunities in the teaching field. This course will also be included in our planned Education and Training P-TECH we intend to begin in the 2021-2022 school year.

2. High School Eliminations

- a) General Employability Skills—General Employability Skills is not included in the Program of Study options by TEA. These skills are embedded in the TEKS for every CTE course.
- b) Health Informatics—This course did not make in the previous two years.
- c) Business Information Management II--Business Information Management II is not included in the Program of Study options by TEA.
- d) Advanced Quantitative Reasoning - (see Algebraic Reasoning above)

3. Middle School Additions
  - a) Fundamentals of Computer Science— The Fundamental of Computer Science course will begin a pathway in middle school to increase participation in our Information Technology pathway.
4. Programs of Study to replace Coherent Sequence of Courses.

Starting in the 2020-2021 school year, districts must meet the guidelines established by TEA for the new Programs of Study which will allow Texas to meet the federal program approval requirements within the Strengthening of CTE for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act (Perkins V). As a result, we have made some changes to our sequences of CTE courses we previously offered to meet the Program of Study requirement. Perkins V describes a program of study as a coordinated, non-duplicative sequence of academic and technical content at the secondary and postsecondary level that incorporates challenging state academic standards; addresses academic, technical and employability skills; aligns with the needs of industries in the state, region, and/or local economy; progresses in specificity, beginning with all aspects of industry and leading to more occupation specific instruction; has multiple entry and exit points that incorporate credentialing; and culminates in the attainment of a recognized postsecondary credential.

In VISD, we reviewed the Program of Study options available from TEA, and with the assistance of our teachers and Advisory Board members, aligned the available options with our current offerings.

One notable change to the Programs of Studies we will offer is in the Information Technology cluster. Starting in the 2018-2019 school year Computer Science courses were moved under the CTE umbrella, which meant we had several classes that essentially served the same function, which is to teach programming skills. For example, we offered Computer Programming as part of our CTE Coherent Sequence, Video Game Design, and we offered Computer Science I as part of our Computer Science strand. Both courses essentially taught the same skills. For 2020-2021, we have combined these two strands into one Program of Study for our students.

*VISD is asking the Board of Trustees to approve the addition of eight courses at the high school level, one course at the middle school level, and the elimination of four courses at the high school level.*

### **ADVANCED ACADEMICS**

With the implementation of the new Gifted and Talented State Plan, we screened all Kindergarten students in VISD for giftedness in October. Of the 989 kindergarten students that were screened, 267 will move on to be tested. To develop a local norm, we are testing all 1034 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students for giftedness. This will help us to insure the district's GT population is proportional to the district's total population, including subgroups and to ensure equity and access within the GT program. We will start testing our 2<sup>nd</sup> graders December 13<sup>th</sup> with the first test. The rest of the testing will be completed the end of January and early February. At this time, we will also test our 443 referrals and the kindergarten students that have moved forward.

In October, we tested 325 seniors for the SAT (free) as well as 900 students for the PSAT NMSQT. We tested 1400 students for the PSAT 8/9 amongst our secondary campuses. We are offering the ACT on February 25<sup>th</sup> and the SAT again on March 4<sup>th</sup>. Juniors and Seniors receive one of these three college entrance exams (October SAT, February ACT or March SAT) free to them per HB3.

## ASSESSMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY

- December EOCs – End of Course (EOC) assessments will be administered from December 10-13, 2019 at all VISD high school campuses. Results are scheduled to be posted to the parent portal on January 20, 2020.
- TEA Readability Study - Below please find the Moak, Casey published article dated 12/3/19 regarding TEA's STAAR assessments' readability study, as well as, the link to the study.

*"Late Monday, TEA released Part 1 of the [STAAR Readability Study](#) that was initiated as a result of HB 3 legislation. This study was conducted by The Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk at the University of Texas at Austin. This study was divided into 3 parts:*

- *Content Alignment,*
- *Item Readability, and*
- *Passage Readability*

**Text-Analysis Tool.** *For both Item Readability and Passage Readability, the text was processed through Coh-Metrix, a text-analysis tool that provides many indices of text features. Three of the indices were used - one to measure word & sentence length and difficulty, another to measure syntax, and a third to measure vocabulary load (narrativity). A passage was deemed "readable" if at least two of the three indices fell within or below the grade level band.*

**Content Alignment.** *All exams in grades 3-8 for all subject areas (Reading, Writing, Math, Science, and Social Studies) were reviewed to ensure that the tests were aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). This task was subdivided into 2 different subtasks. In the first subtask, each item was reviewed to see if the TEKS coded for the item matched the content of the item. The results were that the "overwhelming majority of items were rated as aligned to the precoded content standards". The alignment ranged from 100% alignment in Reading to 93.18% alignment in Social Studies. In the second subtask, each item was reviewed to see if it met a student expectation either from the tested grade or any grade below. In this review, 100% of all items were deemed to be aligned to grade-level TEKS (or below), including those items where the precoded content standard did not match the actual item.*

**Item Readability.** *The study notes that existing research on readability pertains primarily to passages of text. Because of this, they used several different methodologies to determine if they could achieve reliable results. However, when they compared the results from each methodology, the results varied substantially. Therefore, the study could draw no conclusions regarding the readability of test items. The researchers emphasized that the task was to analyze the readability of the items, not the difficulty of the items.*

**Passage Readability.** *The researchers concluded that for passage readability, "86% of the passages analyzed met the criterion for readability as defined" in the study. That initial conclusion used the Coh-Metrix ELA norms for narrativity because the passages were from the STAAR Reading and Writing tests. However, the researchers felt that many of the passages were classified as informational texts, which would more closely align to the Coh-Metrix social studies norms. When the Social studies norm was used for narrativity, the number increased from 86% to 97%.*

*The entire document is attached for subscribers to review. Part Two of this study is due to be released in February of 2020.”*

**COUNSELING** – VISD Secondary Counselors and Principals have been meeting with Curriculum Administration to review course offerings and update the Course Selection Guide with appropriate courses based on past and current legislative guidelines and industry and workforce needs related to high wage and high demand fields of study. Counselors have received training and are working on Master Schedule planning using the Cardonex software to support a streamlined process for ensuring that class sizes are balanced and appropriate number of seats are available to support student request that meets the needs of their graduation plan.

Beginning in January, high school counselors will use a common Powerpoint presentation to provide information to students and families on the 2020-2021 course selection process. Families will be able to view the presentation from the VISD website as well as on the East and West campus pages. Counselors have worked to ensure consistency between the two high school campuses in this arena so that all students can make the best-informed decision about their pathway and can benefit from the many opportunities VISD offers.

The GenTX luncheon was held on November 22, 2019 with record number of student participants (80) and record number of business and industry leaders (36). Students heard from guest speakers including UHV President, Dr. Bob Glenn, Community Member, Emett Alvarez, VC Dean of Student Services, Dr. Edrel Stoneham. Additionally, a panel of University students and community leaders provided feedback to a question and answer session regarding experience with college life and pursuit.

## **ELEMENTARY CIA**

**FEDERAL PROGRAMS** – Over the last couple of months you have learned the history of how the Parents as Teachers (P.A.T.) grant came into V.I.S.D., the P.A.T. National Center’s 35-year history of community support, along with their vision, mission, core values and approach. Hopefully, you have clicked the links to the National Center, the P.A.T. brochure and the V.I.S.D. P.A.T. Facebook page. If you have not, you can go back to the October and November Administration Reports to find this information.

This month will conclude the 3-part rollout of the V.I.S.D. P.A.T. program and we hope it will turn out to be the “*first step*” toward strengthening and deepening our commitment to students and their families BEFORE they arrive upon our schoolhouse doors!

Quotes from P.A.T. parents:

\*The Parents as Teachers program has helped me understand my child’s development better and how I can help her at home. Our home visitor has made the activities fun and my child is really learning from them.

\*My child has learned great language skills to help her be school ready. She started in Head Start and I know she is doing well because of the PAT program and learning basic skills.

\*I am a mother of four. I have 3 grown children and am currently in the process of adopting a two year old who has been in the PAT program for a little over a year. When she started I knew she had some

disabilities and Kari did the screenings and helped us with the referral to ECI. Kari has helped me understand how to help her at home. She has come a long way.

Please take 4 minutes to view the video link below to understand the at-risk situations children are facing every day. [Change the First Five Years and You Change Everything](#). Thank you for watching! Now it is your turn...THINK...

How can we empower our children, our families and our communities? *IT'S TIME!*

## **SECONDARY CIA**

### **Enrichment/Remediation Day**

Victoria West High School held a SAT CAMP for our pre-AP geometry students during our Enrichment/Remediation Day on November 22<sup>nd</sup>. Over 100 students participated by taking the calculator and non-calculator math portions of the College Board's SAT Practice Exam. After the students completed the exam, the exams were scored and commonly missed questions were reviewed. After the conclusion of the camp, math teachers analyzed the data and adjusted in lesson plans that will be used in the spring semester. Cheryl Clark, Patricia Cruz, Laura Grunewald and Cody McDonald organized the camp and provided small group instruction.

### **Field Trip – Holocaust Museum**

Our high school students taking US History this school year will have the opportunity to attend a field trip to the Holocaust Museum due to the generous contributions from Mr. & Mrs. Jay Lack. Students will have an opportunity to study the Holocaust, contemporary genocides and related topics in detail and from a variety of perspectives. This experience will enhance what our students learn about World War II in their US History course.

Approximately 720 students will be invited to attend this field trip during the months of February and March. Due to the large numbers, we have scheduled six trips to the museum. Students will depart from their home campus at 6:30 a.m. and will be back in time for students who need transportation to catch their 3:00 p.m. bus home. Our donors have graciously provided charter buses and lunch for our students attending the field trip.

### **Instructional Rounds**

This year we have changed the focus of middle school Instructional Rounds. In the past, participants of the process have consisted of classroom teachers, instructional coaches, and administrators. With the goal of ensuring that we have a shared understanding of what high-quality instruction looks like, we changed our audience in Instructional Rounds to zero-year (new to the profession) teachers and their mentors.

Each middle school will host Instructional Rounds one time during the months of September – January. During each visit, the day begins with a re-teach of Sean Cain's five fundamentals of effective instruction. One of the fundamentals is the focus for the observations that the new teachers and mentors will be conducting that day. Teachers are provided an observation form to complete during observations that serve as the debrief at the end of the day. Along with the five fundamentals, teachers

receive lessons from our Curriculum Department on incorporating instructional technology and classroom management techniques.

We have completed three of the four Instructional Rounds visits and have already seen the benefits of this new process. New teachers are seeing exemplar lessons emphasizing the five fundamentals and are using this to improve their own instruction. They are also observing “OOs” (other observations) such as strong classroom management techniques, teacher-student relationships, organizational ideas, managing technology and much more. This new process also gives dedicated time for mentors to meet with mentees.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

In an effort to support quality instruction and inclusion services across all special education settings, the Special Education Department has worked to create two distinct professional development opportunities in January. Attached to your administration report please find our training grid which indicates the training option for the 360 special education staff across the district.

In special education, we are tasked with all areas of a student’s growth and development including academics, but also independent living, functional communication, rec and leisure, post-secondary planning, motor development and social emotional learning. Recently the department held our 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Winter Wonderland event. The event provides an opportunity for a traditional holiday experience that meets our students at their level of need and includes opportunities to engage with individual Speech, Occupational and Physical therapy staff. Thank you to the board members, community members and VISD staff that were able to come out and/or support our Special Education Winter Wonderland on December 6<sup>th</sup>. We also hope to see you at our upcoming Spring events including: Young Athletes Day, An Extra Special Stock Show, Special Olympics Track Meet and our Fishing with Friends event.

## **OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATION**

The [local policies from Update 114 are hyperlinked for your review](#). The Policy Committee met, to review TASB Policy Update 114, on Tuesday, December 10<sup>th</sup> in Board Room #2 at 4:30 pm.

Campus Safety Audits are required every three years by Texas Education Code Chapter 37. 2020 requires another Safety Audit in the three-year cycle. The audit must include all facilities and campuses in the district. The VISD Emergency Management Working Group selected an audit tool for use district wide. On November 14, 2019, all campus administrators designated to conduct the safety audit for their respective campuses were provided an overview of the Audit Tool and Audit Schedule. Upon completion of the Safety Audit, results will be compiled and provided to the VISD Safety and Security Committee for review and then submitted to the Texas School Safety Center in August.

## **CENTRAL SUPPLY AND PURCHASING**

- The Central Supply Warehouse will be closed December 20, 2019 for inventory through the holiday break and will reopen on January 6, 2020.
- Awaiting access to student transcripts from Parchment that are being scanned. (Stroman & Profit)
- Sales for the month of November totaled **\$56,244.73** for the Warehouse and Print Shop, while December sales are still accruing.
- Continue collaboration with Dr. Bonewald to prepare the RFP for a 457(b) Deferred Compensation Voluntary Retirement Plan for the December Board Meeting.
- Advertising and opening the Instructional Technology RFP for presentation at the January board meeting.
- Scheduling the recycle pick up of 30 pallets of outdated/ obsolete technology equipment.

## **CHILD NUTRITION**

- Dietitian intern Catherine Ibanez will be finishing her rotation with us in December. A new intern will be here in March. Thank you Dana Bigham; Child Nutrition Director for supporting interns.
- 3,598 guests and 8,208 students were served Thanksgiving meals. That is a grand total of 11,806 lunches! It could not have happened without the volunteers for which we are immensely grateful.

## **MAINTENANCE**

- Repair the Dectron Compressor at the Aquatics Center
- Continue working on the Stroman Cafeteria HVAC (piping, remove and replace fan coils)
- Stroman back gym-repair expansion walls and check deck material
- Stroman field house-replace 2 mechanical room doors and one training room door
- Administration Building-drywall storage area for Curriculum Department
- Continue disinfectant Clorox 360 rotation for all campuses
- Transportation Department-replace the staff exit doors
- Liberty Building A-continue caulking windows
- Liberty Building A-continue pressure washing exterior
- Liberty Building A-replace worn out window panels
- Liberty Field House-replace entry doors
- Report to City of Victoria on repairs made to adjust meters.

- Deleon Elementary-remove and replace Basketball back boards and goals
- Insurance Inspections on equipment failure on the following 5 Campuses:  
Victoria ISD - Aquatic Center  
Victoria East High School  
Liberty Academy  
Stroman Middle School  
Torres Elementary School
- Student Services-install flooring
- Mission Valley Elementary-deliver and install 10 bookshelves
- Paint classrooms and offices at Rowland Elementary and Shields Elementary
- Howell Parking lot-repair potholes
- Transportation-repair potholes

**STUDENT SERVICES**

***Student Enrollment:***

***Student Enrollment (budgeted ADA enrollment = 12,900 students)***

	<b>AS OF 12.2.19</b>	<b>SAME TIME LAST YEAR (12/3/2018)</b>	<b>DIFFERENCE</b>
ELEMENTARY	<b>6725</b>	<b>6934</b>	<b>-209</b>
MIDDLE SCHOOL	<b>3218</b>	<b>3164</b>	<b>+54</b>
<u>HIGH SCHOOL</u>	<u><b>3829</b></u>	<u><b>3884</b></u>	<u><b>-55</b></u>
<b>DISTRICT</b>	<b>13,772</b>	<b>13,982</b>	<b>-210</b>

***Student Attendance Rate from 8.15.19 thru 12.6.19 = 95%***

***(VISD's 2019-20 Attendance Goal is 95%)***

**TRANSPORTATION**

- December 6, 2019 – Transport special needs students to the Conference Center for Winter Wonderland
- December 20, 2019 – CPI staff development for bus drivers
- The Transportation Department will provide transportation for 87 athletics events, 50 extra-curricular trips transporting 2,058 students, 13 special needs field trips transporting 344 special needs students.

## **FINANCE**

### **Gifts and Donations:**

The total gifts and donations for November 2019 is \$25,426. The total gifts and donations for fiscal year 2020 is \$58,878.53.

**School FIRST:** On October 31<sup>st</sup>, we received our Final 2018–2019 School Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST) rating. Currently, the District has a rating of “Above Standard”, scoring 80 points out of a possible 100 points on the financial accountability worksheet. The Final 2018–2019 School FIRST ratings report will be presented at the December 2019 meeting.

**Critical Indicators:** Criteria #1 through #4 are the critical indicators. Any “NO” response in this category is a signal indicator of fiscal distress. These four criteria revolve around the audit report and the district’s payment of debt. The annual financial report must be submitted on time and receive a “clean” opinion from the auditors. Also, the district must be in compliance with debt payments. For the 2017-2018 fiscal year, Victoria ISD received all “YES” responses to the critical indicators.

**Solvency Indicators:** Criteria #6 through #12 address solvency and administrative cost patterns. For the 2017-18 year, the District’s number of days of cash on hand was 39.9493 (This is a 16.07% improvement from last year!). The District was able to cover their short-term debt and long-term debt and our required debt service (Great news - our assets to liability ratios for both indicators 7 & 8 have decreased nearly 4%). The District’s revenues did not exceed the expenses and based on our number of days of cash on hand we did not receive the maximum points. Our administrative cost ratio was below that of the State standard of 8.55% at 7.19%.

**Financial Competence Indicators:** Criteria #13 through #15 are concerned with financial competency. The District’s PEIMS data did not have more than a 3% variance when compared to our annual financial report. Also, the internal controls must be free of any instances of material weaknesses over financial reporting and compliance for local, state or federal funds. The external auditor did not report any instances of material weaknesses in the items mentioned above. The District did not receive an adjusted repayment schedule for more than one year for an over allocation of Foundation School Program funds as a result of a financial hardship.

**2019 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report:** Bumgardner, Morrison & Co., LLP is working diligently to complete our 2019 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. Our audit exit meeting will be January 10, 2020. The CAFR will be presented at the January 16, 2020 Board Meeting.

**Contracted Services:** Several of our district leadership team members recently attended a Texas Association of School Business Officials (TASBO) training held at the Region III ESC focused on supporting school districts in complying with federal and state laws regarding the purchasing of goods and services. The training was excellent and affirmed many of our current practices while simultaneously creating a dialogue about how our leadership team can enhance our training of current and new staff involved in the purchasing of goods and services. We have begun to meet with a core group who are charged with building upon our current processes by developing a VISD Purchasing Training Manual. We are fortunate to have received excellent resources as a part of the TASBO training and look forward to streamlining this process and enhancing our internal training processes for our staff.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES**

**Early Resignation Incentive:** As part of our work with Systems of Great Schools we are exploring a strategy that will allow us to act more swiftly and strategically in filling our staffing needs for teachers. By offering an early resignation incentive, we would be able to encourage those teachers who already know they are retiring or are leaving the district at the end of the school year to inform us earlier than they normally would. This allows us to be much more responsive to overall campus planning, and much more aggressive and targeted in our recruiting efforts. We are contemplating an offer of \$500 as a stipend to those who notify the district that they are leaving prior to February 1<sup>st</sup>, and a \$250 stipend to those who notify us by February 29<sup>th</sup>. This decision has not been finalized. Once we come to a decision, we will work to quickly inform our teaching staff.

**On-Boarding:** A change to our on-boarding process has begun this month. In the past, new professional employees would report to their campus on their first day of work. This is a logical place for them to start, however complications would arise. These complications have presented obstacles to having a new employee up and ready when they first report to their new job location. Moving forward, professional employees will report to the HR office on their first day. This will allow us to work with technology and benefits to get new employees on-boarding process mostly completed prior to sending them to campuses. As this process becomes more fluid, we will expand to all employees moving forward.

**Salary Study/Review:** The HR office along with Payroll is working together to provide the data needed for a Salary Study being performed by TASB. This process is necessary periodically to provide several key points of data in order to allow us to remain in alignment with our practices as it pertains to employee salaries. This study will help us to determine where we stand in all categories of pay. This information helps the district in several areas. Primarily, we are hoping to provide information that allows us to set a budget that is fiscally responsible while allowing us to continue to set our pay categories at levels that allow us to be competitive with other districts and industries that we compete with for employees. Our data will be submitted prior to Christmas break, and the study results should be back in April.

**Benefits: 457(b) Plan:** In an effort to expand the options available to our staff members interested in supplementing their future TRS retirement income, we have been working toward offering a 457(b) plan.

We have reviewed proposals from providers who responded to our Request for Proposals (RFP) and heard presentations from several of the companies who provided proposals. We are planning to bring a recommendation forward to the Board at the regularly scheduled December Board meeting. The 457(b) plan should be available to our employees to utilize by February of 2020.

### Key information about 457(b) Plans

- 457 plans are IRS-sanctioned, tax-advantaged employee retirement plans.
- They are offered by state, local government and some nonprofit employers.
- Participants are allowed to contribute up to 100% of their salary, provided their contributions do not exceed the applicable dollar limit (currently \$19,000) for the year.
- 457(b) plans are available both pre-tax and as Roth (post-tax) options.

Once a partner is formally approved by the Board, our HR and Finance Departments will begin working with the partner to formalize the plan documents and to finalize a communication strategy to educate our staff about this new offering.

**Potential Alternative Health Insurance Option:** We are continuing to gather information about the steps our District would need to take to offer an alternative health insurance plan option in addition to TRS ActiveCare for the 2020-2021 school year. Two school districts began offering an alternative medical plan this school year (El Paso ISD and Raymondville ISD). These districts utilized language in their District of Innovation (DOI) plans to provide this opportunity. In order to ultimately offer an alternative health insurance plan alongside the TRS ActiveCare plan, we would need to amend our current DOI plan. While attending a recent Region III training, we received updates on the process. We have already taken the initial step to request our District's medical claims experience from TRS. This is a necessary first step to determine whether an alternative self-funded or fully-funded medical insurance plan would provide a better cost/benefit value to our staff than the current plan provided by TRS ActiveCare.

**VISD and SafeSchools by Vector Solutions:** In September Thirty-eight (38) members of the Curriculum, Instruction and Accountability Professional Learning Community (CIA PLC) were assigned nine (9) SafeSchools training courses online to participate in a trial-run of the system.

**The nine (9) courses included:** Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Prevention, Child Abuse: Mandatory Reporting, General Ethics in the Workplace, HIPAA Overview, Health Emergencies: Diabetes Awareness, Health Emergencies: Life Threatening Allergies, Sexual Harassment: Staff-to-Staff, Sexual Harassment: Student Issues & Response. The CIA PLC members had a completion due date of November 15, 2019 for all nine (9) courses. One member completed all courses by October 16, 2019 and one other member completed all nine (9) courses by November 4th. A total of seventeen members completed all courses by the completion date. Five (5) members of the team completed one (1) to six (6) courses.

Some of the feedback received by HR regarding this new online training stated that the content is presented in a very clear and understandable format. The information is pertinent, up-to-date and easy to follow. Participants liked the way the information for each course is presented in sections.

SafeSchools is a leading provider of award-winning safety and compliance solutions that helps create safe and more inclusive schools. VISD will be gradually transitioning into this system to keep track of all state statutory professional development/training. All VISD employees will have access to high quality courses and important school safety topics by leading experts on their computers on campus for a more personalized training experience.

**Paraprofessionals and "Project PARA":**

Paraprofessionals performing instructional duties on a Title I, Part A Schoolwide served campus, or those that have at least part of their salary paid for by Title I, Part A on a Targeted Assistance campus, are required to meet the Paraprofessional Highly Qualified standard. Highly Qualified paraprofessionals must meet one of the following requirements:

1. Complete at least two years of study at an institution of higher education (defined as completion of 48 semester hours or equivalent trimester hours) of college coursework or an applicable number of semester hours as defined by the institution of higher education attended, whichever is less;
2. Possess an associate's (or higher) degree;

3. Meet a rigorous standard of quality and can demonstrate, through a formal state or local academic assessment –
  - Knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing reading, writing, and mathematics; or
  - Knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing reading readiness, writing readiness, and mathematics readiness, as appropriate.

The Human Resources Department will assist paraprofessionals who do not meet either of the first two requirements by guiding them through portions of “Project PARA” which is a web-based self-study program. Currently we have fifteen (15) paraprofessionals who have started the program. This program will assist these paraprofessionals in developing skills for working effectively within a classroom and meet NCLB requirements.

## **OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

Task Force Updates: For the most current information on Task Force work, please visit the dedicated [website using this link](#).

**Boundary Analysis and Re-zoning & Demographic Study:** The Boundary Analysis and Re-zoning Task Force met on December 4<sup>th</sup> to review initial findings from the demographic study conducted by Templeton Demographics and to begin working through various boundary scenarios. The Task Force will also be meeting on December 18<sup>th</sup> to continue to scenario plan potential re-zoning options. The demographic study will also be presented at upcoming community forums scheduled to be held at the VISD Fine Arts Center from 6 – 8 p.m. on February 11<sup>th</sup> and February 12<sup>th</sup> and for the Board of Trustees work session, planned for February 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Bond Planning Task Force:** The Bond Planning Task Force met on December 11<sup>th</sup>. This meeting included an overview of the school funding process in Texas, the District's tax rate history and the District's past bond history. Task Force members were also provided with step-by-step description of a typical bond planning process. In addition, an update was given on the field progress of the current facilities assessments being conducted by Huckabee Architects.

**P-TECH:** VISD submitted a planning and implementation grant for the Healthcare P-TECH to open in the fall of 2020 as well as an Education and Training P-TECH for a planning year in 2020-2021 and to open for students in the fall of 2021.

Five of the seven Healthcare P-TECH designated content teachers have been selected. They attended an AVID training together as a staff on December 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> and will begin after school PD in the new year.

We will begin recruiting students in January. A copy of the Healthcare P-TECH Communication and Recruitment plan for students can be found [here](#).

**Systems of Great Schools:** We are currently working in Lever 1 of SGS (Managing School Performance) which includes the development of a School Performance Framework (SPF) and the development of a regular portfolio review process. We are also working on Lever 2 of SGS which is Developing Great Options. Below is a summary of the work in each area:

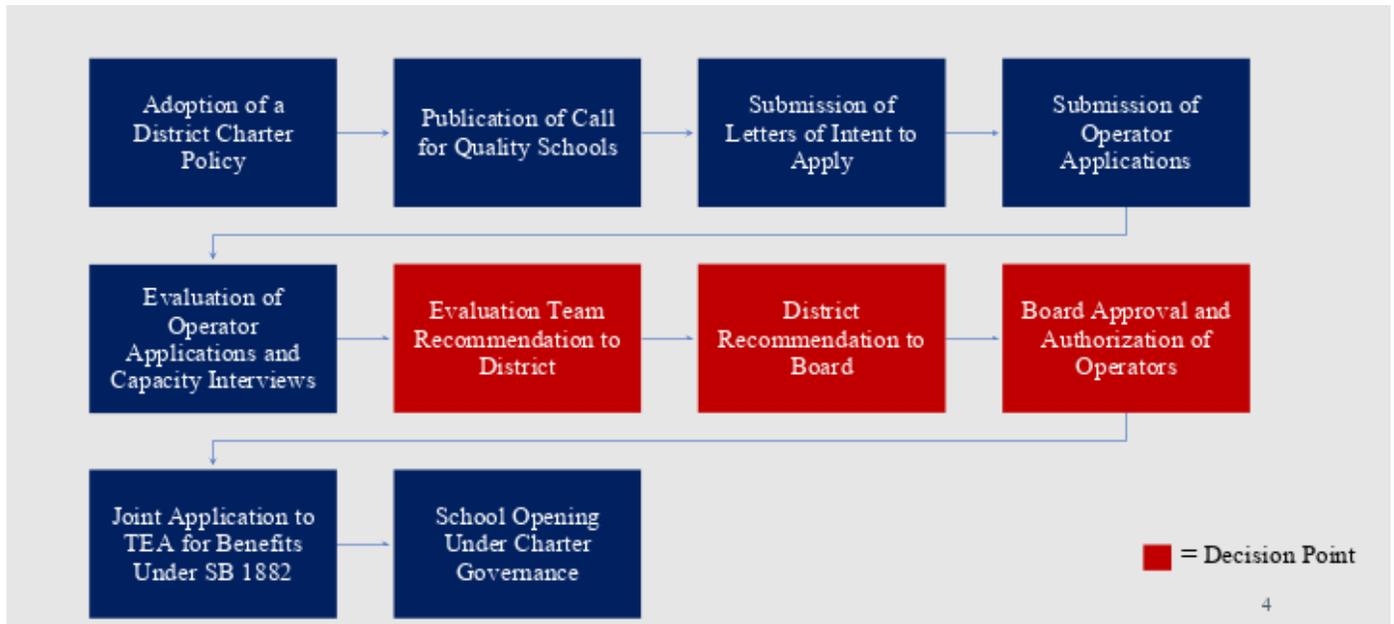
**School Performance Framework:** The SPF provides a metric-based score card of the community's shared definition of quality centered around equitable access for all students. We have closed the "quality classroom and quality schools" exchange and have analyzed the results. Those results were shared with the Strategic Planning task force and we will be using the information gleaned to help guide our efforts in discussions about local accountability models and school performance frameworks.

The SGS task force met on December 10, 2019 and worked toward identifying broad categories for evaluation based on the community's definition of a quality school.

**School Portfolio Review and Planning Cycle:** Through the portfolio review process, the district analyzes data to monitor school performance, neighborhood needs, and parent demand to determine strategic actions be taken at each campus. A link to a TEA document providing an end-to-end view of a best practice approach to annual school portfolio decision making can be found [here](#).

**Call for Quality Schools:** A proposal was received for our Early Childhood Center on December 13 (the closing date). That proposal was

Call for Quality Schools Process Flowchart



After we receive the application, the next step is to conduct a rigorous evaluation of each application through a thorough review of the written proposal, a substantive in-person review (capacity interview) and other due diligence to examine the applicant’s experience and capacity, conducted by knowledgeable and competent evaluators. The evaluation team for the VISD Fall 2019 Early Childhood CQS will consist of Dr. Greg Bonewald, Frances Koch, Tammy Sestak, Carol Dippel and Bethany Castro. The evaluation process occurs over a month’s time, culminating in the capacity interview scheduled for January 15, 2020 and the Evaluation Team Recommendation Summary due to Dr. Shepherd on January 17, 2020.

**Effective Schools Framework (ESF):** The Effective Schools Framework outlines best practices for school improvement and increased school success. The framework, as developed by TEA, features five key levers, district commitments and key campus actions. The VISD ESF task force recognizes that the district and campuses must engage in complicated work centered on the five levers. To enhance school effectiveness, the task force is working to identify recommendations for “Community Commitments” that, if implemented, would support the district and campus work. At this time, the task force has identified two levels which lend themselves to community support. The identified levers are Effective, **Well-Supported Teachers** (lever 2) and **School Culture** (lever 3). The task force team has begun the work of identifying community commitments which would increase support for teachers and encourage a community culture of ownership with a focus on learning.

**Strategic Planning:** The strategic planning group met on Friday and Saturday, December 13 and 14. The two-day session started with a presentation by Dr. Shepherd outlining our work over the past 18 months with various task forces. That presentation can be found online.

We also reviewed information from the “quality classrooms and quality schools” exchange, where over 1,200 thoughts were shared by over 1,000 people. We will be using that information to help guide our thinking. We are also using information learned through task force efforts to guide our discussions.

The Strategic Planning process is being led by N2 Learning (Roz Keck) and the SGS Executive Advisor (Duncan Klussman). On January 18, 2020 N2 Learning has contracted with John Tanner to be a guest presenter to help the strategic task force members think about community-based accountability structures. On January 31, 2020 N2 Learning has contracted with Eric Sheninger (International Center for Leadership) to present to the group.

The next scheduled dates for the strategic planning group are January 17 & January 18 and January 31 & February 1.

**Facilities Needs Study:** Huckabee Architects is continuing to coordinate and conduct facility assessments across the District. Field observations are expected to be completed as we head into the Christmas break. We have received very complimentary remarks from the architects and engineers about the experiences they have had while working with our VISD staff across our campuses and departments. When we return in January, Huckabee will continue their work by gathering additional information from our campus and district leadership teams. We are on schedule to receive a final assessment of all work on February 14<sup>th</sup>.

## COMMUNICATIONS

- **#VictoriaSAFE:** Representatives from VISD, the City of Victoria, Victoria Police Department, Victoria College, and University of Houston-Victoria started discussing how we could collaborate on a community-wide safety awareness program, using the hashtag #VictoriaSAFE. SAFE being an acronym for Safety Awareness for Everyone. The initial meeting started productive conversations on how the program could be used to notify and educate the community on safety awareness. The group decided to also include the Victoria County Sheriff’s Office, Victoria Fire Department, Victoria Emergency Management, and Texas Department of Public Safety. Members are doing research on some of the take-aways and will meet again before the holiday break to further develop the goals.
- **After School Enrichment Program:** We have been exploring additional after-school options to meet the needs of the families in our community, while providing enrichment opportunities for students. *Right at School* offers a high-quality, affordable, flexible program with homework help and enrichment curriculum that supports educational standards in English Language Arts, literacy, math, science, social studies, social-emotional learning, the arts and physical fitness, all while having fun. The provider currently has programs throughout Texas and across the country. If approved by the Board of Trustees, VISD will begin offering the *Right at School* program to students at Aloe, Chandler, DeLeon, Dudley, Mission Valley, O’Connor, Rowland, Schorlemmer, Smith, and Vickers for the 2020-2021 school year. The after-school programming will be available from the time the school bell rings until 6:00 pm every day school is in session. Coverage will also be provided during student holidays and throughout the summer. Parents can choose the number of days per week their child attends. Drop-ins and half-day care options are also available.

## TECHNOLOGY

- We are working on setting up and deploying 330 Lenovo 300e laptops and 68 Dell desktops to replace 2010 model desktops at the elementary campuses that are not compatible with Imagine Learning Math Facts.
- We are working with Maintenance to have interactive displays installed at 7 campuses to replace projectors. Mission Valley Elementary was the first to have the displays installed in November.
- We are working on ways to improve various training courses for new employees in our student and finance systems. Our Technology Systems trainer has been working with the Human Resources department to create a more efficient onboarding process for new employees as it relates to gaining access and being trained on various technology systems.
- We are working to implement additional security features throughout the district including the installation of a new anti-malware program that will enhance endpoint security on high-priority machines.
- The Texas DIR has released a list of approved cybersecurity training providers under HB3834. HB3834 requires state and local government employees to complete a certified cybersecurity training annually, with an initial deadline of June 14, 2020. SafeSchools, the current training platform utilized by the district, is not currently listed as an approved provider but is in the process of gaining approval from DIR.
  - More information on HB3834 can be found here:  
<https://capitol.texas.gov/billlookup/text.aspx?LegSess=82R&Bill=HB3834>

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