



DISTRICT OF INNOVATION

PURSUING INNOVATION, AUTONOMY AND LOCAL CONTROL TO TRANSFORM THE WAY WE EDUCATE OUR FUTURE





APPROVAL

The **District of Innovation** Plan was approved by the Midland ISD School Board on February 12, 2018 and Amended by the Board May 20, 2019.

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BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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District 1

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District 3

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District 2

Bryan Murry, *Secretary*
District 7

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District 4

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District 5

MISSION STATEMENT

All students will graduate prepared and ready for college or career.

CORE ACTION VALUES

Authenticity
Integrity
Awareness
Courage
Perseverance
Faith
Purpose
Vision
Focus
Enthusiasm
Service
Leadership

SCHOOL BOARD GOALS

The School Board defines “improving student outcomes for all students” as meaning that:

- 1.The percentage of students in kindergarten–grade 2 who are reading on or above grade level on two measures shall increase from 50 percent to 75 percent by the end of school year 2020.
- 2.The percentage of students in grades 3–8 who meet passing standards on both reading and mathematics STAAR shall increase from 52 percent to 75 percent by the end of school year 2020.
- 3.The four-year graduation rate shall increase from 85 percent for the graduating class of 2015 to 95 percent for the graduating class of 2020.



THEORY OF ACTION

Every Midland ISD staff member shall have a growth mindset and a “no excuses” philosophy.

Midland ISD shall begin to transition from the Managed Instruction theory of action to an Earned Autonomy theory of action with the goal of having implemented a System of Great Schools theory of action by 2027.

INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE - THEORY OF ACTION



In an Earned Autonomy theory of action, the central administration shall directly administer some campuses and shall grant varying levels of autonomy to other campuses. The central administration shall clearly define operational thresholds that deserve higher levels of autonomy and the specific autonomies earned, consistent with the School Board's student outcome goals and constraints.

The administration shall methodically identify paths for performance improvement, align educator incentives with student performance, and ensure that educator placement is a function of student needs rather than adult preferences.

DISTRICT OF INNOVATION - THEORY OF ACTION

Responsibility for accomplishing the School Board's student outcome goals while operating within the Board's constraints shall vary by context between the central administration and the campus administration.

Within no more than five years, the district shall have begun transition to a System of Great Schools theory of action where central administration grants autonomy to schools, empowers parents to make choices, creates performance contracts with campuses, annually evaluates performance of and demand for schools, and makes strategic decisions regarding growing access to high-performing schools and addressing low performers.



To begin this transition, the district shall immediately explore in-District charter opportunities. Campus performance contracts shall require the campus to accomplish the Board's student outcome goals while operating within the Board's other constraints.



DISTRICT OF INNOVATION - WHAT IS A DISTRICT OF INNOVATION?



WHAT IS A DISTRICT OF INNOVATION?

The **District of Innovation** concept was passed into law during the 84th Legislative Session in House Bill 1842, allowing eligible Texas public school districts to obtain exemptions from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code.

The law allows traditional independent school districts to access most flexibilities available to Texas' open enrollment charter schools. To access these flexibilities, and obtain exemptions, the District must create a Local Innovation Plan.

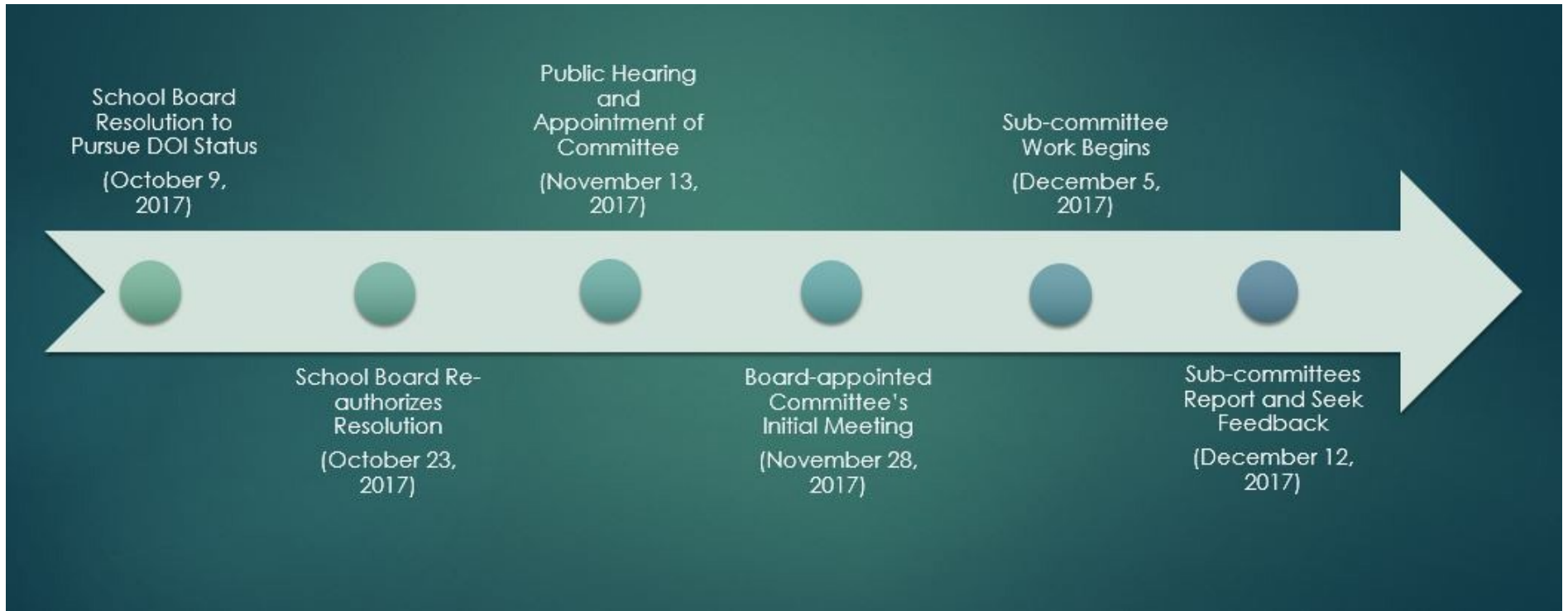


HOW LONG DOES IT LAST?

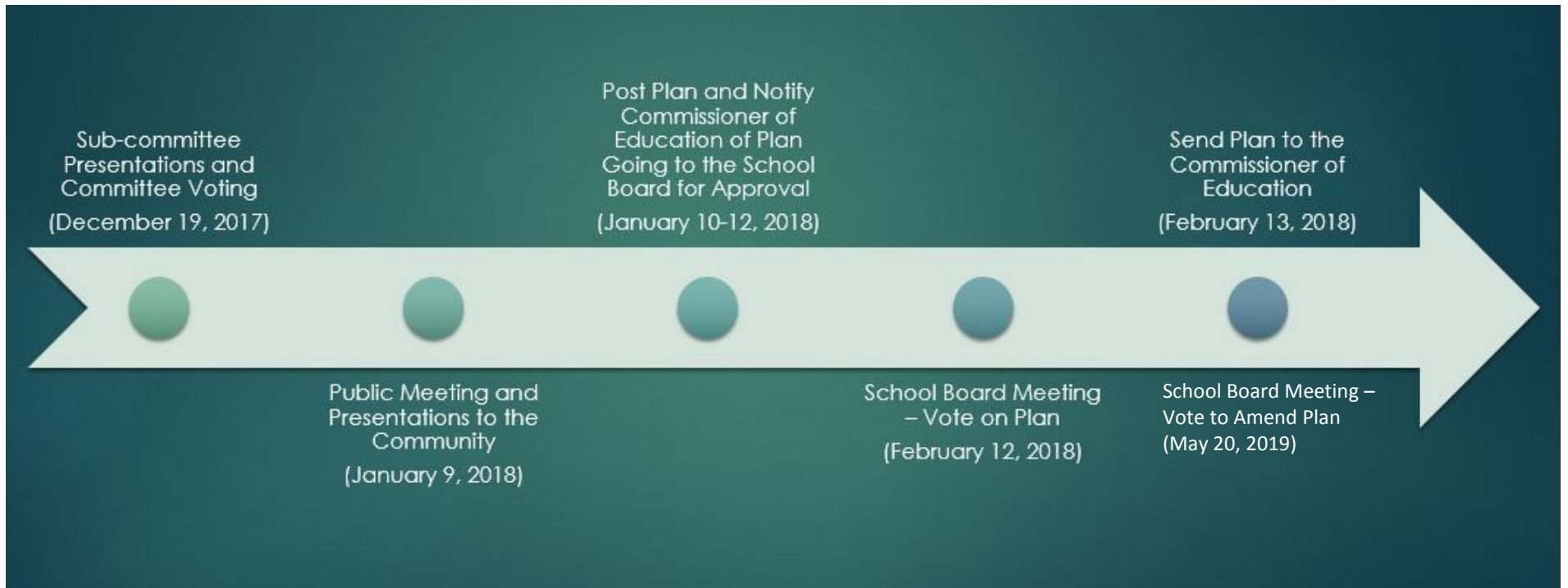
The Midland ISD **District of Innovation** plan has a term of up to five years beginning at the start of 2018-19 school year and terminate at the end of the 2022-23 school year.

Exemptions are NOT locked in for five years. The **District of Innovation** committee will review the plan as needed to confirm consistent alignment with the needs of the district. Any recommended changes to the approved plan will filter through the **District of Innovation** committee and Midland ISD Board of Trustees for approval.

DISTRICT OF INNOVATION TIMELINE



DISTRICT OF INNOVATION TIMELINE



DISTRICT OF INNOVATION 2017-18 COMMITTEE

Orlando Riddick, Superintendent
Patrick Jones, Chief Academic Officer
James Riggen, Chief Operations Officer
Darla Moss, Chief Financial Officer
Jill Rivera, Exec. Director of Professional Development
Elise Kail, Exec. Director of Accountability
Jeff Horner, Exec. Director of Secondary Education
Diane Lopez, Exec. Director of Elementary Education
Kellie Ebenstein, Exec. Director of Elementary Education
Joanna Rowley, Exec. Director of Bilingual/ESL Education
Dawn Miller, Exec. Director of Special Education
Kim Evans, Director of Career & Technology Education
Deb Shaw, Director of Fine Arts
Candi Callas, Director of English Language Arts (ELA)
Stan VanHoozer, Lee HS Principal
Shannon Torres, Midland Freshman Principal
Deborah Kendrick, San Jacinto JH Principal
Leslie Goodrum, Elementary Principal
Julie Sims, Elementary Principal

Iliana Bermea, Elementary Principal
Alan Pitkin, Secondary Teacher
Cory Callaway, Secondary Teacher
Jeffery Johnson, Secondary Teacher
Julie Worster, Secondary Teacher
Moriah Wallace, Secondary Teacher
Douglas Whitman, Secondary Teacher
Faron Holik, Secondary Teacher
Michele Krebs, Secondary Teacher
Tommy Duncan, Secondary Teacher
Brandi Wheeler, Secondary Teacher
Leslie Truax, Secondary Teacher
Stephanie Valma, Secondary Teacher
Nickolaus Ruiz, Secondary Teacher
Katria Kimble, Secondary Teacher
Stephanie Chrane, Elementary Counselor
Carol Schumpert, Elementary Teacher
Monica Murphy, Elementary Teacher
Aleida Soto Ruiz, Elementary Teacher

DISTRICT OF INNOVATION 2017-18 COMMITTEE

Robin Alford, Elementary Teacher
Leesha Seidel, Elementary Teacher
Sarah Cardiel, Elementary Teacher
Lynne Chalker, Elementary Teacher
Erin Lloyd, Elementary Teacher
Kim Wiginton, Elementary Teacher
Alexia Turley, Elementary Teacher
Nancy Ward, Elementary Teacher
Shirley Smith, Elementary Teacher
Megan Whiles, Elementary Teacher
Cathy McCollum, Elementary Teacher
Denise Malm, Elementary Teacher
Diana Boles, Elementary Teacher
Tonya Gilstrap, Elementary Teacher
Corina Flores, Elementary Teacher
Paula Hudspeth, Elementary Teacher
Katy Hutchins, Elementary Teacher
Michelle Hammon, Elementary Teacher

Ana Madrid, Elementary Teacher
Makalee Cater, Student
Alexander Alvarado, Student
Miles Baker, Student
Madison Castro, Student
Jessica Pacheco Gutierrez, Student
Cassandra Quilimaco, Student
Mike Mills, Educate Midland
Hiedi Kirk, Parent/Community Member
Kristen Andrews, Parent/Community Member
Summer Belloni, Community Member
Kaci Beth McDaniel, Community Member
Francene Kilgore Sanchez Slattery, Community Member
Jennifer McDowell, Community Member
Becki Murphy Wilson, Community Member
Melissa Ware, Community Member
Kristen Betton, Community Member
Scott Betton, Community Member

TEXAS EDUCATION CODE EXEMPTIONS

The **District of Innovation** committee worked incredibly hard to research and create a Local Innovation Plan seeking exemptions from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code.

The **District of Innovation** committee presented their recommendations for Midland ISD during a Public Meeting on January 9, 2018.

The School Board of Trustees voted to approve the plan during the February 12, 2018 School Board Meeting.

The School Board of Trustees voted to amend the plan during the May 20, 2019 School Board Meeting.

Texas Education Code exemptions:

1. TEC 21.003 Certification Required
2. TEC 21.458 Mentors
3. TEC 25.081 Operation of Schools
4. TEC 25.0811 First Day of Instruction
5. TEC 25.082 Early Release/Length of School Day
6. TEC 25.087 Absences for College, University, or Military Visits
7. TEC 25.092 Minimum Attendance for Class Credit or Final Grade
8. TEC 25.111 Student/Teacher Ratio
9. TEC 25.112 Class Size
10. TEC 25.113 Notice of Class Size
11. TEC 37.0012 Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator

CERTIFICATION REQUIRED

TEC 21.003 requires that a person may not be employed as a teacher by a district unless the person holds an appropriate certification or permit issued by the appropriate state agency.

Exemption Rationale: To allow the district flexibility in hiring teachers with a focus on career and technology, but also including English Language Arts & Reading, Social Studies, foreign languages, (STEAM) Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics. The District will create a standard to determine qualifications, such as other testing options and/or qualified experiences and work history. The District will continue to seek certified teachers and retain existing teachers in the areas being considered.

Benefits of the exemption:

- Creates the potential to afford more students the opportunity to take a wider variety of courses
- Creates flexibility to recruit teachers from the field, including individuals from trades or vocations with industry knowledge and real world experience
- Creates opportunities for community college instructors to offer additional dual credit and career preparation opportunities
- Creates opportunities to enrich teacher applicant pools



Mentors

TEC 21.458 sets eligibility requirements for teacher mentors and mentees.

Exemption Rationale:

To allow the district flexibility to assign mentors to more experienced teachers in need of assistance and making those assignments based on the needs and scope of capacity of the district to help expand the available pool of mentor teachers.

Benefits of the exemption:

- Increase the number of mentors available to help build capacity
- Ability to increase capacity in more experienced teachers that are experiencing challenges



OPERATION OF SCHOOLS

TEC 25.081 that districts are required to provide 75,600 minutes of instruction (including intermissions and recess).

Exemption Rationale: To allow the district flexibility in calculating minutes of instruction that could possibly vary from the 75,600 minutes required in statute.

Benefits of the exemption:

- Permit the district to offer alternative programming designed to fit the needs of student without having to apply for an annual waiver.
- Flexibility to adjust minutes of instruction can reinforce personalized learning and will better meet individual student needs.
- Students in non-traditional program could acquire credit without meeting the state minutes.
- It would allow the first and second semester to be somewhat balanced
- Provides additional professional development and collaboration opportunities for educators, social-emotional benefits for students, and will allow for accommodations during parent-teacher conferences.
- Allow more flexibility for targeted instruction for remedial or enrichment activities
- More flexible calendar.
- The ability to alter/adjust the length of the day or school year due to inclement weather or other emergencies.
- Provide more time for teachers to plan, collaborate, and prepare for instruction that better meets the needs of students or lengthen the school day to promote innovative programs that increase graduation rates through credit recovery.
- Shortened days scheduled strategically throughout the school year will result in teachers being better prepared.
- Allow for embedded professional learning time.

FIRST DAY OF INSTRUCTION

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

Exemption Rationale: To allow the district flexibility in starting school earlier than the fourth Monday in August.

Benefits of the exemption:

- Balancing instructional days within each semester allows for each six weeks period to be approximately six weeks in length.
- More instructional days in advance of standardized assessments.
- Aligns with college schedules so that students can take advantage of summer offerings at institutions of higher education.
- Provides more frequent breaks throughout the year.
- Flexibility in the schedule to provide more support for our District Wide PLC initiative.
- Innovative scheduling allows for more intentional teacher professional development throughout the school year.
- Benefit students in the area of social emotional learning who are transitioning from elementary to middle, middle to high, and high to senior high by giving those students additional time and support to enable them to adjust socially and emotionally to their new campus environments.



EARLY RELEASE/ LENGTH OF SCHOOL DAY

TEC 25.082 (a) specifies “a school day shall be at least seven hours (420 minutes) each day; including intermissions and recesses.”

Exemption Rationale: To allow the district flexibility on school days with fewer than 240 minutes to count toward minutes of instruction.

Benefits of the exemption:

- Flexibility to the length of the school day promotes innovative programs
- Provide adequate time for teachers to plan, collaborate and prepare instruction that better meets student needs
- Provides time to evaluate student work to adapt instruction to student needs
- Shortened days, such as monthly or at the end of each grading period, will result in all teachers being adequately prepared for instruction
- Allow for embedded professional development and increase student achievement.

ABSENCES FOR COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY, OR MILITARY VISITS

TEC 25.087 states that students are excused for a limit of two days for college, university or military visits.

Exemption Rationale:

Due to our location requiring extended travel, our students will have more flexibility and opportunity to make more college, university or military visits.

Benefits of the exemption:

- Expands college, university or military visits to include those outside of West Texas and/or the state of Texas
- Increase the number of days from two days to four days



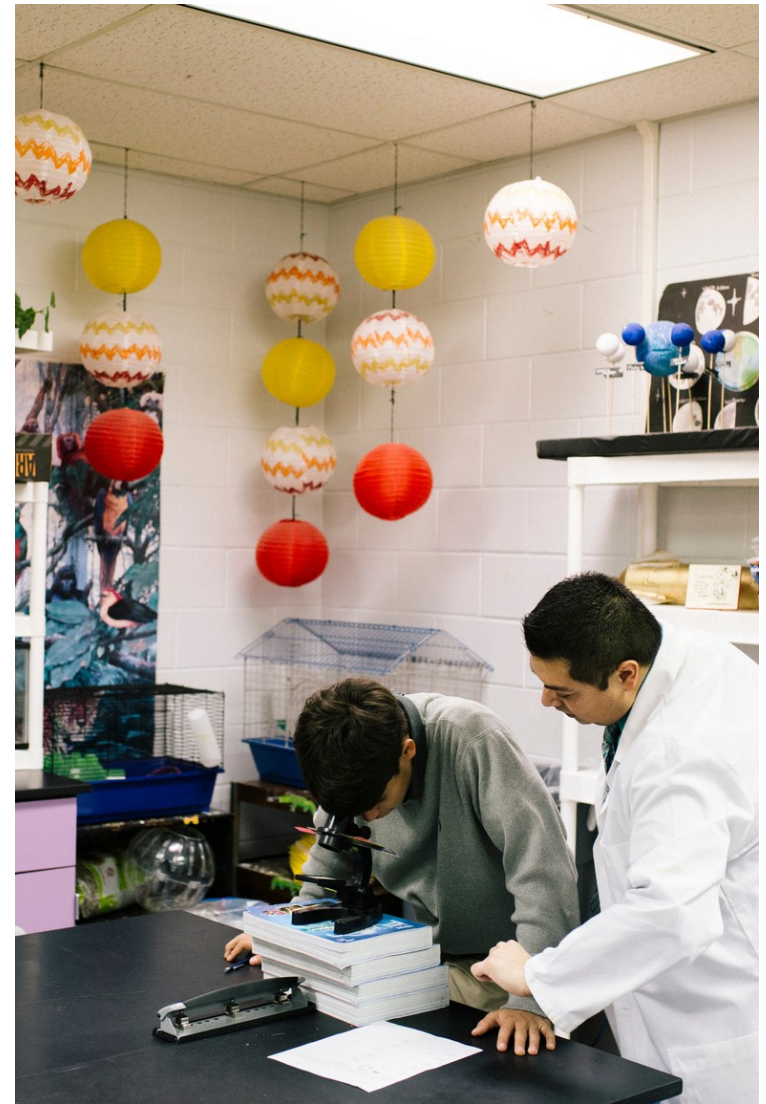
MINIMUM ATTENDANCE FOR CLASS CREDIT OR FINAL GRADE

TEC 25.092 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 also provides provisions for students who are in attendance at least 75 percent of the days a class is offered, in that he/she may be given credit or a final grade if the student completes a plan approved by the principal that meets the instructional requirements of the class.

Exemption Rationale: To allow students additional opportunities to obtain and/or recover credits in an innovative format. The district believes that a student's learning outcomes should be the determining factor in earning credit and a grade rather than measures such as "seat time" that do not consider the real objectives of the educational experience.

Benefits of the exemption:

- Gives flexibility in time, location, and instructional methods of meeting the needs of students that allow for blended learning
- Empower students and parents by providing them with a voice and choice in determining how educational needs can be met
- Increased active learning opportunities
- Provide individual student education plans



STUDENT/TEACHER RATIO, CLASS SIZE, NOTICE OF CLASS SIZE

TECs 22.111, 25.112, and 25.113 require public school districts to maintain a 22:1 student to teacher ratio for Kindergarten-4th grade classes. When any class exceeds this limit, then the district must complete and file a waiver with the Texas Education Agency. These waivers have never been rejected by Texas Education Agency. Therefore, this represents a bureaucratic step unnecessary for the Education action of our students. Additionally, a letter must be sent home to the parents of each student in the class informing them that a waiver has been filed.

Exemption Rationale: To allow the district flexibility in grades Kindergarten-4th grade to increase class sizes from 22:1 when deemed appropriate and in the best interest of students. The district will continue to work diligently with principals to collaborate and make appropriate recommendations that impact class sizes. The Midland ISD School Board will continue to receive a report listing any K-4th grade classes that have exceeded the 22:1 ratio.

An example of what occurs currently without this exemption: In the 5th six week period, a new student moves into a campus that has three 1st grade teachers and 22 students in each class. Current TEC guidelines and administrative requirements require one of the classes to be split into smaller classes or a waiver must be requested.

Benefits of the exemption:

- Provide flexibility to adjust the maximum class size when it is determined to be in the best interest of the students.
- Minimize disruptions to established class sizes.
- Increase opportunities to innovate classroom models.
- Increase opportunities to build capacity and better prepare student teachers and/or non certified personnel by allowing them gain classroom experience in a team teaching classroom environment alongside a certified teacher.
- When students participate in special programs there may be situations when classroom numbers exceed the 22:1 ratio.
- Allows more opportunity/flexibility for students to access schools of choice. such as magnet campuses.

DESIGNATION OF CAMPUS BEHAVIOR COORDINATOR

TEC 37.0012 requires that 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.

Exemption Rationale: To allow the district to better support a collaborative approach to the development of effective, individualized responses to discipline issues.



Benefits of the exemption:

- Allows campuses the flexibility to assign person or persons most knowledgeable about the student to develop the individualized discipline plan with teachers, student, and family;
- Supports individualized and innovative approaches to discipline management;
- Creates more personal and effective approach to student discipline, decreasing classroom removals and increasing exposure to academic material as appropriate;
- Improves communication between families and schools