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DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLAN

DISTRICT CONTEXT

The Galveston Independent School District serves a little less than 7000 students. Galveston ISD is proud of the accomplishments of our hardworking students, outstanding teachers and staff, engaged and committed families and community members. The District has realized exciting gains in the four-year graduation rate (up from 79% in 2011 to 95% in 2015), a decrease in the dropout rate (down from 2.2% in 2011 to .5% in 2015), and an increase in the number of schools meeting state accountability standards and earning distinction designations (up from 3 in 2013 to 9 in 2017). Galveston ISD is also home to a national demonstration school for Magnet Schools of America, a twice nominated Blue Ribbon School, the nationally acclaimed IncubATOR program for young entrepreneurs, a state recognized school that earned all distinctions, and the Texas National Principal for 2017.

The Local Innovation Plan that follows will help advance efforts aligned to the following:

Our Vision

Island of Excellence – World of Opportunity

Our Mission

Educate, Engage, and Empower EACH student for a life of Excellence

Our Strategic Objectives

Teaching and Learning

GISD will implement viable and innovative curriculum and effective instructional programs that address the needs of all learners.

Whole Child

GISD will ensure the holistic needs of our students and families are met.

Human Capital Management System

GISD will recruit, develop, and retain exceptional personnel to assure a life of excellence for each and every student.

Funding and Finance

GISD will optimize resources for student success.

Facilities

Exemplary facilities will maximize current and future district-wide activities that support and enhance student excellence and district performance.

Communications

GISD will educate, engage and empower the GISD community to be well-informed.

Student Achievement Objectives

1. Eighty percent of all students will exhibit satisfactory or above performance on state assessments. Students below satisfactory performance will demonstrate more than one year of academic growth.
2. Fifty percent of all students will EXCEED PROGRESS in reading and mathematics on state assessments.
3. Galveston ISD schools will be the primary choice for families in the Galveston Community.
4. The achievement gap by race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status will be no greater than ten percentage points on all academic measures.
5. Ninety-five percent of students will graduate with 12 or more college hours and/or industry certification.

HOUSE BILL 1842 (84th Session)

House Bill 1842 allows Texas school districts to pursue the designation of ‘District of Innovation,’ a provision that enables traditional independent school districts to access many of the flexibilities that are currently available to open-enrollment charter schools. House Bill 1842 was also intended to generate greater flexibility, local control, and innovation to better meet the needs of Texas students. Through the development and approval of a ‘Local Innovation Plan,’ a district may obtain certain exemptions from the Texas Education Code to advance their local strategic priorities.

GISD District of Innovation Timeline

November 2, 2016	Information shared at Board Curriculum Meeting (Process & Timelines along with sample Innovation Plans)
January 11, 2017	Proposal for Resolution for Districts of Innovation shared at Board Curriculum Meeting
January 18, 2017	Board passed Resolution
January 23, 2017	DEC Discussion around District of Innovation
February 9, 2017	Information about District of Innovation shared with Strategic 40 Tab 2 of Strategic Binder

GISD is engaged in Strategic Planning which can serve as the District of Innovation Plan

February 24, 2017	Action Team Leaders review District of Innovation Components
March 7, 2017	Board Curriculum Meeting Update on District of Innovation
March 20, 2017	Update on District of Innovation for DEC
May 3, 2017	Action Team Leaders cite possible exemptions for their Action Plans
May 12, 2017	Action Plans presented to the Strategic 40
May 15, 2017	District Education Committee (DEC) Review of DOI Opportunities
June 21, 2017	Resolution adopted June 21, 2017
July 19, 2017	Public Hearing and Committee Appointment
September 11, 2017	Meeting with DEC to share DOI Meeting Date and cite proposed exemptions
September 13, 2017	DOI Committee Meeting
September 28, 2017	DOI Committee Meeting

LOCAL INNOVATION PLAN

Term

The term of the Local Innovation Plan will begin on **January 1, 2018** and will end on **January 1, 2023**, unless terminated, amended, and/or renewed in accordance with the law.

School Start Date

Exemption

Texas Education Code Section 25.0811 specifies that “a school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.”

Benefits of Exemption

To better balance the school year such that the number of days in each semester is relatively equal and each six weeks period is approximately six weeks in length, the District seeks

flexibility to begin the school year within the week of the third Monday in August. Beginning the school year earlier may also incur the following advantages:

- More instructional days in advance of standardized assessments, such as Advanced Placement and STAAR exams;
- Additional instructional time after the last official day of school for students retaking a STAAR exam over the summer;
- Completion of fall semester exams before dismissing for Winter Break;
- Opportunity for students to take advantage of the full array of summer dual-credit offerings at institutions of higher education; and
- More balanced distribution of instructional time for one-semester coursework, as students who currently take a one-semester course in the fall have fewer instructional days to master course content than students who take the same one-semester course in the spring.

Implementation Guidance

When planning the student and staff calendars, the District shall ensure the following:

- Changes to the student and staff calendars specified in this proposal must not go into effect until the 2018-19 school year.
- Upon adoption of the Local Innovation Plan, the public must be notified that the school year may start earlier than the fourth Monday in August in the following school year.
- Winter Break should serve as the midpoint of the school year.

Teacher Certification

Exemptions

Texas Education Code Sections 21.003, 21.053, and 21.044 and 19 Texas Administrative Code Chapter 231 limit the District's ability to hire instructors for hard-to-fill and high-demand courses when high quality, certified teachers are not available in:

- Languages Other Than English including Bilingual
- Career and technical education (CTE) and
- Dual-credit

Benefits of Exemptions

To staff hard-to-fill and high-demand positions in the areas of career and technical education and dual-credit coursework in grades 9 through 12 and Languages Other Than English including Bilingual, the District seeks flexibility to recruit, select, and place instructors who do not hold a certificate or permit required by these statutes when high quality, certified teachers are not

available. Flexibility on teacher certification in these areas may also incur the following advantages:

- Ability to hire credentialed postsecondary instructors to teach dual-credit courses to students in grade 9 through 12;
- Ability to hire instructors with industry experience that align to career and technical pathways offered to District students in grades 9 through 12; and
- Opportunity to increase the number of career and technical and dual-credit course offerings to students in grades 9 through 12.
- Opportunity to staff schools needing bilingual teachers or teachers of Languages Other Than English

To staff schools creatively by allowing existing teachers to teach elective courses outside of their standard certification areas that tap their passions and fulfill student interests.

Implementation Guidance

When developing parameters for hiring instructors in career and technical education and dual-credit coursework or bilingual or Languages Other than English who do not have the requisite certificate or permit, the District shall ensure the following:

- The District must first consider high quality, certified teachers.
- The District must establish criteria for selection of high quality, non-certified candidates.
- The District must implement a rigorous on-boarding and training program for newly-hired, non-certified instructors. The program must emphasize support in classroom management and effective instructional practice.
- Non-certified instructors hired under this provision must be evaluated under the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS)
- The District must ensure that the Human Capital Management Division meets with principals who hire teachers under this category the first semester to conduct a performance review regarding teachers' status.

Minimum Attendance for Class Credit

TEC 25.092 states that 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.

Benefits of Exemptions

Through the allowances of the District Local Innovation Plan, the district will create alternative methods for students who need greater flexibility with school attendance and coursework

completion to earn their credits. Flexibility on waiving 90 percent of the days allows the following advantages:

- Ability to consider the unique personal circumstances, challenges, and academic programming needs of affected students.
- Ability to develop local assessments/protocols for awarding credit to include demonstration of mastery of course content.

Implementation Guidance

When developing parameters for awarding credit or a final grade for a class, the District shall ensure the following:

- The District has developed guidelines for identifying students with hardships.
- The District has clearly defined options for students to be able to be awarded credit that have been developed by a team of individuals that represent grades K – 12.

Instructional Minutes

Texas Education Code §25.081: For each school year, a school district must operate so that the district provides at least 75,600 minutes of instruction, including intermissions and recesses.

Benefits of Exemptions

In order to provide teachers much needed time to plan horizontally and vertically, the District seeks flexibility to incorporate districtwide release time for teachers for the purpose of planning and professional learning. Release time allows the following:

- Opportunities for teachers to meet and plan across campuses/content areas/grade levels without incurring substitute costs
- Opportunities for teachers to participate in professional learning without incurring substitute costs

Implementation Guidance

When building in the instructional minutes, the district will include minutes that will allow for six early release days so that teachers will have time to participate in planning and professional learning throughout the school year. The District will ensure the following:

- Professional learning will support district initiatives.
- Three of the six days will be used for the purpose of campus specific professional learning or planning based on campus data.
- District professional learning needs will be determined by district performance data.

Board Approved May 19, 2021

Group Health Benefits for School Employees

Texas Education Code §22.004(i) Group Health Benefits for School Employees states that a school district may not make group health coverage available to its employees pursuant to TEC §22.004(b) after the date a district implements the program of coverages provided under Chapter 1579 of the Texas Insurance Code.

Benefits of Exemptions

In order for district employees to have flexibility in the design of group health insurance benefits to meet their needs, an exemption from Texas Education Code §22.004 (i) is warranted.

The insurance options, not only offer flexibility, but may also attract prospective employees because they find the options appealing.

Implementation Guidance

District employees will have the opportunity to participate in focus groups to become informed about the insurance options that are available to them.

District employees will be able to make more informed decisions after they learn of coverages available through the Texas School Health Benefit Program.

District of Innovation Committee Members

Molly Allmond	Curriculum and Instruction
LeeRoy Amador	GISD Chief of Police
Elizabeth Bennett	Curriculum and Instruction
Kateri Connally	Ball High School Teacher
Paul Byers	GISD Maintenance Department
Jennifer Douglas	Child Nutrition
Jean Fullen	Human Capital Management
Julia Hatcher	Parent
Becky Hernandez	Oppe Elementary
April Horner	Oppe Elementary
Julie Idema	GISD Police Department
Amber Jackson	Parker Elementary
Keri Launius	Curriculum and Instruction
Kelli Moulton	Superintendent
Mariana Mueller	Instructional Technology
Elizabeth Murphy	Parker Elementary
Dyann Polzin	Human Capital Management
Alice Prets	Oppe Elementary
Julia Ramirez	Ball High School Administrator
Billie Rinaldi	Community Member
Annette Scott	Curriculum and Instruction
Monica Wagner	Parent