

# **Kaufman ISD**

## **District of Innovation Plan**

**2021 through 2026**

*HB 1842, of the 84<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session,  
allows Texas districts to qualify as a District of Innovation.  
Districts of Innovation are able to gain local control of certain operations  
currently under the control of the Texas Education Agency.*

This District of Innovation Plan provides for a comprehensive educational program for the district. It identifies requirements imposed by the Education Code that inhibit the goals of the plan from which the district should be exempted on adoption of the plan and specifies the manner in which a particular statute inhibits one or more goals of the plan.

## History of Kaufman ISD District of Innovation Plans

2016-2021 District of Innovation Plan adopted by Board of Education	7/18/2016	
2016-2021 District of Innovation Plan amended	April 2021	
2021-2026 District of Innovation Plan adopted by Board of Education	7/12/2021	
2021-2026 District of Innovation Plan amended	July 2021	
2021-2026 District of Innovation Plan amended	April 2022	
2021-2026 District of Innovation Plan amended	July 2023	
2021-2026 District of Innovation Plan amended	January 2024	
2021-2026 District of Innovation Plan amended	October 2024	
2021-2026 District of Innovation Plan amended	July 2025	
2021-2026 District of Innovation Plan amended	October 2025	
2021-2026 District of Innovation Plan adopted by Board of Education	2/9/2026 3/9/2026 7/12/2026	First Read Board Vote Renew

## **Goal 1: The Kaufman ISD Board of Trustees and Kaufman ISD Administration will make governance decisions based on the unique needs of the district's students and community.**

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### **1-1. Pre-Kindergarten – Grade 4 Class Size**

*(TEC 25.112a-g) (TEC 25.113a-b) (EEB LEGAL)*

#### **Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan**

*TEC §25.112 requires districts to maintain a class size of 22 students or less for Pre-Kindergarten – 4<sup>th</sup> Grade classes. When any class exceeds this limit, the district must complete and file a waiver with the Texas Education Agency. These waivers are never rejected by TEA. This is a bureaucratic step that serves no purpose.*

*TEC §25.113 requires the district to notify parents of waivers or exceptions to class size limits. In many cases, the class has returned to a smaller student to teacher ratio before the waiver is even approved, negating the need for this notice.*

#### **Innovation Strategies:**

- a. KISD will begin each school year with enough teachers to establish a student to teacher ratio of 22:1 per Pre-K-4 in-person homeroom class. In the event that any class size exceeds this ratio during the school year, the superintendent will report this information to the Board of Trustees and to the parents of the affected students.
- b. In the event that two or more Pre-K-4<sup>th</sup> core in-person classrooms reach 23:1 during the first grading period of the year, another teacher will be hired. If a Pre-K-4<sup>th</sup> core in-person classroom reaches 23:1 after that time, the campus will notify the parents of the students in the classroom and inform them of the situation. A teacher may be hired at any time during the school year if the campus principal and superintendent agree that it is in the best interest of the students to do so.
- c. A TEA waiver will not be filed when a Pre-K-4<sup>th</sup> classroom exceeds the 22:1 ratio.
- d. A student to teacher ratio of 30:1 per Pre-K-4 virtual class will be allowed if the campus principal and superintendent agree that it is in the best interest of the students to do so.

### **1-2. School start date**

*(TEC §25.0811a) (TEC 25.0812) (EB LEGAL)*

#### **Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan**

*TEC §25.0811 states that a school district may not begin student instruction before the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of August. TEC 25.0812 states that a school district may not schedule the last day of school before May 15. Local control of the instructional calendar affords the district several advantages.*

#### **Innovation Strategies**

- a. Elimination of an imbalance 9-week and semester schedules while still ending the first semester before Christmas Break.
- b. Alignment of calendar with TVCC, Advanced Placement exams, and STAAR/EOC timelines.
- c. Ensure hours/sear time requirements are met for CTE and IBC courses.

### **1-3. Transfer Policy**

*(TEC §25.036) (FDA Legal) (FDA Local)*

#### **Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan**

*TEC §25.036 states, or has been interpreted to state, that districts are required to maintain the enrollment of a student transfer for a period of one school year.*

#### **Innovation Strategy**

- a. Students who have been accepted as inter-district transfers may have their transfer status revoked by the Superintendent or designee at any time during the school year if the transfer student is assigned disciplinary consequences such as suspension, placement in a disciplinary alternative education program, or expulsion. In addition, transfer students who fail to meet the State's 90% attendance standard may also be subject to immediate revocation of their transfer status.

### **1-4. 90 Percent Attendance Rule**

*(TEC §25.092) (FEC)*

#### **Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan**

*TEC §25.092 requires that a student in any grade level from Kindergarten through grade 12 may not be given credit for a class unless the student is in attendance for at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. In addition, a student who is in attendance for at least 75 percent but less than 90 percent of the dates may be given credit or a final grade for the class if the student completes a plan approved by the school's principal.*

#### **Innovation Strategy**

By eliminating this requirement, the campus administration can make a local determination to award credit based on mastery learning. The 90 percent rule is an arbitrary percentage. Districts should have the local option to set their own requirements for student achievement. Local districts need flexibility as they work to meet the needs of their students. This flexibility can also allow the local school board and district administrators to set higher expectations for students while promoting a healthy school environment.

It must be noted that relief from Section 25.092 does not in any way impact or alter existing compulsory attendance requirements or University Interscholastic League (UIL) rules.

### **1-5. Professional Development**

*(TEC §21.404) (DL Legal)*

#### **Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan**

*TEC §21.404 entitles each classroom teacher to at least 450 minutes within each two-week period for instructional preparation, including parent-teacher conferences, evaluating student work, and planning. A planning and preparation period under this section may not be less than 45 minutes within the instructional day.*

#### **Innovation Strategy**

It is necessary for local districts to have the flexibility to schedule weekly, and/or bi-weekly instructional meetings during the workday without compromising instructional time. In addition, eliminating the oversight provisions in §11.253 will allow for flexible, responsive staff development activities without having to first be approved by a committee which reduces the time teachers must take from their time to attend such meetings. Providing mentors to teachers in need should be a local choice and should be available for any teacher regardless of their years of service.

By eliminating this requirement, Kaufman ISD can also provide additional compensation to teachers who are willing to give up their conference period in order to cover a class period. These teachers would be paid for this work; it is completely voluntary. Substitute teachers can be hard to find and this creates another avenue to put a quality, certified teacher in a classroom when one is not available.

## **1-6. Grievance, Complaint Process**

*(TEC 26A, TEC §26A.001, TEC §26A.002 & TEC §26A.011, TEC §26A.003, TEC §26A.004)*

### **Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan**

*TEC §26.011 changed the grievance process to extend each of the periods of allotted time and adjusted how individuals could submit complaints. As a result of the new law, grievances could last beyond 90 school business days. This new process is not equitable or timely.*

### **Innovation Strategy**

**In order to facilitate a more reasonable and timely process, Kaufman ISD is adjusting the grievance process for all students, staff, parents, and community to the previous set of rules, procedures, and timelines prior to the 89th state legislature.**

In policy FNG, the terms "complaint" and "grievance" shall have the same meaning. The Board encourages students and parents to discuss their concerns with the appropriate teacher, principal, or other campus administrator who has the authority to address the concerns. Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution at the lowest possible administrative level.

Informal resolution shall be encouraged but shall not extend any deadlines in this policy, except by mutual written consent.

A student or parent may initiate the formal process described below by timely filing a written complaint form.

Even after initiating the formal complaint process, students and parents are encouraged to seek informal resolution of their concerns. A student or parent whose concerns are resolved may withdraw a formal complaint in writing at any time.

The process described in this policy shall not be construed to create new or additional rights beyond those granted by law or Board policy, nor to require a full evidentiary hearing or "mini-trial" at any level.

Complaint forms and appeal notices may be filed by hand-delivery, by electronic communication, including email and fax, or by U.S. Mail. Hand-delivered filings shall be timely filed if received by the appropriate administrator or designee by the close of business on the deadline. Filings submitted by electronic communication shall be timely filed if they are received by the close of business on the deadline, as indicated by the date/time shown on the electronic communication. Mail filings shall be timely filed if they are postmarked by U.S. Mail on or before the deadline and received by the

appropriate administrator or designated representative no more than three days after the deadline. The new policy, Texas Education Code § 26A.001(e) (9), which does not allow the school to decline based on procedural error will be null and void. If the form is not filled out correctly within the allotted timeframe, the district will render the grievance invalid and finalized.

The District shall make reasonable attempts to schedule conferences at a mutually agreeable time. If a student or parent fails to appear at a scheduled conference, the District may hold the conference and issue a decision in the student's or parent's absence.

At Levels One and Two, "response" shall mean a written communication to the student or parent from the appropriate administrator. Responses may be hand-delivered, sent by electronic communication to the student's or parent's email address of record, or sent by U.S. Mail to the student's or parent's mailing address of record. Mailed responses shall be timely if they are postmarked by U.S. Mail on or before the deadline.

"Days" shall mean District business days, unless otherwise noted. In calculating timelines under this policy, the day a document is filed is "day zero." The following business day is "day one." The timelines set forth by new law, Texas Education Code § 26A.002, will be null and void.

"Representative" shall mean any person or organization that is designated by the student or parent to represent the student or parent in the complaint process. A student may be represented by an adult at any level of the complaint.

The student or parent may designate a representative through written notice to the District at any level of this process. If the student or parent designates a representative with fewer than three days' notice to the District before a scheduled conference or hearing, the District may reschedule the conference or hearing to a later date, if desired, in order to include the District's counsel. The District may be represented by counsel at any level of the process.

Complaints arising out of an event or a series of related events shall be addressed in one complaint. A student or parent shall not file separate or serial complaints arising from any event or series of events that have been or could have been addressed in a previous complaint.

All time limits shall be strictly followed unless modified by mutual written consent.

If a complaint form or appeal notice is not timely filed, the complaint may be dismissed, on written notice to the student or parent, at any point during the complaint process. The student or parent may appeal the dismissal by seeking review in writing within ten days from the date of the written dismissal notice, starting at the level at which the complaint was dismissed. Such appeals shall be limited to the issue of timeliness.

Each party shall pay its own costs incurred in the course of the complaint.

Complaints and appeals under this policy shall be submitted in writing on a form provided by the District. Additional forms can be used; however, only evidence submitted with the original complaint may be considered at any level. Texas Education Code § 26A.001(e)(5) provides that a school district must allow a grievant to supplement the record with additional documents and add additional claims. There are no limitations to the authorization of a grievant to supplement. However, Kaufman ISD will revert to the previous policy; no new evidence can be submitted at the Level Two or Level Three hearings.

Copies of any documents that support the complaint should be attached to the complaint form. If the student or parent does not have copies of these documents, copies may be presented at the Level One conference. After the Level One conference, no new documents may be submitted by the student or parent. A complaint or appeal form that is incomplete in any material aspect may be dismissed but may be refiled with all the required information if the refiling is within the designated time for filing.

**Level One:**

Complaint forms must be filed:

1. Within 15 days of the date the student or parent first knew, or with reasonable diligence should have known, of the decision or action giving rise to the complaint or grievance; and
2. With the lowest level administrator who has the authority to remedy the alleged problem.

In most circumstances, students and parents shall file Level One complaints with the campus principal.

If the only administrator who has authority to remedy the alleged problem is the Superintendent or designee, the complaint may begin at Level Two following the procedure, including deadlines, for filing the complaint form at Level One. Texas Education Code § 26.001(e) (2) and (3) will be null and void. The Superintendent's or their designee can assign a Level One hearing officer as applicable and needed.

If the complaint is not filed with the appropriate administrator, the receiving administrator must note the date and time the complaint form was received and immediately forward the complaint form to the appropriate administrator.

The appropriate administrator shall investigate as necessary and schedule a conference with the student or parent within ten days after receipt of the written complaint. The administrator may set reasonable time limits for the conference.

Absent extenuating circumstances, the administrator shall provide the student or parent a written response within ten days following the conference. The written response shall set forth the basis of the decision. In reaching a decision, the administrator may consider information provided at the Level One conference and any other relevant documents or information the administrator believes will help resolve the complaint.

**Level Two:**

If the student or parent did not receive the relief requested at Level One or if the time for a response has expired, the student or parent may request a conference with the Superintendent or designee to appeal the Level One decision.

The appeal notice must be filed in writing, on a form provided by the District, within ten days of the date of the written Level One response or, if no response was received, within ten days of the Level One response deadline.

After receiving notice of the appeal, the Level One administrator shall prepare and forward a record of the Level One complaint to the Level Two administrator. The student or parent may request a copy of the Level One record.

The Level One record shall include:

1. The original complaint form and any attachments.
2. All other documents submitted by the student or parent at Level One.
3. The written response issued at Level One and any attachments.
4. All other documents relied upon by the Level One administrator in reaching the Level One decision.

The Superintendent or designee shall schedule a conference within ten days after the appeal notice is filed. The conference shall be limited to the issues and documents considered at Level One. At the conference, the student or parent may provide information concerning any documents or information

relied upon by the administration for the Level One decision. The Superintendent or designee may set reasonable time limits for the conference.

The Superintendent or designee shall provide the student or parent a written response within ten days following the conference. The written response shall set forth the basis of the decision. In reaching a decision, the Superintendent or designee may consider the Level One record, information provided at the Level Two conference, and any other relevant documents or information the Superintendent or designee believes will help resolve the complaint.

Recordings of the Level One and Level Two conferences, if any, shall be maintained with the Level One and Level Two records.

### **Level Three:**

If the student or parent did not receive the relief requested at Level Two or if the time for a response has expired, the student or parent may appeal the decision to the Board.

The appeal notice must be filed in writing, on a form provided by the District, within ten days of the date of the written Level Two response or, if no response was received, within ten days of the Level Two response deadline.

The Superintendent or designee shall inform the student or parent of the date, time, and place of the Board meeting at which the complaint will be on the agenda for presentation to the Board.

The Superintendent or designee shall provide the Board the record of the Level Two appeal. The student or parent may request a copy of the Level Two record.

The Level Two record shall include:

1. The Level One record.
2. The notice of appeal from Level One to Level Two.
3. The written response issued at Level Two and any attachments.
4. All other documents relied upon by the administration in reaching the Level Two decision.

The appeal shall be limited to the issues and documents considered at Level Two, except that if at the Level Three hearing the administration intends to rely on evidence not included in the Level Two record, the administration shall provide the student or parent notice of the nature of the evidence at least three days before the hearing.

Texas Education Code § 26A.001(e)(10) is a new law which allows for the grievant to determine whether or not the meeting is held in open or closed session. However, based on our district of innovation, Kaufman ISD will maintain the right to determine whether the complaint will be presented in open or closed meeting in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act and other applicable law. [See BE]

The presiding officer may set reasonable time limits and guidelines for the presentation, including an opportunity for the student or parent and administration to each make a presentation and provide rebuttal and an opportunity for questioning by the Board. The Board shall hear the complaint and may request that the administration provide an explanation for the decisions at the preceding levels.

In addition to any other record of the Board meeting required by law, the Board shall prepare a separate record of the Level Three presentation. The Level Three presentation, including the presentation by the student or parent or the student's representative, any presentation from the administration, and questions from the Board with responses, shall be recorded by audio recording, video/audio recording, or court reporter.



The Board shall then consider the complaint. It may give notice of its decision orally or in writing at any time up to and including the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. If the Board does not make a decision regarding the complaint by the end of the next regularly scheduled meeting, the lack of a response by the Board upholds the administrative decision at Level Two.

The Texas Education Code 26A allows a school board to delegate the authority to hear a grievance at Level 3 to three board members. Kaufman ISD will continue with this process.

Texas Education Code § 26A.001(e)(4)(A) requires a school district to create a grievance record that includes an explanation of the basis for the decision and includes an indication of how each document presented in the grievance supports the decision. Currently, a school board decision on a grievance does not require an indication of what grievance documents support the decision. Kaufman ISD will continue to follow the previous policy and Kaufman ISD will be exempt from any state requirements with regard to reporting grievances to the Texas Education Agency.

**Note: FOC Legal, This does not change the DAEP appeal process as previously approved by the Board of Trustees. The DAEP process is still a one-step appeal process, which allows for a single and final appeal to the board's designee, the Assistant Superintendent. The student's placement continues throughout the appeal process.**

## **1-7. Library Advisory Council**

*(TEC 33.025) EFB (Legal), EFB (Local)*

### **Manner in which statute inhibits goals of the plan:**

Current law requires the school district to establish a School Library Advisory Council at any campus where either 10% of parents or 50 parents (whichever is fewer) submit a written request for such a council. The council must include at least five members, with a majority being parents of currently enrolled students who are not employed by the district. The council is tasked with reviewing library materials, providing input on the selection and removal of resources, making recommendations to ensure materials are age-appropriate and aligned with community values, reviewing all books and other material objected to by any District parent, and advising on such objections. The law also requires districts to notify parents of their right to request council formation and to maintain transparency through open meetings, public records, and timely reporting of council activities and decisions.

### **Innovation Strategy**

Kaufman ISD requests to be exempted from Texas Education Code §33.025, which mandates the creation of a School Library Advisory Council upon petition by 10% of parents or 50 parents. While the newly required councils are not required to be formed until such a petition is received, once the petition is received, the Board will be statutorily required to create these councils. Should that occur, the council(s) will not be optional for the District.

Accordingly, Kaufman ISD seeks to be exempt from Texas Education Code §33.025, which mandates the creation of a School Library Advisory Council upon petition by 10% of parents or 50 parents. Kaufman ISD already has strong procedures in place for selecting, reviewing, and reconsidering library materials led by certified educators and aligned with state-mandated requirements and guidance from the Texas Education Agency. Creating such advisory councils risks undermining the professional judgment of educators and librarians, introduces the judgment of non-certified individuals, introduces potential for politicization of instructional resources, and could very easily lead to inconsistency across campuses. Furthermore, the statute presents an administrative burden, requiring staff time and resources that would be better directed toward student learning and support.

Kaufman ISD's existing processes already allow for meaningful parental review and involvement, including

access to their child's library checkout records, the ability to restrict selections from the library for their child, formal challenge procedures, and transparency in material selection. In addition, concerned individuals may also speak with teachers, administration, and/or the school board through District complaint processes and/or during the open forum of any regularly scheduled board meeting. The District remains committed to ensuring age-appropriate and educationally sound resources while maintaining an efficient and effective oversight structure that includes educator expertise and parent input, without the disruption and/or duplication caused by the statutory requirements in §33.025.

## **1-8. Acquisition of Library Materials**

TEC §33.026

### **Manner in which statute inhibits goals of the plan:**

Current law outlines specific procedures school districts must follow before acquiring library materials. The law requires that materials be reviewed and approved in advance by a certified school librarian and be verified for compliance with age-appropriateness, educational suitability, and community standards. Additionally, it mandates a multi-step vetting process, documentation of acquisition decisions, and the public posting of selected materials before they are made available to students.

### **Innovation Strategy**

Kaufman ISD requests to be exempt from this statutory provision because the District already has robust procedures, implemented by certified educators in place that govern the acquisition of library materials in a manner that ensures transparency, appropriateness, and educational value. These policies and procedures are fully compliant with the standards required by Texas law and guidance from the Texas Education Agency.

The statutory process under §33.026 introduces redundant and restrictive requirements that may delay access to timely instructional and enrichment resources. It also places bureaucratic barriers in front of trained professionals who are certified to select age-appropriate, curriculum-aligned materials that are consistent with standards set by Texas law. Additionally, the public pre-approval requirement undermines the expertise of certified school educators and creates delays and roadblocks in getting library materials to students who benefit from them. Furthermore, the mandated documentation process creates an administrative burden that consumes time and resources better allocated to instructional support. While Kaufman ISD fully supports transparency and parental engagement in the school library process, the rigid requirements of TEC §33.026 are unnecessary and duplicative of local safeguards already in place.

Kaufman ISD's existing processes already allow for meaningful parental review, involvement, and input, including access to their child's library checkout records, the ability to restrict which materials their child checks out from the school library, formal challenge procedures, and transparency in material selection. In addition, concerned individuals may also speak with teachers, administration, and/or the school board through District complaint processes and/or during the open forum of any regularly scheduled board meeting. This exemption allows Kaufman ISD to preserve instructional flexibility, uphold librarian professionalism, and provide students with timely access to enriching and appropriate materials without compromising accountability or community trust.

## **1-9. Parent-Teacher Conferences**

TEC 28.022(a)

### **Manner in which statute inhibits goals of the plan:**

Under this new law, public schools are now required to provide parents with at least two in-person conference opportunities each school year. This provision establishes a direct and explicit requirement one not present in previous

statutes, ensuring families have meaningful, face-to-face opportunities to engage with educators and actively support their child's academic progress.

### **Innovation Strategy**

At Kaufman ISD, we prioritize and value strong partnerships with parents, recognizing the vital role families play in student success. While the current statutory requirement mandates two parent-teacher conferences each year, this approach can be restrictive and may not represent the best option for families, particularly given the recent history of low parent-teacher conference attendance locally. Under our current Board Policy and procedures, in addition to our annual parent-teacher conference, we host Meet the Teacher, Title 1 Parent Night, Open House, and other campus/program specific scheduled events, while also providing a variety of innovative ways to keep families informed of their child's academic progress. Beyond this, parents are always encouraged and welcome to request additional conferences as needed, and our staff will gladly accommodate as many meetings as necessary to support family schedules and ensure open, ongoing communication.

## **1-10. Instructional Material**

TEC 26.006, 26.0062

### **Manner in which statute inhibits goals of the plan:**

According to current law, a teacher's syllabus or more broadly, their instructional plan and material is subject to greater parental scrutiny and district-level policy. Parents are entitled to review all materials used in a class, including textbooks, supplementary materials, and online content. Districts must also ensure that parents can access instructional materials on the District's website or homepage at the beginning of the semester.

### **Innovation Strategy**

Kaufman ISD is recommending an exemption from TEC 26.006 and 26.0062 in order to provide flexibility while continuing to uphold our strong commitment to transparency and parental engagement. We believe parents are essential partners in the education of their children, and we are committed to ensuring they have meaningful access to the instructional materials used in our classrooms. To that end, Kaufman ISD will be posting on our district website the scope and sequence for all K–12 core and state-tested content areas, as well as Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses. This provides families with a clear and accessible overview of what their children will be learning throughout the school year.

At the same time, we recognize that the statutory requirement, as written, does not fully align with the diverse instructional needs of our district and can create unnecessary burdens without improving transparency for families. The district continues to build the infrastructure and support necessary to expand access to additional courses not yet available online. Importantly, if parents have concerns about instructional materials, Kaufman ISD has a review process in place to address questions and provide clarification. In cases where appropriate, we also offer alternative assignments to ensure that families feel supported and respected. This approach allows us to meet the intent of the law—ensuring openness and collaboration with families—while doing so in a way that is sustainable, student-centered, and responsive to parent needs.

## **1-11 Calculations of GPA**

TEC 28.0252

### **Manner in which statute inhibits goals of the plan:**

During the 89th Legislative Session, the Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 1191 (2025), which requires the Commissioner of Education to develop a standardized method for calculating high school grade point averages (GPAs). Under this law, all public schools in Texas must give equal additional weight to Advanced Placement (AP), International

Baccalaureate (IB), OnRamps dual enrollment, and other dual credit courses. The intent of the bill is to create a fair and consistent statewide system for recognizing advanced coursework, ultimately promoting greater equity in college admissions and scholarship opportunities for students across districts. School districts are required to use the standard method developed by the Commissioner.

## **Innovation Strategy**

While the anticipated amendments to Section 28.0252 of the Texas Education Code are commendable, they also present immediate challenges for districts. Therefore, the District requests relief from the requirement to use the standard method developed by the Commissioner. Kaufman ISD will continue to follow its current GPA calculation methods under existing district policies and procedures. Once state requirements are finalized, the District will carefully review the guidance, determine any necessary changes, and make further assessment on whether to implement the Commissioner's standards or continue with its then existing district policies and procedures.

Just as importantly, Kaufman ISD is committed to developing a strong and timely communication plan so that students and families are fully informed of any adjustments to GPA calculation. Our goal is to maintain clarity, fairness, and transparency throughout this transition to ensure students are not disadvantaged during the process.

## **Goal 2: The Kaufman ISD Board of Trustees and Kaufman ISD Administration will make teacher certification decisions based on district qualifications that meet the unique needs of the district's students and community.**

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### **2-1. Local Teacher Certification**

*(TEC §21.003) (DK LEGAL) (DBA LEGAL)*

#### **The manner in which the statute inhibits the goals of the plan**

*TEC §21.003(a) states that a person may not be employed as a teacher by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued by the appropriate state agency. In the event a district cannot locate a certified teacher for a position or a teacher is teaching a subject outside of their certification, the district must request emergency certification from the Texas Education Agency and/or State Board of Educator Certification.*

*This system is burdensome and does not take into account the unique financial and/or instructional needs of the district. Also, the system does not take into account sporadic or sustained teacher shortages that arise.*

## **Innovation Strategies**

Kaufman ISD will make every attempt to employ individuals who hold the appropriate certification for posted vacancies. When that is not reasonably possible, the district will employ the following strategies.

- a. Campus principals may request that the superintendent or designee assign a local certification that will allow a certified teacher to teach one or more subjects in a related field for which he/she is not certified. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses that would qualify this individual to teach the proposed subject.
- b. Campus principals may submit to the superintendent or designee a request for local certification that will allow an uncertified applicant to be hired for a vacant teaching position, including, but not limited to, vacancies

in Career and Tech (CTE), core classes, and electives. Selected applicants will be deemed to have the knowledge and expertise that will meet the needs of students in the short term. Preference will be given to a candidate who: i. has a bachelor's degree; ii. is enrolled or eligible to be enrolled in an alternative certification program, and/or; iii. is currently employed with the district in a paraprofessional role and has demonstrated skills leading to student success.

c. Local teaching certificates will expire at the end of each school year and may only be renewed at the discretion of the superintendent or designee.

d. Non-degreed employees working under a local teaching certificate will not receive a probationary or term contract but will be employed on an at-will basis. Non-degreed employees under a local teaching certification will receive a maximum of 80% of a beginning teacher's salary as reported, except for CTE courses.

e. Degreed, but uncertified teachers employed under a local teaching certificate will receive a salary on the teacher's salary scale as reported.

f. Employees who have provided contracts can receive credit for years of service if they previously served in another role or within a role that qualifies for service, as determined by Kaufman ISD.

a. The superintendent will report this action to the Board of Trustees at the first board meeting following the assignment.

b. A teacher certification waiver, state permit applications, or other paperwork will not be submitted to the Texas Education Agency.

**HB 2 passed in the 2025 legislative session, which requires this provision to be eliminated by September 2026 or 2030 if delayed by the Commissioner. This plan will be amended accordingly.**

## **2-2. Probationary Contracts**

(TEC 21.102) (DCA LEGAL)

### **Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan**

*For experienced employees new to the district, the probationary period may not exceed one year if the person has been employed as an employee in public education for at least five of the previous eight years. This time period is not sufficient to evaluate the employees since employee contract timelines demand that employment decisions must be made prior to the first or second year's state assessment results.*

### **Innovation Strategies**

- a. For experienced administrators, teachers, counselors, or nurses new to the district that have been employed in public education for at least five of the eight previous years, a probationary contract may be issued for up to three years from the last date of district employment.

## **2-3. Counselor - General Duties**

(TEC §33.006 (d))

**Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan**

*TEC §33.006 requires the board of trustees of each school district to adopt a policy that requires a school counselor to spend at least 80 percent of the school counselor's total work time on duties that are components of a counseling program. Each school district shall annually assess the district's compliance with the policy adopted.*

**Innovation Strategy**

- a. By eliminating the 80 percent requirement set forth, counselors can continue to perform all duties assigned to them by the local district. Counselors will continue to work with students, staff, and parents to support the learning and growth of all students within the district.
- b. Counselors will no longer be limited by this time constraint or be forced to calculate their minutes for submission. The district nor any individual counselor will be required to submit any waivers or counseling minute documentation.