ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATIONS

Background Information:

House Bill 2 (HB 2) was passed during the 89th Texas Legislature Regular Session, 2025, and signed into law by Governor Greg Abbott. HB 2 limits school districts' ability to exempt themselves from teacher certification requirements under their District of Innovation (DOI) plans.

Under Texas Education Code (TEC), §21.003, individuals employed as teachers must hold an appropriate certificate or permit issued by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC). HB 2 introduces new limitations under TEC, §21.0032, which phase in over the next three academic years and significantly restrict DOI exemptions.

Gonzales ISD's current DOI plan allows for limited hiring of uncertified teachers in specific Foundation Curriculum areas. The requested delay allows the district time to transition current staff to certification while maintaining compliance with new statutory requirements.

Metric | Impact on Gonzales ISD

Affected Workforce
19 uncertified teachers are currently assigned as Teachers of Record in Foundation Curriculum courses.

Annual Hiring Vulnerability
Gonzales ISD has hired an average of 2–3 uncertified teachers annually over the last three years to meet staffing needs in high-need instructional areas.

Risk of Inaction
Failure to obtain a delay would likely result in the loss of current instructional staff, creating immediate staffing shortages and instructional disruption as early as Fall 2026.

Transition Plan and Compliance Roadmap

Gonzales ISD's compliance roadmap utilizes a phased approach to eliminate reliance on uncertified teachers while maintaining instructional continuity and workforce stability.

Strategy 1: Stabilize the Current Workforce

Strategy 1A: Certification Pathway for Current Staff

The immediate priority is to ensure that all currently employed uncertified teachers are actively enrolled in an approved Alternative Certification Program (ACP). Gonzales ISD will partner with approved Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs), including regional and statewide providers, to ensure all uncertified teachers have access to a clear and supported pathway to standard certification. This process began during the current school year, and all seven uncertified teachers are currently enrolled in approved programs, including iteach, Teachworthy, and Teachers of Tomorrow. The district will continue to monitor each candidate's progress toward certification to ensure timely completion of coursework, testing requirements, and credentialing milestones.

Focus:
Transition 19 uncertified foundation curriculum teachers to full certification through structured milestones.

Mandatory Certification Timeline:
The district will implement internal compliance deadlines aligned to HB 2 requirements:

- **Year 1:** Enrollment in an approved Educator Preparation Program (EPP)
- **Year 2:** Obtain an Intern or Probationary Certificate aligned to the teaching assignment
- **Year 3:** Achieve Standard Certification aligned to the teaching assignment

Annual Reduction Goal:
This timeline ensures a steady reduction of uncertified teachers, with full compliance achieved no later than Fall 2029.

Strategy 1B: Monitoring, Support, and Accountability

Gonzales ISD will ensure campus-level and district-level support for teachers pursuing certification.

Monitoring & Support Protocol:

- Campus administrators will conduct documented check-in meetings with uncertified teachers to review EPP progress and certification timelines.
- Human Resources will maintain centralized tracking of certification status and testing progress.

Communication Protocol:

- **Teacher:** Regular reminders and status updates regarding certification milestones

- **Principal:** Immediate notification of missed deadlines or certification risks
- **District Leadership:** Periodic summary reports on overall compliance status and intervention needs

This shared accountability model ensures proactive support while maintaining compliance expectations.

Strategy 2: Phase Out Future Uncertified Hiring

To prevent growth of the uncertified workforce, Gonzales ISD will implement gradual reductions in uncertified hiring for Foundation Curriculum positions.

School Year	Target for Uncertified New Hires	Rationale
2025-26 SY	Current staffing level	Baseline year
2026-27 SY	Limited, exceptional circumstances only	Intentional Reduction
2027-28 SY	Near elimination	Final transition year
2028-29 SY	0 uncertified hires	Full compliance achieved

Note:
The District of Innovation (DOI) plan will be amended to align with these targets. Hiring flexibility for non-foundation areas (e.g., CTE, Fine Arts) will remain unchanged as allowed by law.

Transition Plan Justification and Benefits

Granting a delay allows Gonzales ISD to responsibly transition to compliance while maintaining staffing stability and leveraging state-supported incentives:

- **Workforce Stability and Retention:**
  The delay allows current staff to remain employed while completing certification, minimizing turnover and preserving instructional continuity.
- **Certification Incentives:**
  The plan aligns with TEA timelines and leverages available state incentive payments for teachers who achieve certification, reducing financial barriers for educators and accelerating compliance.