

# Goodrich ISD

## District of Innovation Plan

### Introduction

House Bill 1842, created and passed during the 84<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislative Session in Spring of 2015, provides a unique opportunity for Texas public school districts to exempt themselves from some parts of the Texas Education Code. In order to do this, a public school district must adopt an innovation plan, as set forth in Texas Education Code Chapter 12 A.

As a District of Innovation, Goodrich ISD may be exempted from a number of state statutes and will have:

- greater local control as the decision makers over the educational and instructional model for students;
- increased freedom and flexibility, with accountability, relative to state mandates that govern educational programming; and
- power to innovate and think differently.

HB 1842 does not allow exemptions from statutes including curriculum and graduation requirements or academic and financial accountability.

### Continuous Improvement:

The Local Innovation Plan is guided by and aligned with the Board's Vision, Mission, Strategic Priorities, and Goals for the District as follows:

### Mission Statement:

Goodrich ISD will cultivate the potential of all students: **Challenging** and supporting them to achieve academic excellence, **Inspiring** a love of learning and civic engagement and, **Embracing** the full richness and diversity of our community, **Enabling** them to thrive as global citizens.

### Vision Statement:

Giving you our Best, so you can be your Best.

### GISD Goals:

1. Academic Achievement: Goodrich ISD will ensure that students achieve at high academic levels and maintain high scholastic standings without socioeconomics determining their success.
2. Efficient and Effective Operations: Allocate resources in an efficient manner to facilitate quality learning experiences. We will be fiscally responsible, maintain a well-balanced district budget, and be transparent in regards to financial reporting.
3. Community Engagement & Open Communication: Provide a variety of opportunities for parents and community members to be active, collaborative partners. As a school community, we will maintain open communication via multiple mediums that are transparent, clear, concise, correct, and courteous.
4. Human Capital: Recruit and retain the highest quality of employees.
5. Safe and Orderly School Community: Maintain a school community that is safe, orderly, and conducive to student learning.

## District of Innovation Process and Timeline

- Feb. 2017            At the Goodrich ISD Board meeting, the Board approved the Resolution to become designated as a District of Innovation and appointed the District Advisory Committee to develop the GISD District of Innovation Plan.
- Public Hearing at the Goodrich ISD Board meeting to inform the public of plan for District of Innovation.
- March 2017            District Advisory Committee met to discuss the District of Innovation Plan components.
- May 2017            District Advisory Committee met to approve District of Innovation Plan.
- During Goodrich ISD Board meeting, Trustees considered action to approve the District of Innovation Plan.
- August 2017            On June 17, 2017, the Goodrich ISD Board of Trustees approved the proposed District of Innovation Plan
- September 2017        District Advisory Committee met to discuss the revision process of the current District of Innovation Plan.
- November 2019        District Education Improvement Council (DEIC) met to discuss the five-year review/revision process of the current District of Innovation Plan.
- February 2021        Public Hearing was held to inform the public of the plan for renewal of the District of Innovation designation.
- The Board approved the Resolution to renew the District of Innovation and appointed the District Education Improvement Council (DEIC) to review the plan and make any necessary revisions.
- March 2021            District Education Improvement Council (DEIC) met on March 24, 2021 to review the District of Innovation plan.
- The District of Innovation plan was posted on the GISD Website March 27, 2021.
- January 2022            District Education Improvement Council (DEIC) met on January 5, 2022, to review the proposed revisions(12/21) to TEC Code: §21.003 Certification Required contained within the approved 2021-2026 District of Innovation Plan. The Council approved the proposed revisions(12/21). On January 6<sup>th</sup> a copy of the proposed revisions was posted on District Website.
- 1/20/22 Public Hearing was held to present the District of Innovation Plan Proposed Revision.
- 1/20/22 Board of Trustees reviewed and approved the proposed revisions to the 2021-2026 District of Innovation Plan (12/21).
- 1/21/22 Board-of Trustees approved revisions(12/21) to the District of Innovation posted on District Website.

Goodrich Independent School District  
District of Innovation Plan 2021-2026  
Rev. 1/20/2022

**Flexible School Calendar**

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

**Proposed:** To allow for a school calendar that is tailored around the needs of Goodrich ISD students, we would like to consider a flexible calendar option which may include an earlier start date which also emphasizes the importance of maximizing instruction time, instructional rigor, and high-quality instruction. Flexibility to begin instruction earlier in the calendar year will enable the district to improve quality instruction by balancing the amount of instructional time each semester, allowing teachers to plan, pace and deliver instruction before and after the Christmas Break. This change will also afford more time to teaching semester courses at the secondary level. In addition, by having the flexibility to start and end the school year earlier, students will be able to enroll in college courses and/or trade school courses that start in early June, thereby increasing college and career readiness. Adjusting the start date will provide additional instruction days prior to Fall & Spring STAAR/EOC exams. This flexibility would also allow the school year to end prior to June 1<sup>st</sup> which would allow for a longer summer school session for those students needing accelerated instruction prior to the third administration of STAAR/EOC exams and more instructional time for students seeking credit recovery during the summer.

Benefit of Exemption for GISD:

- ✓ Schools will have the flexibility to start school weeks earlier than the fourth Monday in August, for either the entire District or individual campuses.
- ✓ Starting earlier will balance the two semesters, set exams prior to Christmas Break, and create more instructional time before (Fall, Spring, Summer) STAAR/EOC exams.
- ✓ The balanced semesters will align with college semesters as well, allowing more opportunities for summer school, internships, and industrial certification opportunities.
- ✓ Starting school earlier will also accommodate new and innovative educational models such as summer bridge programming.

**Class Size**

**Class Size in Kindergarten through 4th Grade: TEC Code Requiring Exemption: Sec. 25.112. Except as otherwise authorized by this section, a school district may not enroll more than 22 students in a kindergarten, first, second, third, or fourth grade class.**

**Student/Teacher Ratios**

**The Texas Education Code, TEC 25.111 requires districts to employ a sufficient number of certified teachers to maintain an average ratio of not less than 1 teacher for each 20 students in average daily attendance.**

Benefit of Exemption for GISD:

- ✓ local solution to class size adjustments should be made without submitting waivers to TEA. Goodrich ISD will continuously monitor grade level enrollment at the Elementary campus. Being exempt from the inflexible 22-to-1 requirement will allow students to remain with the teacher and classmates that they began the year with, fostering continuity and stability which will support increased student achievement.

- ✓ Incoming students can remain in their preferred or neighborhood school rather than have to be transported to a different campus. Districts will not be forced to hire new teachers not accounted for in the Local Board's adopted Budget Local Guidelines:
- ✓ The District will strive to keep class sizes at 22:1, with the flexibility to go above 22:1.
- ✓ If the student/teacher ratio averaged across a grade level needs to go over 23:1, it must have both administrator and teacher approval.-If the student/teacher ratio averaged across a grade level needs to go over 24:1, parents of all students in each affected class will be notified. The Superintendent will provide the Board of Trustees with updated enrollment numbers and a plan of action to reduce class size.

### **Certification Required**

**TEC Code Requiring Exemption: 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. In the event a certified teacher cannot be hired for a position or a teacher is assigned to a subject outside his/her certification, the district must submit an emergency certification/exception/waiver to TEA.**

- ✓ The District will continue to first seek qualified applicants with a TEA certification for all teacher positions. However, if a satisfactory candidate is not available a procedure would be implemented permitting the Superintendent to allow a certified teacher to teach a subject outside of their certification or permitting the District to employ an uncertified person on an at-will contract. Upon written request from the Human Resources Department or a Campus Principal, a qualified individual may be eligible to teach any course through a local teaching certificate. The superintendent may hire an eligible person on a local certification under an at-will contract. The District shall develop minimum required qualifications for persons hired in the above manner and will also require certain professional development in the areas of student management, instructional strategies, curriculum, and parent engagement. Notwithstanding the foregoing, all certification requirements will remain in place for special education and primary ESL (bilingual) teachers.
- ✓ When it is not reasonably possible, the district will have the flexibility to hire individuals who are knowledgeable and equipped to effectively perform the duties of the position. Goodrich ISD would like the ability to locally certify teachers to better meet the educational needs of our students. This action will greatly expand the District's hiring capability, which is impacted by the District's geographical proximity to highly populated areas and competitive hiring practices at neighboring rural school districts. This flexibility will be particularly beneficial in CTE areas (where industry experience is highly valued) and hard-to-fill classroom positions. Goodrich ISD will continue to prioritize obtaining certified candidates for all positions as available

\*The Superintendent will determine whether it is in the best interest of the district to certify the individual. The Superintendent will notify the Board prior to beginning employment.