

Legislative Budget Board Update

JANUARY 2020

LBB REPORT SUMMARY

- The Legislative Budget Board School Performance Review Team conducted a review of district operations during calendar year 2019. Analysis of the review findings was completed during late fall of 2019. The finalized report included 94 recommendations with companion sub-recommendations in five major categories:
 - Strengthening spending practices and improving financial monitoring
 - Reorganization and realigning of staff, departments, and functions
 - Standardization of programs and services
 - Improvement of communication, planning, and procedures
 - Improvement of board operations

ACCOMPLISHMENTS HIGHLIGHTED IN THE REPORT

- HISD's Career and Technical Education programs offer various courses and certifications to meet the students' diverse needs.
- HISD requires all staff to be paid via direct deposit, which is an effective and efficient system that provides timely payroll processing for employees.
- All activity funds have been centralized and an internal audit program is in place to systematically review activity funds at greatest risk.
- The Medicaid Finance and Consulting Department provides Medicaid claim fund services to 101 school districts throughout Texas and operates at a profit, which provides additional funding to the district's general fund.
- HISD has refunded bonds and maximized the benefits of tax increment reinvestment zones to achieve savings on debt obligations and optimize the use of capital funds.
- HISD has developed thorough and helpful procedures to improve its alternative education programming.
- HISD provides breakfast, lunch, and dinner to students through the Community Eligibility Provisions Program.
- Ascending to Men connects positive role models with male students of color to help guide them academically, socially, and professionally.
- Parent University provides parents with valuable information on the importance of parental involvement and district programs that support student achievement.

COMPLETED RECOMMENDATIONS BY CATEGORY

- Educational Service Delivery
 - Recommendation 16: Develop, implement, and evaluate a strategic plan for a long-term, comprehensive system of the district's wraparound services initiatives.

COMPLETED RECOMMENDATIONS BY CATEGORY (CONTINUED)

- Financial Management
 - Recommendation 27: Increase the annual revenue of the alternative certification program to meet operating expenses or eliminate the program and seek partnerships with other certifying organizations to meet Houston ISD’s ongoing needs.
- Human Resources Management
 - Recommendation 39: Reorganize the Human Resources Department and adhere to best practices for an effective and equitable span of control.
- Facilities Use and Management
 - Recommendation 46: Develop an accurate facility utilization rate for each campus and ensure that campuses maintain industry-standard utilization rates.
 - Recommendation 52: Revise the process for the design and construction document reviews, and mandate that specific departments have representation during the design and construction phases of projects.
 - Recommendation 54: Assess the work order needs and evaluate the ability of a digital system to improve service quality provided by the Facilities Services Department.
- Safety and Security Management
 - Recommendation 59: Restructure the police chief’s reporting relationship so that the position reports only to the superintendent.
- Nutrition Services Management
 - Recommendation 72: Analyze participation rates monthly, develop and implement strategies to increase participation, and develop board policies that address challenges to participation.
 - Recommendation 73: Hold principals accountable for ensuring that all competitive foods sales on campuses comply with United States Department of Agriculture regulations.
 - Recommendation 75: Develop and implement procedures and systems to provide oversight and consistent management of campus cafeteria operations.
 - Recommendation 76: Use productivity data to manage staffing in accordance with industry standards.
 - Recommendation 80: Use the contracted consultant’s report to eliminate inefficiencies and decrease costs at the Nutrition Services Department.
- Transportation Management and Fleet Operations
 - Recommendation 81: Reorganize Transportation Department functions and develop strategies to improve recruitment and retention of staff.
 - Recommendation 84: Establish processes to strengthen Transportation Department internal and external communications and solicit feedback from stakeholders.
 - Recommendation 85: Enhance transportation training for drivers and students and address safety concerns at the terminals and on school buses.

COMPLETED RECOMMENDATIONS BY CATEGORY (CONTINUED)

- Transportation Management and Fleet Operations
 - Recommendation 86: Develop a bus replacement plan that includes industry-standard criteria and decrease the number of spare and surplus school buses in the district's inventory.
- Community Involvement
 - Recommendation 89: Develop and implement written procedures to update campus and department websites with consistent and current information.
 - Recommendation 93: Ensure the efficient communication of staff and department changes to the Information Center to maintain an updated and cohesive central directory.

In addition, six sub-recommendations have been completed for an additional five recommendations.

- Recommendation 1: Modify the district's organizational structure to decrease the superintendent's supervisory responsibilities and streamline the number of executive leadership positions.
 - Eliminate the chief development officer position and develop a director of community relations position. This position will have the same duties as the previous chief development officer position, but it will not be an executive leadership position.
 - Eliminate the chief government relations and strategy officer position and develop a director of government relations position. This position will have the same duties as the previous chief government relations and strategy officer position.
- Recommendation 2: Systematize the district process for developing, reviewing, and implementing School Improvement Plans.
 - Develop comprehensive principal training for SIP development
- Recommendation 6: Develop and implement procedures that establish a timeline and framework to review and update all board policies systematically.
 - The district should schedule a Policy Review Session with TASB.
- Recommendation 10: Address communication deficiencies among central academic office functions to improve transparency with internal and external stakeholders.
 - The district should require the Chief Academic Officer to maintain current organizational charts on the district website.
- Recommendation 90: Update the affiliation agreement between the district and the Houston ISD Foundation to reflect actual practices and promote accountability and transparency to the public.
 - An updated MOU reflecting changes called for in the report is presently being negotiated between Counsels for HISD and the HISD Foundation.

PROGRESS SUMMARY

- 18 out of 94 recommendations have been completed.
- 76 out of 94 recommendations are presently in progress and in various phases of implementation.

PROJECT TIMELINE

November 8, 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalized LBB Report Received by Superintendent, Cabinet, and Trustees and LBB Project Manager assigned
November 8- December 16, 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-Depth Cabinet Review and Analysis of Findings and Feasibility of Implementation of Recommendations Made by Cabinet
December 9, 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet Strategic Planning and Discussion Pt. 1
December 16, 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet Strategic Planning and Discussion Pt. 2
January 16, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LBB Board Update
January 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet Strategic Planning and Discussion Pt. 3
April 19, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LBB Board Update
Spring and Summer 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation Phase 1
August 13, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LBB Board Update
Fall and Winter 20/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation Phase 2
January 2021*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LBB Board Update
April 2021*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LBB Board Update
Spring and Summer 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation Phase 3
August 2021*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LBB Board Update

*DATE TBD ONCE NEXT YEAR'S BOARD CALENDAR IS FINALIZED