



# District Plan to Address Uncertified Teachers

DELAY OF TEACHER CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

2025-2026

## Position Statement

The goal of Princeton ISD is to build and maintain a high-quality, stable, and effective educator workforce that positively impacts student outcomes. This involves ensuring that all teachers meet state certification requirements and that plans are in place to address the certification status of any uncertified teachers currently employed.

### The purpose of this plan is to:

Delay the timeline for implementation of the new HB 2 certification requirements for foundation curriculum courses until the start of the 2029-2030 school year. This will allow the district to:

- extend current employment for uncertified teachers in the foundation subjects who have made significant progress toward certification requirements and shown success in the classroom, and
- extend the district's ability to utilize its District of Innovation Plan to hire uncertified teachers enrolled in educator preparation programs who are diligently working toward certification requirements for *unfilled positions* in the foundation courses.

## Background: Changes in Texas Law for Certification

**House Bill (HB) 2** of the 89th Regular Legislative session narrows the scope of exemptions allowed under "Districts of Innovation," specifically prohibiting DOI districts from bypassing requirements to employ certified teachers for courses in the foundation curriculum. This legislation restricts including K-5 reading and math teachers in DOI exemptions starting in the 2026-2027 school year, expanding to all foundation subjects and grades in the 2027-2028 school year.

**Texas Education Code (TEC), §21.0032 (a-1)**, authorizes the commissioner of education to approve district requests to delay implementation of certification requirements for foundation curriculum courses until the beginning of the 2029-2030 school year. Texas school districts can apply for a delay of teacher certification requirements for foundation curriculum courses by submitting a comprehensive plan to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) detailing how it will transition uncertified teachers to standard certification by the new deadline. The plan must include:

- A timeline and strategies to reduce uncertified teachers each year
- Support structures to help uncertified teachers earn certification
- Recruitment and teacher pipeline initiatives to increase the number of certified teachers
- Partnership with at least one Educator Preparation Program (EPP)

The plan must be approved by the district board of trustees and posted on the district website prior to applying to TEA.

Districts requesting a delay must include the following in their application:

- The number of uncertified teachers assigned to foundation curriculum courses

- The name of at least one EPP partner supporting certification efforts
- The board approval date for submitting the application
- Link to the board meeting agenda and the board-approved plan on the district website

In compliance with TEC §21.0032 (a-1), Princeton ISD will submit the following plan to the commissioner of education to approve its request to delay implementation of certification requirements for foundation curriculum courses.

## Princeton ISD Plan to Address Uncertified Teachers

The following plan outlines how Princeton ISD will transition uncertified teachers to standard certification to meet the statutory guidelines for teacher certification requirements by the 2029-2030 school year.

### TIMELINE AND STRATEGIES TO REDUCE UNCERTIFIED TEACHERS EACH YEAR

**2025-2026 School Year:** Verify eligible uncertified teachers and plan support for their certification.

**2026-2027 School Year:** Provide support for teacher certification efforts, and reduce reliance on hiring uncertified teachers in core subjects to no more than 10 percent.

**2027-2029 School Years:** Gradually phase out most uncertified teachers in foundational content areas to no more than 5 percent.

**2029-2030 School Year:** 100 percent of teachers in foundational content areas will be certified in one of the following acceptable ways under HB 2:

- **Certificates issued by the SBEC**
  - **Standard Certificate:** The primary, full teaching certificate
  - **Intern Certificate:** Issued to individuals actively completing requirements for initial certification through an approved Educator Preparation Program (EPP)
  - **Probationary Certificate:** Another type of certificate issued during a candidate's training and induction period within an EPP, allowing them to teach while completing requirements
  - **Enhanced Standard Certificate:** A new or modified form of standard certificate issued to individuals who complete an educator preparation program's residency pathway, which includes co-teaching with an experienced teacher for a full year while also completing an SBEC-approved educator preparation program
  - **Emergency Permit:** A permit issued for specific subject areas and grade levels when a fully certified teacher is not available
- **Acceptable Exceptions to Standard Teacher Certification**
  - **School District Teaching Permit:** an authorization from the Commissioner of Education that allows the school district to employ an individual the district deems qualified to serve as a teacher

but who does not hold a State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) teaching certificate under TEC, §21.055, for the assigned area

- **Teacher Certification Waiver:** a formal request to the state for an exception under TEC, §7.056, often for positions where no certified candidate is available

## **SUPPORT STRUCTURES TO HELP UNCERTIFIED TEACHERS EARN CERTIFICATION**

Princeton ISD will provide the following support structures to help uncertified teachers succeed and earn certification:

### **New Teacher Mentorship Program**

Princeton ISD's uncertified teacher support systems include a yearlong mentor/mentee program. PISD will pair new, uncertified teachers with experienced, certified mentors for guidance and support. Mentors will provide their mentees ongoing academic and functional training to assure success in the classroom.

### **Certification Assistance Program (CAP)**

1. **Learning Liaisons:** Uncertified teachers in the foundation subjects will complete a Learning Liaisons Test Prep Course for each certification test required to earn their Standard teaching certificate. Learning Liaisons is a top-performing platform that delivers teacher exam preparation through interactive video courses and workshops completed all at the teacher's own pace. All courses are directly aligned with the test blueprints provided by Pearson and ETS for each individual TExES exam. PISD will cover the tuition fees for these course(s) in hopes that this resource will provide teachers with the knowledge, skills, and confidence they need to be successful on their certification tests.
2. **Saturday Certification Prep Sessions:** Uncertified teachers will attend a *minimum* of one half-day per month certification prep session. Instructional coaches will be onsite to provide resources and support for individual needs. Teachers may work on their Learning Liaisons test prep course(s) to study for exams or complete coursework required by their educator preparation program.

### **PISD Teacher Tiers and Support Options**

Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) observe candidates at their schools, often through formal and informal observations conducted by field or university supervisors. These observations are a key part of a candidate's field-based experiences and are used to evaluate their effectiveness in the classroom, provide feedback, and meet state certification requirements.

During the first three weeks of school and on an ongoing basis thereafter, all uncertified teachers in Princeton ISD will be designated as Tier 1, Tier 2, or Tier 3 based on observations aligned with the T-TESS rubric conducted by instructional coaches, curriculum coordinators, and administrators. Multiple levels and forms of support are provided based on individual needs to insure continuous growth. Uncertified teachers will benefit from consistent feedback and coaching related to instructional design, delivery and classroom management to perform well on the formal and informal observations conducted by their EPPs.

## **Professional Development**

Princeton ISD will offer targeted training on instructional strategies, classroom management, and curriculum development. Resources include Region 10 ESC (face-to-face); Eduhero Online Platform (self-paced); and individualized coaching sessions conducted by district staff.

## **Ongoing Certification Tracking**

The district will continuously track data for each uncertified teacher's certification progress. This will include conducting regular check-ins to address challenges, provide feedback, monitor progress, and provide support to help individuals become certified teachers.

## **RECRUITMENT AND TEACHER PIPELINE INITIATIVES TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF CERTIFIED TEACHERS**

To increase the number of certified teachers, PISD will focus on the following recruitment and pipeline initiatives:

### **Teacher Certification Incentive**

- A one-time \$1,000 incentive will be paid by the TEA to the district for each eligible classroom teacher upon successful completion of the preparation requirements and issuance of a standard certificate. (Note: This Incentive will expire September 1, 2028)

### **Career Fairs**

- Attend both in-person and virtual job fairs to promote the district as an attractive place to teach.

### **Post Vacancies on Job Boards**

- TXED Job Network (posts vacancies to all ESC Regions)
- School Spring
- Indeed
- Linked In
- Monster
- Glassdoor
- WorkinTexas.com
- College Job Boards via Handshake
- Teacher Association Job Boards

### **Advertise Vacancies on Media Outlets**

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Newspaper
- Email Express

## Host Student Teachers

- Student teaching internships serve as a pipeline for future educators, helping to address teacher shortages.
- Providing future educators hands-on experience within our district will improve the overall quality of these prospective new teachers.

## PARTNERSHIP WITH AT LEAST ONE EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM (EPP)

An Educator Preparation Program (EPP) is a program that trains and prepares teachers. The preparation of educators is considered the joint responsibility of both the EPP and the school district. This collaboration aims to produce higher-quality educators who are better prepared for the classroom. Princeton ISD has partnerships with the following EEPs to prepare educators and meet state expectations for certification:

- Education Career Alternatives Program (ECAP)
- iteach Texas
- Region 10 ESC
- Region 11 ESC
- Teach Us
- Teacher Builder
- Teachworthy
- Texas Teachers of Tomorrow
- University-based Educator Preparation Programs

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Texas Education Code (TEC) §21.0032 – Employment of Uncertified Teachers

<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/ED/htm/ED.21.htm>

Texas Education Code (TEC) §21.0033 – Teacher Certification Incentive

<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/ED/htm/ED.21.htm>

HB 2 Implementation: New Certification Requirements and Incentives for Uncertified Teachers

<https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/news-and-multimedia/correspondence/taa-letters/hb-2-implementation-new-certification-requirements-and-incentives-for-uncertified-teachers>

For further information on this or any program offered at Princeton ISD, please contact the following personnel:

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