



Grand Prairie Independent School District Local Innovation Plan 2021-2026

Proposed Innovations June 2024:

The following amendments will be taken to the Board of Trustees for consideration at the Regular Board meeting in June 2024:

Revocation of Interdistrict Transfers During the School Year:

TEC Code Requiring Exemption: TEC 25.036: A school district has the option to admit students who do not reside inside the district boundaries through an interdistrict transfer. The transfer period is considered to be valid for one school year.

Benefit of Exemption for GPISD:

- Flexibility in Revoking Transfers: The district gains the authority to revoke a student's transfer during the academic year in response to disciplinary infractions, placements in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP), or expulsions.
- Upholding Accuracy: Misrepresentation of information on the transfer application or documentation may lead to the revocation of the student's transfer.
- Ensuring Attendance Standards: Transfers may be revoked if a student's attendance falls below the TEA 90% attendance standard.

Local Guidelines:

The superintendent may revoke an interdistrict transfer after careful consideration of the circumstances surrounding the need for revocation during the school year if the student (1) faces disciplinary consequences such as suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion, (2) makes a misrepresentation on the transfer application, or (3) fails to meet district attendance standards.



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Extending Suspension Duration to More Than Three Days:

TEC Code Requiring Exemption: TEC 37.005 states that suspensions “may not exceed three school days.”

Benefit of Exemption for GPISD:

- **Broadened Discipline Range:** By lifting the three-day suspension cap, campuses gain flexibility in disciplinary actions, avoiding immediate recourse to placement in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP).
- **Tailored Disciplinary Measures:** Relief from this regulation permits more nuanced responses to student misconduct. In cases where a three-day in-school suspension (ISS) proves inadequate, but a DAEP placement appears overly severe, extending ISS duration provides a middle ground.
- **Maintaining Campus Connections:** Increased ISS days enable campuses to retain students on-site, fostering continuity in education by keeping them closer to their regular educators and support services.

Local Guidelines:

Current laws limit suspensions to three days, so campus staff encounter limitations in administering disciplinary measures for moderately serious offenses. Exemption from this mandate grants campuses the flexibility to retain students on-site, fostering proximity to their regular teachers during disciplinary actions, rather than defaulting to placement in disciplinary alternative educational programs. This shift towards a more expansive disciplinary toolkit reflects an innovative approach to student discipline, prioritizing individual needs while maintaining a conducive learning environment.



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Ability to Suspend Students Below Third Grade:

TEC Code Requiring Exemption: TEC 37.005 states that a student “who is enrolled in a grade level below grade three may not be placed in out-of-school suspension unless while on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property, the student engages in:

1. Conduct that contains the elements of an offense related to weapons under Penal Code 46.02 or 46.05;
2. Conduct that contains the elements of a violence related under Penal Code 22.01, 22.011, 22.02, 22.021; or
3. Selling, giving, or delivering to another person or possessing, using, or being under the influence of any amount of:
 - a. Marihuana or a controlled substance, as defined by Health and Safety Code Chapter 481, or by 21 U.S.C. Section 801 et seq.;
 - b. A dangerous drug, as defined by Health and Safety Code Chapter 483; or
 - c. An alcoholic beverage, as defined by Alcoholic Beverage Code 1.04.

Benefit of Exemption for GPISD:

- Meeting Varied Needs: Granting discretion in assigning limited OSS days allows schools to better address both school and student needs.

Local Guidelines:

In situations where a student's behavior significantly disrupts the school's functioning, action must be taken to ensure the effectiveness and safety of the educational environment for all students. Some students require specially designed plans and support mechanisms to thrive in their learning environment. Providing a brief period of suspension can afford staff the time to develop appropriate plans and allocate necessary resources, ultimately serving the best interests of the student and the campus. Any out-of-school suspension for a student below third grade necessitates written permission from a chief of schools (or equivalent position) overseeing the campus.



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Enhancing Teacher Certification Flexibility:

TEC Code Requiring Exemption: TEC 21.003(a) mandates that all district teachers possess appropriate certification as per rules outlined by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC).

Benefits of Exemption to GPISD:

- Addressing Staffing Gaps: Granting flexibility in teacher certifications facilitates the hiring of certified teachers to address unfilled content areas, particularly in elementary and middle schools, bolstering applicant pools in areas of specific need.
- Expanding Teaching Opportunities: This innovation permits certified teachers to instruct subjects beyond their SBEC-certified areas, enhancing instructional versatility.
- Meeting Local Needs: Flexibility in hiring allows for the recruitment of teachers who meet district qualifications, particularly in high-need areas.
- Utilizing Out-of-State Talent: The provision enables the hiring of out-of-state certified instructors possessing active standard teaching certifications in relevant content areas.
- Bridging Certification Gaps: Core-subject EC-6 instructors meeting certain criteria will be considered for eligibility to teach other content areas or grade levels.

Local Guidelines:

While prioritizing individuals with appropriate certifications, the district acknowledges the necessity of flexibility in hiring practices. When positions cannot be filled by individuals with required certification, this provision enables the hiring of individuals who are certified in various content areas or grade levels or who possess certifications from other states. However, content-area teaching certifications remain mandatory for Special Education, in which the ARD committee significantly modifies instructional content.

The district will establish metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of out-of-state certified instructors and certified teachers who are teaching subjects outside their SBEC-certified areas. Professional development plans will be implemented to support appropriately certified personnel in their assigned content areas/grade levels. This innovative approach aims to expand educational opportunities for students, particularly in cases where state-certified teachers are unavailable to teach certain courses.



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Supplementary Pay for Volunteering during Planning and Preparation Time:

TEC Code Requiring Exemption: TEC 21.404 requires each classroom teacher to receive at least 450 minutes within each two-week period for instructional preparation, including parent-teacher conferences, evaluating students' work, and planning. A planning and preparation period under this section may not be less than 45 minutes within the instructional day. During a planning and preparation period, a classroom teacher may not be required to participate in any other activity.

Benefit of Exemption for GPISD:

- Addressing Staffing Challenges: Teachers can volunteer to cover classes during substitute shortages, ensuring continuity in student learning.
- Providing Additional Compensation: Teachers have the opportunity to earn extra income by voluntarily covering classes during their planning periods.
- Enhancing Classroom Coverage: This innovation facilitates better class coverage amid teacher shortages, maintaining a conducive learning environment.

Local Guidelines:

In light of severe teacher and substitute shortages, teachers volunteer to cover other classes during their planning periods, as necessary. Selected teachers may opt to teach additional courses during their instructional preparation time, receiving supplementary pay as an incentive. Teachers could also take additional students from another class during the school day and receive extra money as an incentive. This initiative empowers teachers to fulfill specific duties during their planning periods and/or during the school day, contributing to continuous, appropriate supervision and instruction for all students.