



Renewal of GPISD District of Innovation Plan 2026 – 2031

House Bill 1842, passed during the 84th Legislative Session, provides the opportunity for Texas public school districts to pursue the designation of District of Innovation. This allows local school districts to obtain exemptions from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code to allow more flexibility and local control for innovative programming. Grand Prairie ISD became a District of Innovation with its approved Local Innovation Plan on July 21, 2016. Based on the requirements of the Texas Education Code, Chapter 12A, and its implementing regulations, Texas public school districts are required to renew their District of Innovation status every five years. Grand Prairie ISD renewed its plan for 2021–2026 and again in 2026-2031. As a District of Innovation, Grand Prairie ISD has more local control and support for innovation and local initiatives that support our students.

The District Educational Improvement Committee (DEIC) convened on April 29, 2026, to review the plan and provide any feedback for recommendations to the School Board regarding renewal of the plan. A Public Hearing was held on April 29, 2026, to allow the public to learn more about the designation and provide feedback on the renewal of the Local Innovation Plan. The Local Innovation Committee voted unanimously to renew the Local Innovation Plan for an additional five-year period. The plan was posted online for 30 days for public consideration. The Board approved the renewal of the Local Innovation Plan on June 11, 2026.

Term

The term of the Local Innovation Plan will begin at the start of the 2026-2027 school year and end at the end in July 2031, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The committee will revisit the plan as needed to ensure that the recommendations are still in line with the needs of the district. Any changes recommended would be on the website for 30 days and require approval of the DEIC and the School Board.



INNOVATIONS

Uniform Start Date for Academic Calendar — Exemption from Texas Education Code §

25.0811(a): The Board has previously approved flexibility from Texas Education Code § 25.0811(a), which generally prohibits a school district from beginning student instruction before the fourth Monday in August. This exemption allows GPISD to collaboratively design an academic calendar that best meets the needs of students, families, staff, campuses, and the local community, including the ability to begin instruction earlier for the entire District or for individual campuses. An earlier start date may help balance the two semesters around Winter Break, allow semester exams to occur before Winter Break, increase instructional time before STAAR, End-of-Course, and Advanced Placement exams, and better align District schedules with college semesters for dual credit, summer school, internships, industry certification opportunities, and summer bridge programming. The District Education Improvement Committee will receive parent and staff input and recommend the first day of instruction for students, subject to Board approval, with a preference that instruction begin no earlier than the second week of August.

Minimum Minutes of Instruction and Minimum Attendance for Credit — Exemptions from

Texas Education Code §§ 25.081 and 25.092: The Board has previously approved flexibility from Texas Education Code § 25.081, which replaced the prior 180-day instructional requirement with a requirement that each school district provide at least 75,600 minutes of instruction, including intermissions and recesses, each school year, and from Texas Education Code § 25.092, which generally requires a student to attend at least 90 percent of the days a class is offered to receive credit or a final grade. These exemptions allow GPISD to adjust instructional minutes within the required annual total, including the length of the school day, early release days, professional learning days, half-day prekindergarten/PPCD schedules, and alternative campus schedules, while also allowing the District to consider appropriate alternative methods for students to demonstrate mastery of course content when unforeseen circumstances cause attendance to fall below the 90 percent threshold. For half-day PK/PPCD programs, GPISD may operate two 210-minute daily sessions, allowing each teacher to serve both a morning and afternoon group of students while maintaining a conference period and duty-free lunch within the regular school day. For alternative education settings, including Crosswinds High School, GPISD may provide flexible scheduling options for non-traditional and at-risk students, including shortened daily sessions, full-day schedules with designated days off for work or family responsibilities, evening school options, personalized learning, instructional support, and credit recovery or acceleration



opportunities, while continuing to emphasize regular attendance and compliance with District attendance guidelines. This flexibility supports quality programming, cost efficiency, professional

learning, individualized pathways to graduation, and meaningful opportunities for students to earn credit based on demonstrated mastery when their educational needs may not be met through a traditional school schedule.

Educator Certification Requirement for Teachers and Other Educators — Exemption from Texas Education Code §§ 21.003, 21.053, and 21.057: The Board approved flexibility from Texas Education Code §§ 21.003, 21.053, and 21.057, which generally require public school teachers to hold and present appropriate state certification and require related parent notice when a teacher is assigned outside the teacher’s certification area, to allow GPISD to recruit, select, and employ qualified individuals through a local district teaching permit when the District determines that the individual is the best candidate for a difficult-to-fill, high-demand, or state-identified shortage area position. Certified teachers will remain the District’s preference; however, when high-quality, appropriately certified candidates are not available, this exemption allows the District to consider non-certified experienced professionals, out-of-state certified educators, degreed EC–6 core-subject candidates, and degreed secondary English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies candidates who meet District DOI permit criteria. This flexibility may also be used for Career and Technical Education, dual-credit, world languages, and visual and performing arts assignments when the candidate’s education, credentials, industry experience, professional expertise, or language proficiency qualifies the individual to teach the assigned course. The exemption will be applied on a case-by-case basis after the required posting period and candidate interviews, with the principal documenting the specific need for the assignment and the candidate’s relevant credentials, experience, expertise, or out-of-state certification. The superintendent must approve the assignment and report the action to the Board at the first board meeting following the assignment. The District will establish selection criteria, provide appropriate onboarding, training, professional development, and campus support, and use local evaluation measures and effectiveness metrics to assess educators assigned under this exemption. Staff hired under a local district teaching permit will have the same rights and responsibilities as other teachers within the District; however, any authorization issued under this provision is local to GPISD and does not transfer to another school district.

Bank Depository Contracts — Exemption from Texas Education Code §§ 45.205 and 45.206: The Board has previously approved flexibility from Texas Education Code §§ 45.205 and 45.206, relating to the term, extension, bid, and request-for-proposal requirements for school district



depository contracts. This exemption allows GPISD to reduce the administrative burden associated with preparing and reviewing a depository Request for Proposal every two years, particularly when there are a limited number of banking institutions available or willing to bid on

the District's business. At the end of each two-year term, the District and its depository bank may agree to extend the contract for an additional two-year period, provided the District reviews the contract to ensure best value and continued support for District operations and obtains Board approval for each extension. This exemption does not prevent the District from rebidding the depository contract when doing so is in the District's best interest, and the District's Innovation Plan will continue to be reviewed and renewed in accordance with state law, ensuring Board and committee oversight. The flexibility will allow administration and the Board to devote less time to repetitive procurement administration and more time to student progress, instructional strategies, and innovative educational goals.

Revocation of Interdistrict Transfers During the School Year — Exemption from Texas

Education Code § 25.036: The Board has previously approved flexibility from Texas Education Code § 25.036, which permits a school district to admit a student who does not reside within the District's boundaries through an interdistrict transfer and generally treats the transfer as valid for one school year. This exemption allows GPISD to revoke an interdistrict transfer during the school year when, after careful consideration, the superintendent determines that revocation is appropriate due to the student's disciplinary conduct, including in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, placement in a disciplinary alternative education program, or expulsion; misrepresentation of information on the transfer application or supporting documentation; or failure to meet District attendance standards, including the 90 percent attendance standard. This flexibility allows GPISD to maintain accurate transfer records, uphold student conduct and attendance expectations, and ensure that interdistrict transfers continue to serve the best interests of the District and its students.

Supplementary Pay for Voluntary Duties During Planning and Preparation Time — Exemption

from Texas Education Code § 21.404: The Board has previously approved flexibility from Texas Education Code § 21.404, which generally requires each classroom teacher to receive at least 450 minutes within each two-week period for planning and preparation, including parent conferences, evaluating student work, and instructional planning, and provides that a planning period may not be less than 45 minutes within the instructional day. This exemption allows GPISD, during staffing shortages or other identified instructional needs, to permit teachers to voluntarily relinquish all or part of a planning period to perform additional teaching or instructional support duties, including



covering classes, teaching an additional section or course, assisting with student intervention, or accepting additional students from another class. Teachers may not be required to give up planning and preparation time under this exemption, and any additional duties performed during that time must be voluntary and may be compensated through supplementary pay or other locally

approved incentives. This flexibility supports continuity of instruction, appropriate student supervision, improved classroom coverage, and additional compensation opportunities for teachers while allowing the District to respond to teacher and substitute shortages in a locally effective manner.

Grievance Policies — Exemptions from Texas Education Code §§ 26A.001–26A.004 and §

26.011(a): Submitted to the board for approval is flexibility from Texas Education Code §§ 26A.001–26A.004 and from the language in Texas Education Code § 26.011(a) requiring a grievance procedure “that complies with Chapter 26A,” to allow GPISD to maintain local control over its grievance policies, procedures, and timelines. Chapter 26A establishes statewide grievance requirements, including extended timelines for filing complaints and appeals, opportunities to amend complaints and supplement the record during the grievance process, and other procedural requirements that may delay prompt resolution and make it more difficult to address concerns at the lowest appropriate administrative level. GPISD will continue to follow its locally adopted grievance policies, including FNG(LOCAL), DGBA(LOCAL), and GF(LOCAL), which provide orderly procedures for parent, student, employee, and community complaints; require timely submission of grievances; support thorough documentation, investigation, review, and response; and allow the District to allocate administrative resources efficiently while resolving concerns as promptly and effectively as possible. This exemption supports local control, timely problem-solving, transparent recordkeeping, accountability, and the Board’s ability to address grievance outcomes with the Superintendent as appropriate. This exemption does not exempt the District from requirements or authority of the Texas Commissioner of Education or the Texas Education Agency that are not subject to local exemption, including those referenced in Texas Education Code §§ 26A.001(f), 26A.001(h), and 26A.001(i).