



## Grand Prairie Independent School District Local Innovation Plan

Local Innovation Committee Members	
Bessye Adams	Community Member/Parent
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Claudia Munoz	Community Member/Parent
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Lorimer Arendse	Campus Leader
Donnie Bartlett	Campus Leader
Mary Smith	Campus Leader
Kristin Booth	Campus Leader
Jennifer Ellison	Campus Leader
Veronica Kunschik	Campus Leader
Hollye Mohler	Campus Leader
Juan Espinosa	Classroom Teacher, District Teacher of the Year
Mary Cavasos	Classroom Teacher, District Teacher of the Year
Twila Read	Counselor, TCTA Representative
Mary Grafflin	Classroom Teacher, ATPE Representative
Dorris Hill	Classroom Teacher, TSTA Representative
Cindy King	Classroom Teacher
Thad Myers	Classroom Teacher
Alejandro Padilla	Classroom Teacher
Jennifer Jordan	Classroom Teacher
Gabriel Trujillo	Chief of Schools
Elna Davis	Chief of Schools
Demetrus Liggins	Chief of Schools
Traci Davis	Chief of Innovation and Choice
Susanna Ramirez	Assistant Superintendent of Student Support
Patricia Lewis	Assistant Superintendent of School Improvement
Robb Welch	Assistant Superintendent of Finance
Lorraine Morazzano	Senior Chief of Human Capital
Winston Minix	Director of CTE
Teri Wilson	Chief of Staff
Linda Ellis	Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning
Ad Hoc Members	
Susan Simpson Hull	Superintendent
Tom Dyar	Legal Counsel
Vern Alexander	Deputy Superintendent
Nancy Bridges	Deputy Superintendent
Nugget Cunningham	Deputy Superintendent



## Grand Prairie Independent School District Local Innovation Plan

### I. INTRODUCTION

House Bill 1842, passed during the 84<sup>th</sup> 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. On May 12, 2016, the Grand Prairie Independent School District passed a Resolution to initiate the process of designation as a District of Innovation in order to increase local control over District operations and to support innovation and local initiatives to improve educational outcomes for the benefit of students in the community.

On May 18, 2016, the GPISD School Board held a Public Hearing to allow the public to learn more about the designation and provide feedback. The School Board appointed a Local Innovation Committee comprised of community members appointed by the School Board Officers, parents, teacher leaders, and campus and district level administrators to prepare a Local Innovation Plan to address the needs of the District.

This Local Innovation Committee met to develop an initial draft of the Local Innovation Plan. The plan was posted online for public viewing and feedback on June 21, 2016, and remained online until July 20, 2016. The Local Innovation Committee met to consider feedback received and finalize the plan on July 20, 2016. The plan was presented to the GPISD Education Improvement Committee (EIC) and it was recommended by the committee that the plan be presented to the School Board for consideration. The Local Innovation Committee presented the plan to the School Board, and the Board adopted the plan on July 21, 2016.

### II. Term

The term of the Local Innovation Plan will begin at the start of the 2016-2017 school year and end at the end of the 2020-2021 School Year, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The committee will revisit the plan annually 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 Innovation Committee, the Educational Improvement Committee and the School Board.

## Grand Prairie Independent School District Local Innovation Plan

### III. Continual Improvement

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

#### Mission Statement

We will ensure student success through engaging learning experiences, collaborative leadership, and a focus on maximizing student achievement.

#### Vision Statement

We are a learning community vigorously pursuing student success.

#### GPISD Goals

- Maximization of Student Achievement
- Exercise Responsible Fiscal Oversight
- Develop Leadership Capacity
- Promote 21st Century Learners who are College and Career Ready

#### GPISD Six Plays



## The 6 Plays of GPISD Schools

Vertically & Horizontally Aligned Curriculum	5E Model of Instruction	Data-Driven Decisions	Relational Capacity	Intentional Leadership	Visit What We Value
<p>Curriculum is about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication – ongoing conversations</li> <li>• Customization – making it our own</li> <li>• Connections – within and across grade levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage</li> <li>• Explore</li> <li>• Explain</li> <li>• Elaborate</li> <li>• Evaluate</li> </ul>	<p>Data-driven decision making is about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collecting appropriate data</li> <li>• Analyzing that data in a meaningful fashion</li> <li>• Getting the data into the hands of the people who need it</li> <li>• Using the data to increase school efficiencies and improve student achievement</li> </ul>	<p>Exploring and expanding classroom and campus relationships for greater student inclusion and performance</p>	<p>Educators bringing innovation, increased student engagement, and higher-level performance at all grade levels</p>	<p>Time, energy, and effort dedicated to finding, increasing, and celebrating student achievement</p>



## Grand Prairie Independent School District Local Innovation Plan

### **Innovations Recommended:**

The GPISD School Board and the Local Innovation Committee considered all areas available for local innovation and decided to create a plan that centers around four areas:

#### Class Size in Kindergarten through 4<sup>th</sup> 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.

##### Benefit of Exemption for GPISD:

- Schools begin the school year with staff based on projections of student enrollment. Often, enrollment will exceed projections for one school while under projections for another school. As a result, teachers and/or students must be moved from class to class or school to school to meet the 22-to-1 requirement. As a result, students leave behind friends and teacher relationships that have already formed.
- 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 needed:
  - 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, and the School Board will be notified.



## Grand Prairie Independent School District Local Innovation Plan

### 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.

#### Benefit of Exemption for GPISD:

- District Improvement Committee will have the flexibility to start school one week early, the third Monday in August, for either the entire District or individual campuses.
- Starting one week earlier will balance the two semesters with a natural Winter Break, set exams prior to Winter Break, and create more instructional time before STAAR/EOC/AP exams.
- The balanced semesters will align with college semesters as well, allowing more opportunities for summer school, internships, and industrial certification opportunities.
- Starting one week earlier will also accommodate new and innovative educational models such as summer bridge programming.

#### Local Guidelines:

The District Improvement Committee will receive parent and staff input, then decide, subject to School Board approval, whether the entire District or individual campuses will start on the third Monday of August.



## Grand Prairie Independent School District Local Innovation Plan

### Teacher Certification:

#### 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.

#### Benefit of Exemption for GPISD:

- The statutory certification requirements inhibit the District's ability to hire professionals with industry experience to teach Career and Technical Education (CTE) and STEM Courses.
- Local Qualifications will allow the district to :
  - Recruit teachers from the field, including individuals from certain trades and/or vocations with industry knowledge and real world experience
  - Offer dual credit opportunities in CTE courses
  - Hire community college instructors

#### Local Guidelines:

- The District will establish Local Criteria, such as years of experience, qualifications, and industry certifications, to qualify for a local (district) teaching certificate.
- Principals, along with the CTE department, will submit candidates to the Superintendent with credentials. 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.



## Grand Prairie Independent School District Local Innovation Plan

### Minimum Minutes of Instruction:

#### TEC Code Requiring Exemption:

TEC Code 25.081 (HB 2610): For each school Year, each school district must operate so that the district provides for at least 75,600 minutes of instruction, including intermissions and recesses.

#### Pre-Kindergarten Exemption:

##### Benefits for GPISD PK/PPCD Program:

The state requires 75,600 minutes for full day programming. For half-day programs such as PK and PPCD the required minute requirement would be 37,800 minutes. There is not enough time in the day to be able to accommodate 37,800 minutes for both a morning and afternoon group of students in our 170 day calendar. We would like to request that we be allowed to offer a 210 minute school day for half-day programs. This will allow each teacher to have a morning and an afternoon group of students along with their conference period and duty free lunch within the regular school day. This 210 minute exemption will result in the students receiving 35,700 minutes of instruction during their half day program.

##### Local Guidelines for PK/PPCD Program:

GPISD will offer a PK schedule consisting of two three-hour sessions of 210 minutes, which allows each teacher to teach two groups of students while still having the required conference period and 30-minute duty free lunch.

#### Alternative Education Setting Exemption:

##### Benefits for GPISD Alternative Campuses (ie. Crosswinds)

- Campuses such as Crosswinds offer an alternative education program designed to meet the needs of non-traditional students. This program offers an opportunity for students to accelerate credit attainment, acquire credits at a faster rate, and mitigate credit deficiencies. Crosswinds High School provides an alternate route to graduation for students who have not been successful in the traditional school due to special challenges. These challenges include (but are not limited to) parent or parenting students; over-age students; family hardships created by economic situations that result in the student having to work instead of attend school; being credit deficient for various reasons; and/or having difficulty passing STAAR End-of-Course exams.



## Grand Prairie Independent School District Local Innovation Plan

- Being exempt from the minimum minutes requirement will permit the District to offer alternative programming with fewer minutes that focuses on quality programming and cost savings, designed to fit the needs of these at-risk students without having to apply for an annual waiver.

### Local Guidelines for Alternative Campuses:

Crosswinds High School will offer three options for students choosing an alternative setting.

**Option 1:** Students attend a 4 hour school window daily, three 70 minute courses.

**Option 2:** Students attend full day sessions to have days off throughout the week to work and/or care for their families.

**Option 3:** Evening School Option

M-TH: 5:30 PM-8:00 PM

Students will be enrolled in one session and will be required to attend daily and meet district attendance guidelines. Students will have the opportunity to attend an additional session to accumulate attendance time and credits.