



## ***Scurry-Rosser ISD District of Innovation Plan***

**I. INTRODUCTION:** House Bill 1842, passed during the 84th Legislative Session, permits Texas public school districts to become Districts of Innovation and to obtain an exemption from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code. On November 28, 2016, the Scurry-Rosser Independent School District's Board of Trustees ("Board") passed a resolution to initiate the process of designation as a District of Innovation in order to increase local control over District operations and to support innovation and local initiatives to improve educational outcomes for the benefit of students and the community.

**II. TERM:** The term of the (Revised) Plan is for five years, beginning May 2022 and ending May 2027, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The Committee will continually monitor the effectiveness of the Plan and recommend to the Board any suggested amendments to the Plan. Any amendment adopted by the Board will not extend the term of this Plan. The District may not implement two separate plans at any one time.

**III. A COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM:** The plan's goal is to allow Scurry-Rosser ISD the flexibility to create an educational plan that best equips these students to achieve their highest level of success and preparedness. This comprehensive educational program is guided by the school board's mission statement, district goals, and core beliefs.

**IV. RENEWAL:** All sections of the Plan and exemptions shall be reviewed and SRISD will follow all steps in 19 TAC 102.1307 for adoptions of a new local District of Innovation Plan.

**Mission Statement:** The mission of Scurry-Rosser ISD is to prepare students to be passionate learners and influential leaders who strive for excellence and fulfill their potential.

### **REQUIREMENTS OF THE EDUCATION CODE (TEC) THAT INHIBIT THE GOALS OF THE DISTRICT AND WILL BE EXEMPT FROM UPON ADOPTION OF THIS PLAN**

**Minimum Attendance for Class Credit (90% rule) - TEC Code 25.092 Requiring Exemption:** 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.

**The benefit of Exemption for SRISD:** As SRISD continues to expand innovative and engaging instructional arrangement offerings, such as online learning, blended learning, service learning projects, and internships, we need an exemption from the requirement that credit is determined by a student's physical time in a classroom seat for an arbitrary percentage of time the class is offered. We believe strongly that a student's mastery of learning outcomes should be the determining factor in earning credit and a grade rather than "seat time". Exemption from this requirement will allow the District to provide active learning opportunities to students in the areas of time, location, and method thereby allowing students more voice and choice in determining their learning path. While the District has offered online learning through online learning for many years, the addition of blended learning, internships, and service-learning projects are recently emerging.

**First Day of Instruction - TEC Code 25.0811 Requiring Exemption:** A school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.

**The benefit of Exemption for SRISD:** The first benefit is the ability to develop a calendar that fits the needs of Scurry-Rosser ISD and the community. In past years, the first semester has ended before Winter Break, so that time in January is not lost in reviewing for exams when students return. Having to wait to start classes until the fourth Monday in August will force our semesters to be significantly unequal in length, with the second semester being approximately four weeks longer than the first semester. This will give the flexibility to begin instruction earlier in August and will enable the District to improve active learning by balancing the amount of instructional time in the semesters, which will give teachers the opportunity to better pace and deliver instruction before and after the Winter Break. This start date will also provide more educational days prior to state testing. The goal will improve the district attendance rate and student success through the flexibility in the calendar.

**Local Certification - TEC Code 21.003(a) Requiring Exemption:** States a person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern or teacher trainee, librarian, educational aide, administrator, educational diagnostician, or school counselor by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued as provided by Subchapter B.

**The benefit of Exemption for SRISD:** Scurry Rosser Independent School District will maintain its current expectations regarding employee certification and will make every attempt to hire individuals who hold the appropriate certification for the position in question. However, when that is not reasonably possible, the district will have the flexibility to hire individuals who are knowledgeable in the area and equipped to effectively perform the duties of the position in question. Scurry-Rosser ISD would like the ability to locally certify teachers and staff to meet the educational needs of our students. These certification areas would include but are not limited to CTE, elective, core classes, and administrative responsibilities. While this exemption would be exercised in a limited way for specific situations, it would also allow the District to recruit instructors from the field, including individuals from certain trades and/or vocations with industry knowledge and real-world experience.

**Teacher Contract - TEC Code 21.401 Requiring Exemption:** An educator employed under a 10-month contract must provide a minimum of 187 days of service.

**The benefit of Exemption for SRISD:** This proposal reduces teacher contract days from 187 to 185 with no effect on teacher salaries. This proposal will increase the daily rate the district pays teachers as well as enhance teacher recruitment, therefore putting the district on a more level playing field with larger districts. This change is expected to significantly improve teacher morale.

**Teacher Appraisal Process - TEC Code 21.352 Requiring Exemption:** The Texas Education Code requires the commissioner to adopt a recommended process and criteria on which to appraise the performance of teachers. The criteria must be based on observable, job-related behavior, including: (1) teachers' implementation of discipline management procedures; and (2) the performance of students. In appraising teachers, each school district shall use the appraisal process and performance criteria developed by the commissioner.

**The benefit of Exemption for SRISD:** The district is seeking flexibility within the appraisal process and performance criteria of teachers and staff evaluated using the appraisal system Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS). The district seeks to utilize T-TESS as the teacher appraisal instrument while seeking exemption from the Student Growth Measure. Data provided from district and campus assessments will continue to be used following the current district assessment model.

**Student Discipline - TEC 37.005(c) requiring Exemption:** A student who is enrolled in a grade level below grade 3 may not be placed in out-of-school suspension unless while on school property or while on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off of school property.

**The benefit of Exemption for SRISD:** If a student's behavior reaches a level of such disruption that the school cannot function properly, immediate action should be taken to maintain the effectiveness and safety of the educational environment for all students. There are instances in which a student needs specially designed plans and support in order to be successful in his or her learning environment. At those times the student's needs can be met if the staff has the appropriate time to prepare a plan for the child's needs.

**Removal of Individuals from Facilities - TEC 37.105 requiring Exemption:** The Texas Education Code requires Scurry-Rosser ISD to maintain a record of each verbal warning of potential removal from district property, including the name of the person to whom the warning was issued and the date of issuance. At the time a person is refused entry or removed from district property, Scurry-Rosser ISD is also required to provide to the person written information explaining the appeal process.

**The benefit of Exemption for SRISD:** To better ensure the safety and security of students, staff, and other guests. Scurry-Rosser ISD would allow designated staff members the authority to remove parents or visitors, whose behavior is deemed inappropriate, from district property without warning or written notice.

**Transfer Policy - TEC 25.036 requiring Exemption:** A district may choose to accept, as transfers, students who are not entitled to enroll in the district, but TEC 25.036, has been interpreted to require a transfer to be for a period of one school year.

**The benefit of Exemption for SRISD:** The rationale for Exemption Nonresident students who have been accepted as inter-district transfer may have such transfer status revoked by the Superintendent at any time during the year if the student is assigned discipline consequences of suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative education program, or expulsion. In addition, students not meeting the State's 90% attendance standard may also be subject to immediate revocation of the transfer status.

**Probationary Contracts for Experienced Teachers - Tec 21.102(b) requiring Exemption:** Texas Education Code Section 21.102(b) states that a probationary contract may not exceed one year for a person who has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment with the district.

**The benefit of Exemption for SRISD:** This period of time may not be sufficient to evaluate the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom since teacher contract timelines demand that employment decisions must be made prior to the availability of end-of-year classroom and student data. For experienced teachers, counselors, librarians, or nurses new to Scurry-Rosser ISD who have been employed in public education for at least five of the eight previous years, a second probationary contract may be offered when needed to benefit the teacher and students served. This action requires principal recommendation, in collaboration with the appropriate human resources administrator, and consideration and approval by the superintendent.

**Committee Members:**

**Name**

**Position**

JD Berryhill	Community Member
Gail Crow	District Administration
Kandy Shirey	Elementary School Principal
Grant Miller	High School School Principal
Allison Farmer	Middle School Staff
Brian Pierce	High School Staff
Candy Nelson	Middle School Principal
Nancy Moncrief	Elementary School Staff
Sonnie Sikes	Community Member
Brian Smith	Community Member
Cathie Stringer	High School Staff
Cindy Wiedemann	District Administration