

**Amarillo Independent School District
DISTRICT PLAN TO INFORM AND SUPPORT
INSTRUCTIONAL AIDES**

INTERESTED IN BECOMING CERTIFIED TEACHERS

H.B. 1130 requires the Board of Trustees to establish a local plan by January 1, 2002, to encourage the hiring of educational aides who show a desire to become certified teachers. The local plan, to be administered by the personnel department staff, is a two-part plan designed for current eligible employees and applicants for educational aide positions.

Part I: Current Eligible Employees

Certified Educational Aide Exemption Program – House Bill 571, passed by the 75th Legislature, created a college tuition and partial fee exemption program for individuals who have been employed as certified educational aides for at least one year at a public school in Texas and who are attending a public institution of higher education in Texas to become certified as a teacher. Long-term substitutes can also receive assistance through this program if they are able to document 180 days of experience as a substitute during the past five years. This program became effective during the fall semester of 1997. The program provides for an exemption of university tuition and mandatory fees based on the student's demonstrated financial need. The program is administered by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Information concerning the program is received by the district and distributed to interested district employees.

Educational Aide Release Program – Eligible educational aides are provided a maximum of 10 clock hours per week of release time (without pay) to attend teacher certification classes. The release time must be approved by the principal and assistant superintendent of personnel and may not create a hardship on the campus instructional program.

Communication and Support – School secretaries will receive annual reminders about the program and the procedures to follow when implementing the program. Eligible employees will be notified about the program availability on an annual basis. Information about the program will be included on the AISD Home Page. Participating employees will be contacted by the personnel department periodically for the purpose of tracking progress. Staff development sessions will be offered to outline the application process.

Part II: Applicants for Educational Aide Positions

Educational aide applicants will receive information in the following manner:

- available on the district's web site
- included in the "New Hire Packet" and New Hire Orientation
- presented to future teacher clubs at the high schools
- presented to AISD substitute teachers during training sessions