

AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



Austin Independent School District Local Innovation Plan

First Adopted by the Austin ISD Board of Trustees On March 27, 2017

Revision of Plan

Revised February 24, 2024

Adopted by the Austin ISD Board of Trustees on February 22, 2024



House Bill 1842, Section 4, passed in the 84th Texas Legislative Session, provides an opportunity for Texas public school districts be designated as Districts of Innovation, thereby allowing them the flexibility to be exempt from or modify state requirements at the local level to better meet the needs of the students and personalize learning.

Districts of Innovation provide opportunities for:

- Greater local control;
- Increased flexibility governing education programming; and
- Empowerment to innovate and think differently.

Districts are not exempt from statutes related to curriculum, graduation requirements, nor academic and financial accountability.

On September 26, 2016, the AISD School Board approved a resolution to initiate the process of becoming a District of Innovation. On October 25, 2016, The Board of Trustees held a public hearing on Districts of Innovation and requested an ad hoc committee be formed to develop an innovation plan. On November 7, 2016, the board of trustees instructed the superintendent to move forward and create an Innovation District Advisory Committee (IDAC) to develop the plan.

This five-year District of Innovation Plan was in effect from March 27, 2017 – March 27, 2022.

The IDAC committee was reestablished for the purpose of reviewing, revising, and adding exemptions to the District of Innovation Plan. The committee consisted of thirty members, including teachers, administrators, parents, and community members. During the month of February 2022, the IDAC hosted a meeting to discuss and seek feedback on updating the plan. The plan was posted online from February 24 – March 24 for public comment and feedback. After the approval of the Board on March 24, 2022, the committee was called to into session to review and vote on a new revision to the plan.

The IDAC committee was reestablished for the purpose of reviewing, revising, and adding exemptions to the District of Innovation Plan. During the month of December 2023, the IDAC hosted a meeting to discuss and seek feedback on updating our plan. The plan was also discussed at the January 16, 2024, District Advisory Council Committee meeting. The plan was posted online from January 24, 2024– February 22, 2024, for public comment and feedback. The DOI updated plan was approved by the Board of Trustees at the February 22nd school board voting meeting.

Timeline for Updating DOI Plan

- December 20, 2023– Reconvened the committee to review proposed revisions to the plan and voted to approve the revised draft.
- January 16, 2024– Presented for input to the District Advisory Council.
- January 24, 2024– Proposed revision of the plan was posted online for 30 days.
- February 22, 2024–The Board of Trustees approved the revised plan.

Committee Members IDAC 2023-24

Non-Staff:

Jessica Bazan, O'Connell Robertson
Genevieve Dell, Community Member
Shelly Grabe, Parent - Greenleaf
Alberto Gonzalez, Community Member
Nicole Hepburn, Parent - Ann Richards MS
Richard Kelly, Parent - Austin HS
Paul Mitchell, Community Member
Helen Miller, Community Member
Heather Shaw, Community Member
David Smith, United Way
Laurie Solis, President of the Austin Council Parent Teacher Association
Sharon Vigil, Communities in Schools
Snow White, Intel
Ken Zafaris, President of Education Austin

Staff:

Oscar Adams, Director of Discipline Standards & Accountability
Debra Austrum, Counselor – Bailey MS
Andrew Bailey, Principal – Eastside Memorial High School
Katrina Bailey, Executive Director of Elementary Schools
Carolyn Hanschen, Executive Director, Office of Accountability & Assessment
Pamela Jessie, Counselor – Alternative Learning Center
Dr. Dru McGovern-Robinett, Assistant Superintendent of Special Education Programs
Heather Petruzzini, Special Assistant to the Superintendent
Dr. Jacob Reach, Chief Officer Governmental Relations & Board Services
Oscar Rodriguez, Chief Officer of Technology
Melinda Van Horn, Counselor, Akins HS
Dr. Suzanne Villalpando, Executive Director Governmental Relations & Board Services
Juilo Villaneda, Teacher, Gus Garcia YMLA
Carla De La Rosa, Safe Schools Review Administrator
Cedric Maddox Principal, Covington
Dr. Gloria Williams, Assistant Superintendent of Student Support Services

AISD Strategic Plan Framework

AISD: Every Child, Every Day

Vision

We are Austin's home for inclusive learning; high expectations for all children, high outcomes for every student.

Mission

We prepare every student with the knowledge and skills to thrive in college, career, and life.

Values

- Caring for every child to be healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged.
- Educational equity, to ensure every child receives what is needed to develop to their full potential.
- Innovation and academic excellence to inspire the next generation of leaders, civically engaged citizens, creative and critical thinkers, and lifelong learners.
- Valuing diversity, inclusion, and meaningful engagement of all voices as we collaborate to improve the common good.
- A culture of respect, transparency, and data-informed decision making to build trusting relationships with each other and those we serve.
- Engaging our employees and inviting their collaboration to make AISD a great place to work.
- Aligning resources to student needs, to be strategic stewards of financial and human capacities to achieve our vision and mission.

Priority Focus Areas: Equity

- Student Well-Being and Achievement
- Teacher & Employee Well-Being
- Culture of Respect/Customer Service
- Fiscal Stewardship and Prioritization

AISD Strategies for Action 2020-2025

Academic Excellence

- **Strategy 1:** Implement consistent and culturally relevant instruction that is rigorous and rooted in relationships and the community for every child, every day.
- **Strategy 2:** Serve more young learners from communities that are marginalized in quality early childhood instruction.
- **Strategy 3:** Improve access to quality college and career programs for students from marginalized communities, including connections with higher education institutions and industry partners, and prepare every student with the knowledge and skills to thrive.
- **Strategy 4:** Prioritize improvement of program opportunities, communication, and facility planning for campuses in communities that are marginalized.

Culture and Climate

- **Strategy 5:** Improve systems for students who access special education, dyslexia, and bilingual services to ensure high expectations and high outcomes for every child.
- **Strategy 6:** Expand access to enrichment opportunities for students from communities that are marginalized.
- **Strategy 7:** Build a cultural of respect and inclusion by increasing the cultural competence and diversity of our teaching staff to support the students we serve and foster growth and well-being for all employees.

Reflective and Inspirational Leadership

- **Strategy 8:** Provide teachers and principals with ongoing coaching to foster reflection, analyze disaggregated student data, and continuously improve culturally-responsive, rigorous and relationship-centered instruction.
- **Strategy 9:** Build trusting relationships with our families and community by engaging with them to listen and improve AISD environments, processes, and experiences.

Exemptions

Educator Certifications (1)

Current Challenges

- A lack of highly qualified staff for innovative and Languages Other Than English Courses
- A lack of highly qualified staff for Secondary (7th -12th Grade) Math, Science, English and Social Studies Courses
- A lack of a teachers with specialized certifications
- Lack of highly qualified staff for Early Childhood – 6th Grade
- Inability to hire subject-matter experts for specialized courses
- Lack of opportunities for authentic, field-based experiences
- Competition from charter schools already utilizing this exemption offering specialized courses

Exemptions

- § 21.003 Certification Required (for Math, Science, CTE, Tech Apps, Languages Other Than English)
- § 21.0031 Failure to Obtain Certification; Contract Void
- § 21.053 Presentation and Recording of Certificates
- §21.052 Certification of Educators from Outside the State

Requirements Imposed by the Texas Education Code That Inhibit the District's Goals

A person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern or teacher trainee, librarian, educational aide, administrator, educational diagnostician, or school counselor by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit.

An employee's probationary, continuing, or term contract is void if the employee does not hold a valid certificate or permit issued by the State Board for Educator Certification.

A person who desires to teach in a public school shall present the person's certificate for filing with the employing district before the person's contract with the board of trustees of the district is binding.

An educator who does not hold a valid certificate may not be paid for teaching or work done before the effective date is issuance of a valid certificate.

The board may issue a certificate to an educator who applies for a certification and (1) holds: (A) a degree issued by an institution accredited by a regional accrediting agency or group that is recognized by a nationally recognized accreditation board or (B) a degree issued by an institution located in a foreign country, if the degree is equivalent to a degree described by Paragraph (A);(2), (3)(A), (B), (a-1).

The district is committed for any teachers hired under this exemption without an existing Texas teacher certification or out-of-state certification to enroll, or require the individual to enroll, in an alternative education certification program whenever possible.

Rationale for Innovations

Students receiving high school credit need access to specific areas of study that promote career & technical educational pathways and technology application pathways. Some of these specialized courses required the expertise of field experts. In some instances, field-based experts are more qualified to teach career & technology (CTE) and Technology Applications courses than certified educators, and the district needs the discretion to hire the most qualified individuals to teach these courses. Having the ability to recruit experts from the field will enhance community partnerships and increase field-based opportunities for students. Furthermore, the ability to hire subject matter experts from the field for specialized courses will reduce costs by eliminating the need to have a certified teacher of record in addition to the CTE or Tech Apps course instructor.

Students need access to courses that promote college and career readiness including the ability to communicate in language other than English. The district needs the discretion to hire the most qualified individuals to teach Languages Other Than English (LOTE) high school credit courses. Having the ability to recruit language experts will help find teaching position left vacant due to the lack of certified teachers.

Students also need access to courses that promote college and career readiness including the areas of secondary (7-12) Math, Science, English and Social Studies. The district needs the discretion to hire the most qualified individuals to teach secondary (7 – 12) Math, Science, English and Social Studies courses. Have the ability to recruit expert Math, Science, English and Social Studies teachers will help fill teaching position left vacant due to the lack of certified teachers.

Students need access to educators in the area of EC – 6 for positions that are difficult to fill due to the lack of a certified teacher candidate pool. This flexibility would allow the district to expand the pool of qualified candidates and employ highly qualified educators that might not ordinarily meet the requirements under the traditional teacher certification pathways.

Section 21.003, 21.0031, and 21.053 of the TEC limit the district's ability to hire educators to teach Secondary (7-12) Math, Science, CTE & Technology Applications and LOTE courses along with EC – 6 core subjects when quality certified teachers are not available.

In a highly competitive market, delays in hiring out of state teachers does not allow us to support our campuses and students. Having the ability to hire out-of-state teachers with certifications from other states will help expedite the immediate need to fill teacher vacancies.

Guiding Principles

Current expectations for employee certification should be maintained and a dedicated effort should be made to hire individual with appropriate certification for CTE and Technology Application, LOTE, Secondary (7 – 12) Math, Science, English, Social Studies, and EC - 6 teaching positions. However, when that is not reasonably possible, an out of state certified or a non-certified individual or industry/language expert is more highly qualified, flexibility to hire other individuals should be exercised. Those who are knowledgeable in CTE and Tech Apps, Math and Science areas should be considered for CTE and Tech Application, Math, and Science courses. Individuals who demonstrate superior or distinguished language proficiency on an exam recognized by the American Council of the Teaching of Foreign Languages should be considered for LOTE courses. For, CTE the non-certified instructors should hold an industry certification in the field being hired to teach in. Local qualifications and training procedures, as well as an approval process for non-certified instructors should be maintained, to include background checks and classroom management skill building. A policy should remain in place to notify parents is a non-certified teacher is employed for their child's class.

Alignment to Strategic Plan

Academic Excellence

- Strategy 1: Implement consistent and culturally relevant instruction that is rigorous and rooted in relationship and the community for every child, every day.
- Strategy 3: Improve access to quality college and career programs for students from marginalized communities, including connections with higher education institutions and industry partners, and prepare every student with the knowledge and skills to thrive.
- Strategy 4: Prioritize improvement of program opportunities, communication, and facility planning for campuses in communities that are marginalized.

Minutes of Instruction (2)

Current Challenges

- Competition from charter schools already utilizing this exemption for innovative scheduling
- Insufficient professional learning time
- Texas Education Agency will require innovation plans instead of waivers for late start days
- No late start days at the elementary and middle school levels for teacher planning and preparation and/or staff development

- Insufficient planning and preparation time
- Insufficient time for teacher collaboration
- Insufficient time to complete grade reporting tasks at the end of grading periods
- Insufficient time for planning at the prior to each grading period or instructional unit
- Mental and physical fatigue and stress due to insufficient time to plan and prepare for instruction
- Increased student and staff absenteeism due to burnout
- Lack of teacher preparedness

Exemptions

- §25.081(d)(e) Operation of Schools (Minutes of Instruction)
- §25.082 Length of School Day

Requirements Imposed by the Texas Education Code That Inhibit the District's Goals

For each school year each school district must operate so that the district provides for at least 75,600 minutes of instruction, including intermissions and recesses, for students.

The commissioner may approve the instruction of students for fewer than the number of minutes required if a calamity causes the closing of schools. If the commissioner does not approve reduced instruction time a school district may add additional minutes to the end of the district's normal school hours as necessary to compensate for minutes of instruction lost due to a calamity.

The commissioner may adopt rules, on the basis of the minimum minutes of instruction required, that refer to a minimum number of days of instruction.

A day of instruction means 420 minutes of instruction. A school day shall be at least seven hours each day, including intermissions and recesses.

Rationale for Innovations

The district is not seeking an exemption from the 75,600 minutes of instruction for the school year. However, the district seeks the flexibility to occasionally shorten the school day to provide more time for teachers to plan, collaborate, and prepare for instruction that better meets the needs of students. Flexibility to the length of the school day promotes innovative programs that increase graduation rates through credit recovery, such as Twilight program. Teachers need more time to analyze and evaluate student work and adapt instruction to meet student needs. Shortened days, scheduled strategically throughout the school year, such as monthly or after grading periods, will result in teachers being better prepared. This will also allow for embedded professional learning time. Strategically placed late start or early release days will reduce staff and student fatigue, stress, anxiety and absenteeism. Austin ISD believes the local community should decide what is best for its students and staff. Sections 25.081(d)(e) and 25.082 of the TEC limit the District's ability to provide sufficient time for teachers to plan, collaborate, and prepare for innovative and high-quality instruction and to provide ongoing, high-quality professional development.

Guiding Principles

Changes or modifications to the instructional day should not be made without specific purpose and should be planned for the purpose of improving the quality of instruction. Shortened days should not be excessive. Length of school day changes should be developed with stakeholders and advisory bodies, planned ahead of time, and noted in the district calendar, so that families can plan and be prepared. Calendars should be published and distributed to stakeholders well in advance of the school year. Instructional time should be maximized to maintain 75,600 minutes for the school year.

Alignment to Strategic Plan

Academic Excellence

- Strategy 1: Implement consistent and culturally relevant instruction that is rigorous and rooted in relationships and the community for every child, every day.
- Strategy 3: Improve access to quality college and career programs for students from marginalized communities, including connections with higher education institutions and industry partners, and prepare every student with the knowledge and skills to thrive.

Culture and Climate

- Strategy 7: Build a culture of respect and inclusion by increasing the culture competence and diversity of our teaching staff to support the students we serve and foster growth and well-being for all employees.

Reflective and Inspirational Leadership

- Strategy 8: Provide teachers and principals with ongoing coaching to foster reflection, analyze, disaggregated student data, and continuously improve culturally-responsive, rigorous, and relationship-centered instruction.

First & Last Day of Instruction (3)

Current Challenges

- Competition from charter schools already utilizing this exemption for innovative scheduling
- Insufficient professional learning time
- Texas Education Agency will require innovation plans instead of waivers for adjustments to the first and last day of school
- Insufficient planning and preparation time before the first day of instruction and throughout the school year
- Insufficient time to complete grade reporting tasks at the end of the grading period
- Insufficient time for planning at the beginning of each grading period or instructional unit
- Mental and physical fatigue and stress due to long blocks of time without breaks
- Increased student and staff absenteeism due to burnout and fatigue
- Lack of teacher preparedness

- Unequal instructional time in the fall and spring semester
- Unable to begin the year before the 4th Monday in August (especially when it falls late in the year, i.e., 8/28/17)
- Unable to end the year before Memorial Day
- Traditional calendars result in lost instructional time
- District and college calendars are not aligned for dual credit / dual enrollment courses

Exemptions

- §25.0811 First Day of Instruction
- §25.0812 Last Day of School

Requirements Imposed by the Texas Education Code That Inhibit the District's Goals

A school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.

A school district may not schedule the last day of school for students for a school year before May 15.

Rationale for Innovations

The district needs the flexibility to begin the instructional year before the 4th Monday in August to prevent the loss of instructional time and to provide more days of uninterrupted time for teachers to plan and prepare for instruction. This would also allow for more creative scheduling for extracurricular activities, such as athletics and band. Adjusting the first and last day of instruction will allow flexibility in scheduling holidays, as well as scheduling periodic breaks for staff and students to re-energize and refocus after grading cycles. Strategically planned breaks will reduce stress, anxiety, fatigue, and absenteeism. Having the flexibility to adjust the first and last day of instruction will allow the district to better balance instructional days during the first and second semester. Adjustments to the first and last day of school will allow the district to strategically embed professional learning days and additional opportunities for teacher planning and preparation. This flexibility would also allow the district to end the school year prior to Memorial Day. Austin ISD believes the local community should decide what is best for its students and staff when developing its calendar. Sections 25.0811 and 25.0812 of the TEC limit the District's ability to adjust the first and last day of school to create a calendar that best meets the diverse needs of stakeholders.

Guiding Principles

Changes or modifications to the calendar should not be made without specific purpose and should only be made for the purpose of improving the quality of instruction, maximizing instructional time, and meeting the diverse needs of stakeholders. Changes to the calendar should be developed with stakeholders and advisory bodies and planned ahead of time so that families can plan and be prepared. Calendars should be published and distributed to stakeholders well in advance of the school year.

Alignment to AISD Strategic Plan

Academic Excellence

- Strategy 1: Implement consistent and culturally relevant instruction that is rigorous and rooted in relationship and the community for every child, every day.
- Strategy 3: Improve access to quality college and career programs for students from marginalized communities, including connections with higher education institutions and industry partners, and prepare every student with the knowledge and skills to thrive.

Culture and Climate

- Strategy 7: Build a culture of respect and inclusion by increasing the culture competence and diversity of our teaching staff to support the students we serve and foster growth and well-being for all employees.

Reflective and Inspirational Leadership

- Strategy 8: Provide teachers and principals with ongoing coaching to foster reflection, analyze disaggregated student data and continuously improve culturally-responsive, rigorous, and relationship-centered instruction.

Minimum Attendance Required (4)

Current Challenges

- Students are penalized for illness
- Attendance committees are required to convene for credit determination even when absences are excused, and work has been completed.
- Limited student access to extracurricular events
- Limited student access to field-based experiences and enrichment opportunities
- Limited student access to internships
- Lack of individualized learning plans and student schedule flexibility
- Lack of blended learning and distance learning opportunities
- Lack of opportunity to complete online coursework away from the campus
- Attendance make-up time options are not rigorous and authentic
- Seat time is prioritized over content mastery
- Prevents focusing on learning and results
- Promotes focusing on time spent at desk
- Inhibits student acquisition of self-monitoring skills

Exemptions

- §25.092 Minimum Attendance Required for Class Credit

Requirements Imposed by the Texas Education Code That Inhibit the District's Goals

A student in any grade level from kindergarten through grade 12 may not be given credit or a final grade for a class unless the student is in attendance for at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. A student who is in attendance for at least 75 percent but less than 90 percent of the days a class is offered may be given credit or a final grade for the class if the student completes a plan approved by the school's principal that provides for the student to meet the instructional requirements of the class.

The board of trustees of each school district shall appoint one or more attendance committees to hear petitions for class credit or a final grade by students who are in attendance fewer than the number of days and have not earned class credit or a final grade. Classroom teachers shall comprise a majority of the membership of the committee.

Rationale for Innovations

The district needs the flexibility to award class credit to students based on content mastery rather than seat time. The district does not wish to penalize students who miss class due to extra/co-curricular activities, academic activities, field-based experiences, distance learning activities, or other extenuating circumstances. Freedom from the minimum attendance required rule will allow the district to implement blended learning, problem-based learning, and community partnership and internships, which will increase student engagement in innovative learning opportunities. While attendance committees play a vital role to engage in individualized learning pathways that incorporate classroom instruction, online instruction on and off campus, and field-based learning at a pace suited to their specific learning needs. Students should not be penalized for attending extracurricular events, participating in field-based activities and internships, or completing work in less time than what is provided. Austin ISD believes the local campus community should decide what constitutes sufficient attendance. Section §25.084 of the TEC limits flexible seat time, blended and distance learning opportunities, field-based learning opportunities, and extracurricular activities.

Guiding Principles

High expectations for attendance should continue to be maintained and dropout prevention measures should be in place for all campuses. Campuses should continue to have a comprehensive attendance plan to account for truancy, appeals for credit, and chronic absenteeism.

Alignment to AISD Strategic Plan

Culture and Climate

- Strategy 6: Expand access to enrichment opportunities for students from communities that are marginalized.

Reflective and Inspirational Leadership

- Strategy 9: Build trusting relationships with our families and community by engaging with them to listen and improve AISD environments, process, and experience.

Class Size Waiver (5)

Current Challenges

Staffing based on the total number of students per grade level with a maximum of 22 per teacher, regardless of instructional program, may result in classrooms with a mix of students in a bilingual/dual language program and students not in a bilingual/dual language program. Although AISD has worked to staff elementary classrooms based on language in recent years, certain ratios beyond the 22-student maximum may be necessary to prevent mixed-language classrooms.

Mixed language classrooms have many negative effects:

- Mixed-language classrooms negatively impact student performance, on average, on academic outcomes in reading, both for Emergent Bilingual students (students classified as LEP) in bilingual programs and native English speakers not in bilingual programs.
- Other campus leveling that takes place early in the school year is disruptive to both teachers and students and negatively impact social-emotional development.
- Prevents Dual Language teachers from meeting the required minimum of 50% of the day taught in their target language (Spanish, Mandarin, Vietnamese.)
- Creates challenges for teachers to instruct students in their native language to read specifically in grades Pre-K, Kinder, 1st when their classrooms are mixed with monolingual and bilingual student groups.
- Prevents teachers from providing English instruction to students not in a bilingual/dual language program when they are placed in bilingual classrooms.
- Prevents teachers from instructing Emergent Bilingual students in the target language without translating when English-only students are placed in bilingual/dual language classrooms.

Exemptions

- 25.112 Class Size
- 25.113 Notice of Class Size (a) A campus or district that granted an exception under Section 25.112(d) from class size limits shall provide written notice of the exception to the parent of or person standing in parental relation to each student affected by the exception.

Rationale for Innovation

Students required to receive dual language instruction need to do so in a classroom environment that allows for fidelity to the best practices of the one-way or two-way dual language instructional model.

Students required to receive instruction in English should do so in a classroom environment that allows for fidelity to the best practices of a general education instructional model with English language supports.

Student and teacher disruption should be minimal during the leveling process.

AISD Strategic Plan

Academic Excellence

- Strategy 1: Implement consistent and culturally relevant instruction that is rigorous and rooted in relationships and the community for every child, every day.
- Strategy 2: Serve more young learners from communities that are marginalized in quality early

childhood instruction.

Culture and Climate

- Strategy 5: Improve systems for students who access special education, dyslexia, and bilingual services to ensure high expectations and high outcomes for every child.
- Strategy 6: Expand access to enrichment opportunities for students from communities that are marginalized.

Reflective and Inspirational Leadership

- Strategy 8: Provide teachers and principals with ongoing coaching to foster reflection, analyze disaggregated student data, and continuously improve culturally-responsive, rigorous and relationship-centered instruction.

HB 4545 (6)

Current Challenges

- The new statute is effective, as of June 16, 2021.
- Meeting the requirement of 30 hours of supplemental instruction outside the normal instructional day.
- Need to expand the available personnel pool to support student learning as tutors and interventionists.

Exemptions

21.003, 21.0031, 21.053 Certification required to serve as a temporary tutor (Math, Science, English and Social Studies)

Requirements Imposed by the Texas Education Code That Inhibit the District's Goals

A person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern or teacher trainee, librarian, educational aide, administrator, educational diagnostician, or school counselor by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit.

An employee's probationary, continuing, or term contract is void if the employee does not hold a valid certificate or permit issued by the State Board for Educators Certification.

A person who desires to teach in a public school shall present the person's certificate for filing with the employing district before the person's contract with the board of trustees of the district is binding.

An educator who does not hold a valid certificate may not be paid for teaching or work done before the effective date of issuance of a valid certificate.

Rationale for Innovations

Allow the District to hire current student teachers as tutors in order to meet the requirements of HB 4545.

Accelerated instruction as defined by TEA entails either 1) assigning a classroom teacher who is a certified master, exemplary, or recognized teacher.

Guiding Principles

Current expectations for employee’s certification should be maintained and a dedicated effort should be made to utilize current certified teachers in the areas of Math, English, Social Studies, and Science to tutor students according to HB 4545. If certified teachers are not available, then AISD will hire a student teacher who is under the direction of a certified teacher to be allowed to tutor students in a content area of need.

Alignment to AISD Strategic Plan

Academic Excellence

Strategy 1: Implement consistent and culturally relevant instruction that is rigorous and rooted in relationships and the community for every child, every day.

Strategy 2: Serve more young learners from communities that are marginalized in quality early childhood instruction.

Strategy 4: Prioritize improvements of program opportunities, communication and facility planning for campuses in communities that are marginalized.

HB 114 Mandatory DAEP for E-Cigarettes/Vaping

Current Challenges

- The new statute is effective, as of September 1, 2023
- Marijuana, THC, E-Cigarettes related offenses are a **mandatory** DAEP placement. Includes:
 - E-cigarette or comparable device
 - Consumable liquid solution
- If DAEP is at capacity, student must be placed in ISS
- If DAEP is at capacity, student who has been placed for this offense to move out and be placed in ISS to make room in DAEP for student who has committed violent offense
- If a position comes open at DAEP before expiration of the student’s placement, the student must be transferred back to DAEP.
- ALC can only accommodate 180 students.
 - HS – 100 students
 - MS – 80 students

Exemptions

House Bill (HB) 114 amends Chapter 37 to make clear that conference, hearing, and review provisions in 37.009(a) apply to all removals for mandatory placement in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) and mandatory expulsions. This bill requires a student to be placed in the DAEP if the student

possesses, uses, or is under the influence of, or sells, gives, or delivers marijuana, THC, or an e-cigarette to another person within 300 feet of school property or at a school-related event.

Texas Education Code §37.006 requires districts to remove a student from class and place in a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP) as provided by Section 37.008, if the student possesses, uses, sells, gives, or delivers to another person an e-cigarette. The district seeks exemption from HB 114 amendment to Chapter 37.

(as defined by Section 161.081, Health, and Safety Code)

Requirements Imposed by the Texas Education Code That Inhibit the District's Goals

Under the new provisions of the statute, students must be mandatorily placed at the DAEP for possessing an e-cigarette (vape) containing nicotine. However, a student possessing a cigarette containing nicotine would face other, lesser consequences under the student code of conduct. The district believes that students possessing a nicotine e-cigarette (vape) would be best served by receiving education from the district regarding nicotine's harmful effects and receiving appropriate consequences at the student's home campus rather than removing the student to the DAEP.

Rationale for Innovations

Austin ISD continues to work towards eliminating the use of e-cigarettes and vapes. However, we believe the District could more effectively address these student health concerns through education. The district believes students possessing e-cigarettes containing nicotine should be best supported by providing additional wellness education while remaining on the campus with appropriate consequences for the first offense. Students with second and subsequent offenses may be assigned to the DAEP. The district is not requesting exempt provisions under Section 37.006, which require mandatory removal to DAEP for possessing controlled substances such as marijuana and THC. Additionally, this exemption would not apply to the selling or distribution of any e-cigarettes or vaping products.

Guiding Principles

This will allow our district to follow best practices for student's disruptions to the educational environment should be at a minimal.

- Caring for every child to be healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged.
- Educational equity, to ensure every child receives what is needed to develop to their full potential.

Alignment to AISD Strategic Plan

- Implement consistent and culturally relevant instruction that is rigorous and rooted in relationship and the community for every child, every day.
- Improve access to quality college and career programs for students from marginalized communities, including connections with higher education institutions and industry partners, and prepare every student with the knowledge and skills to thrive.

Reflective and Inspirational Leadership

Strategy 9: Build trusting relationships with our families and community by engaging with them to listen and improve AISD environments, processes, and experiences.

Glossary

AAPSA: Austin Association of Public School Administrators

ACPTA: Austin Council of PTAs (Parent Teacher Associations)

Blended Learning: An instructional method that combines in-person direct teach with online learning opportunities.

Chronic Absenteeism: A student has fifteen or more absences from school for both excused and unexcused reasons.

Education Austin: Teachers' and employees' union for Austin ISD

Twilight: AISD evening school program allowing high school students the ability to regain lost credits

House Bill 4545: recently passed in the 87th Regular Legislative Session. HB 4545 establishes new requirements for supplemental accelerated instruction for students who do not pass the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR). The new statute is effective, as of June 16, 2021, with supplemental accelerated instruction practices required during the 2021-2022 school year for all students, based on STAAR results from Spring 2021

