

Gregory-Portland ISD District of Innovation Plan

In 2015, the 84th session of the Texas Legislature passed HB 1842 which allows districts to pursue a **District of Innovation Designation**. This designation allows districts freedom from state-level regulations to deliver instructional and support services in creative and innovative ways that improve student educational outcomes. The bill provides districts with opportunities similar to those previously enjoyed by charter schools and prompts districts to determine how exactly to best utilize the designation to better serve students.

Under HB 1842, districts may identify certain requirements imposed by the Texas Education Code (TEC) “that inhibit the goals of the district and from which the district should be exempted on adoption of the plan...” Due to G-PISD’s District Improvement Plan and strategic goals for the future, G-PISD seeks exemption from all permissible provisions of the TEC as allowed in the statute.

The following allowable exemptions have been developed for implementation beginning with the 2017-2018 school year:

Chapter 25 – Admission, Transfer, and Attendance

School Start Date

(TEC §25.0811a)

TEC Section 25.0811 states that a school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.

Benefit of Exemption for G-PISD:

- Allow for balance in instructional days between first and second semester and to create more instructional time to prepare for STAAR/EOC/AP exams
- UIL activities, including academic, fine arts, and athletic, will benefit from an earlier start date by allowing practice to coincide with the school days and not during summer break
- Additional days to recover students before “drop-out/no show” date
- To maximize student performance and combat student regression over the summer
- Allow flexibility in planning Professional Development days throughout the school year as opposed to placing all days prior to the beginning of instructional days

In the future, if the need arises, those allowable exemptions (Addendum A) not currently utilized in the plan will be developed and approved for implementation only after going through the **Approval Process for Use of Remaining TEC Statute Exemption(s)** (Addendum B) developed by the District of Innovation committee.

Addendum A: Available District of Innovation Statutes

Chapter 11 – School Districts

Subchapter D. Powers and Duties of Board of Trustees of Independent School Districts

- §11.1511 (b)(5), (14) Specific Powers and Duties of Board
- §11.162 School Uniforms

Subchapter F. District-Level and Site Based Decision-Making

- §11.251 Planning and Decision-Making Process
- §11.252 District-Level Planning and Decision-Making
- §11.253 Campus Planning and Site-Based Decision-Making
- §11.255 Dropout Prevention Review

Chapter 21 – Educators

Subchapter A – General Provisions

- §21.002 Teacher Employment Contracts
- §21.003 Certification Required
 - Career and Technology Education, online and integrated
 - Bilingual Education
- §21.0031 Failure to Obtain Certification; Contract Void

Subchapter B – Certification of Educators

- §21.051 Rules Regarding Field-Based Experience and Options for Field Experience and Internships.
- §21.053 Presentation and Recording of Certificates

Subchapter C – Probationary Contracts

Subchapter D – Continuing Contracts

Subchapter E – Term Contracts

Subchapter H – Appraisals and Incentives

- §21.352 Local Role
- §21.353 Appraisal on Basis of Classroom Teaching Performance
- §21.354 Appraisal of Certain Administrators
- §21.3541 Appraisal and Professional Development System for Principals

Subchapter I – Duties and Benefits

- §21.401 Minimum Service Required
- §21.402 Minimum Salary Schedule for Certain Professional Staff
- §21.4021 Furloughs
- §21.4022 Required Process for Development of Furlough Program or Other Salary Reduction Proposal
- §21.403 Placement on Minimum Salary Schedule
- §21.4031 Professional Staff Service Records
- §21.4032 Reductions in Salaries of Classroom Teachers and Administrators
- §21.404 Planning and Preparation Time
- §21.405 Duty-Free Lunch

- §21.406 Denial of Compensation Based On Absence for Religious Observance Prohibited
- §21.407 Requiring or Coercing Teachers to Join Groups, Clubs, Committees, or Organizations: Political Affairs
- §21.408 Right To Join or Not To Join Professional Association
- §21.409 Leave Of Absence for Temporary Disability
- §21.415 Employment Contracts

Subchapter J – Staff Development

- §21.451 Staff Development Requirements
- §21.452 Developmental Leaves of Absence
- §21.458 Mentors

Chapter 22 – School District Employees and Volunteers

Subchapter A – Rights, Duties, and Benefits

- §22.001 Salary Deductions for Professional Dues
- §22.002 Assignment, Transfer, or Pledge of Compensation
- §22.003 Minimum Personal Leave Program
- §22.006 Discrimination Based on Jury Service Prohibited
- §22.007 Incentives for Early Retirement
- §22.011 Requiring or Coercing Employees to Make Charitable Contributions

Chapter 25 – Admission, Transfer, and Attendance

Subchapter C – Operation of Schools and School Attendance

- §25.0812 Last Day of School
- §25.083 School Day Interruptions
- §25.092 Minimum Attendance for Class Credit or Final Grade

Subchapter D – Student/Teacher Ratios; Class Size

- §25.111 Student/Teacher Ratios
- §25.112 Class Size
- §25.113 Notice of Class Size
- §25.114 Student/Teacher Ratios in Physical Education Classes; Class Size

Chapter 37 – Discipline; Law and Order

Subchapter A – Alternative Setting for Behavior Management

- §37.0012 Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator
- §37.002 Removal by Teacher

Chapter 44 –Fiscal Management

Subchapter B – Purchases; Contracts

- §44.031 Purchasing Contracts
- §44.0331 Management Fees Under Certain Cooperative Purchasing Contracts
- §44.0352 Competitive Sealed Proposals
- §44.042 Preference to Texas and United States Products
- §44.043 Right To Work

- §44.047 Purchase or Lease of Automated External Defibrillator

Subchapter Z – Miscellaneous Provisions

- §44.901 Energy Savings Performance Contracts
- §44.902 Long-Range Energy Plan to Reduce Consumption of Electric Energy
- §44.903 Energy-Efficient Light Bulbs in Instructional Facilities
- §44.908 Expenditure of Local Funds

Chapter 45 – School District Funds

Subchapter G – School District Depositories

- §45.205 Term of Contract
- §45.206 Bid Or Request for Proposal Notices; Bid and Proposal Forms
- §45.207 Award of Contract
- §45.208 Depository Contract; Bond
- §45.209 Investment of District Funds

Addendum B: Approval Process for Use of Remaining TEC Statute Exemption(s)

Initiating Consideration of Possible Exemption

Individual(s) desiring to utilize a statute named within the District of Innovation plan must submit a full copy of the statute for consideration from Texas Education Code (<http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/?link=ED>), along with written justification for the district to utilize exemption, to the Superintendent of Schools and the individual(s) managing District Site Based Decision Making (DSBDM) meetings with a request for consideration.

- Superintendent: Dr. Paul Clore, pclore@g-pisd.org
- District SBDM: Darla Czerwinski, Asst. Supt., dczerwinski@g-pisd.org

District SBDM

- **Advance Notice, Review:** At least two weeks in advance of a regular meeting, a copy of proposed statute and justification for consideration, along with full copy of the District of Innovation plan, is provided via email to all attendees with notice of meeting date/time. District SBDM attendees are strongly encouraged to attend the upcoming meeting to discuss possibility for exemption of proposed statute. (Copies sent via email also later provided in hard copy format at District SBDM meeting.)
- **Meeting Attendance:** At least 50% of secondary and 50% of elementary educators serving on the District SBDM must be in attendance at a meeting where proposed statute is discussed, as well as a Principal or Assistant Principal from every campus. Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent must be in attendance. If statute pertains to financial operations, the Chief Financial Officer must also be in attendance.
- **Record Keeping:** District SBDM must designate a member to record discussion (minutes) regarding the potential exemption.
- **Meeting Discussion:** In District SBDM meeting/discussion, committee reviews District of Innovation plan (particularly mentioning the statute being proposed) followed by the justification submitted by person(s) requesting that it be considered for implementation.
- If desired, discussion and development of justification for exemption may be carried forward in multiple meetings. Previously mentioned attendance requirement applies at any meeting in which statute is discussed.
- Majority of District SBDM members must vote in favor of carrying the exemption forward, and notes from their discussion (minutes) must be provided in addition to proposed statute and justification for consideration by the Board of Trustees.
- If the exemption is to be applied, the District SBDM will assign an individual to present to the school board. The board must receive a copy of the District of Innovation plan, the final version of the statute and justification/reasoning for exemption (as refined in SBDM), and a copy of the minutes recorded with specific points of discussion at the District SBDM meeting(s) as well as list of those in attendance and not in attendance for discussion(s).

Post Exemption to Website for Public View

Any exemption the school district intends to utilize will be posted on the website as an addition, attachment, or addendum to the existing District of Innovation Plan for public input for a period of 30 days.

Board of Trustees

- **Advance Notice, Review:** Documents (defined above) must be submitted to the Superintendent of Schools in electronic format at least two (2) weeks in advance of an upcoming board meeting. Board members will be provided documents for advance review.
- Designated individual(s) from the District SBDM will present material and the Board will discuss.
- If Trustees determine via majority vote whether an exemption can, or should, be applied for the purpose(s) intended, the exemption will become effective.
- Minutes from the Board meeting will document the date/time that exemption became effective.

Report to SBDM

- Designated individual(s) who presented at the Board meeting will update the District SBDM committee as to Board discussion (if any) and whether the statute was maintained as an exemption for the school district.