



## Plainview ISD District of Innovation Plan

### Introduction

House Bill 1842, passed during the 84th Texas Legislative Session provides public school districts the opportunity to seek designation as a District of Innovation to obtain exemptions from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code. On Thursday, December 19, 2019, the Board of Trustees adopted a resolution to initiate the process of designation as a District of Innovation.

### Term

The term of the District of Innovation Plan, as outlined by the Texas Education Agency, is five years from the passage of the approved District of Innovation Plan, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The Education Improvement Council (EIC) will continually monitor the effectiveness of the Plan and recommend to the Board any suggested modifications as needed to address innovative disruptions.

Uniform School Start and End Date
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Exemption from: TEC §25.0811; TEC §25.0812
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TEC §25.0811 states a school district may not begin student instruction before the 4th Monday of August. TEC §25.0812 states a school district may not schedule the last day of school for students for a school year before May 15

### Innovation:

Plainview ISD believes that increased flexibility in determining the start and end of the instructional calendar will increase student achievement, improve attendance, and empower the district to meet the social and emotional needs of the students. Setting the local limits for starting school no earlier than August 1 and ending no earlier than May 1 will have the following benefits:

- The instructional days of the fall semester (finishing before the Christmas holidays) could be increased, making the number of days closer to equal the days of the spring semester. This allows for a more balanced approach to the scope and sequence of all classes but greatly benefits single semester courses
- Allows for a more equal distribution of the number of days in each grading period
- Allows students and teachers to participate in summer courses offered by post-secondary institutions
- Allows for more flexibility in scheduling professional development during the school year
- Allows for the possibility of more frequent holidays, giving staff and students needed respite

Teacher Certification
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Exemption from: : TEC §21.003(a); TEC§ 21.057
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TEC §21.003(a) states a person may not be employed as a teacher by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued by the appropriate state agency. In the event a district cannot locate a certified teacher for a position or a teacher is teaching a subject outside of their certification, the district must request emergency certification from the Texas Education Agency and/or State Board of Educator Certification. TEC§ 21.057 requires that a school district provide parental notification if the district assigns an inappropriately certified or uncertified teacher to the same classroom for more than 30 consecutive instructional days.

**Innovation:**

Plainview ISD will continue to seek highly effective certified educators for teaching positions. By establishing local certification in lieu of requirements set in the education code, Plainview ISD will be able to best serve students by employing high quality educators that might not ordinarily qualify under the traditional teacher certification pathway. Examples of this could be an experienced university professor being allowed to teach an upper level academic course, a local technician with a master level skill teaching students in a Career and Technology class, or a teacher already certified in one subject being allowed to teach a different subject as long as he/she possessed sufficient university hours in the different subject.

In order to best serve students, all decisions on teacher certification and assignments will be handled locally, and notification of District Teaching Permits (local certification) shall not be necessary.

The principal may submit to the superintendent and/or the designee a request for District Teaching Permit (local certification) outlining the individuals credentials/qualifications.

Qualification for local certification could include, but is not limited to:

- professional work experience
- formal training/education in the content area
- active/relevant professional industry certification/registration
- a combination of work experience, training, and education
- demonstration of successful experience working with students

The superintendent or his/her designee will then approve the request if the individual possesses the knowledge, skills and experience required of the position and feel the individual could be an asset to students, by providing quality instruction.

An employee working under a District Teaching Permit who does not hold a state teaching certification will not receive a contract, but will work on an at-will basis and have a separate pay

scale from state certified teachers. The District Teaching Permit will become void at the end of the school year in which it is issued.

A teacher certification waiver, state permit applications, notifications, or other paperwork will not be submitted to the Texas Education Agency or other district stakeholders.

An employee working under a District Teaching Permit (local certification) will be appraised under the same teacher appraisal system as required of all certified teachers and will adhere to the same professional standards, ethics, and requirements of all certified teachers. Also, where applicable and appropriate, employees working under a District Teaching Permit will be encouraged to seek state certification in the area that they are teaching.

All state certified teachers will continue to receive a contract and will be paid according to the state and district teacher pay scale.

Class Size requirement
Exemption from: TEC §25.112; TEC §25.113

TEC §25.112 requires districts to maintain a class size of 22 students or less for Kindergarten – 4th Grade classes. TEC §25.113 requires a district to notify parents of waivers or exceptions to class size limits. Districts are required by state law to maintain a 22:1 student to teacher ratio for Kindergarten – 4th Grade classes

**Innovation:**

Plainview ISD recognizes that smaller class sizes are beneficial and will continue to use the 22:1 student/teacher ratio for Kindergarten-4<sup>th</sup> grade in projecting the number of staff needed for future school years. If all the classes on a particular grade level reach the 22:1 ratio, the district will determine if it best suits the district to enroll the student at another campus, allow the current campus to exceed the 22:1 limit, or hire an additional classroom teacher to compensate for the additional students. No campus will be allowed to exceed 24:1 student/teacher ratio in each section of a grade level. The Plainview ISD school board will be informed at the next convenient meeting when a grade level is exceeding the 22:1 ratio, however parental notification in each instance will be optional. Each section in a grade level will receive new students equally. Transfers will not be allowed into a campus if it will increase the ratio over 22:1.

Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator
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Exemption from: TEC §37.0012
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TEC§37.0012 requires a person be designated to serve as the Campus Behavior Coordinator (CBC) who is primarily responsible for maintaining student discipline and implementation of Chapter 37 and allows duties imposed on a campus principal or other campus administrator to be performed by the campus behavior coordinator.

**Innovation:**

Plainview ISD has always taken a collaborative approach to student discipline in the campuses. With exemption from the requirement and duties of the Campus Behavior Coordinator, principals will be able to create the system where the duties of the CBC are shared among the administrative staff. This allows a more personal and effective approach to student discipline and better communication with parents.

Limitation on Out of School Suspension Assignments
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Exemption from: TEC §37.005 (c)
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TEC §37.005 (c) states a school district may not assign an out-of-school suspension as a disciplinary consequence to a student below grade three.

**Innovation:**

Plainview ISD values a supportive and conducive learning environment for all students in a classroom and throughout the school. If an occasion arises where a student or small groups of students are disrupting that environment, correction and disciplinary consequences are applied. There are times when the student continues the disruption beyond the classroom and disrupts other environments throughout the school. The statute that limits out-of-school suspensions to only students in third grade or above places an unnecessary burden on the school and further limits techniques available for maintaining classrooms where quality learning can take place. Although out-of-school suspension assignments for young students will not be common, they will be used as necessary to maintain order in the classroom and encourage parental engagement in the growth of the students.

Minimum attendance for Class Credit or Final Grade Requirement
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Exemption from: TEC §25.092
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Texas Education Code Section 25.092, commonly referred to as the 90 percent rule, provides conditions for credit or a final grade for a class based on student attendance for at least 90 percent of the days a class is offered. The law requires districts to award class credit to students based on the time a student is present in a classroom for instruction, rather than mastery of content and subject proficiency.

**Innovation:**

Flexibility in the abstaining from the requirement means the district won't have to penalize students who miss class due to enriching activities, academic activities, or other extenuating circumstances that supports the Plainview ISD mission, vision and beliefs. This will particularly be applicable in the Ash Program under PHS.

Inter-District Transfers of a Student
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Exemption from: TEC §25.036
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Texas Education Code Section 25.036 required that if a student is accepted in the district as an inter-district transfer, the approval must stand for the remainder of the school year.

**Innovation:**

Plainview ISD is seeking to eliminate the provision requiring a one-year commitment after accepting inter-district transfer students. In rare circumstances, a non-resident student's behavior may warrant the kind of consequences contemplated by this exemption. These are students assigned behavioral consequences of suspension, placement in a disciplinary alternative education program or expulsion. In addition, students with excessive absences or failing grades may also be subject to immediate removal