

**Coupland ISD**  
**DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLAN**  
**May 2022 – May 2027**

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**Introduction**

HB 1842 was passed during the 84th Texas Legislative Session in spring 2015. This bill provides Texas public school districts the opportunity to be designated as Districts of Innovation. To access these flexibilities a school district must adopt a District of Innovation Plan.

Districts of Innovation provides opportunities for:

- Greater local control;
- Increased flexibility governing education programming; and
- Empowerment to innovate and think differently.

Districts are not exempt from statutes related to curriculum, graduation requirements, nor academic and financial accountability

<b>TIMELINE</b>	
<b>4/11/22</b>	<p><b>District Plan of Innovation Posted</b>                      The Coupland ISD District Plan of Innovation will be posted on the Coupland ISD website for at least 30 days prior to renewal.</p>
<b>4/26/22</b>	<p><b>Public Meeting</b>                      On April 26, 2022 the Coupland ISD district level committee will hold a public meeting for public input and final approval of the renewal of the District of Innovation Plan.</p>
<b>5/10/22</b>	<p><b>District of Innovation Plan Approved by Board of Trustees</b>                      On May 10, 2022 the Board of Trustees will vote on the renewal of the Coupland ISD District of Innovation Plan. A copy of the approved District of Innovation Plan will be provided to Texas Education Agency for posting on its website.</p>

Coupland ISD has an approved District of Innovation Plan through May 10, 2027.

Below is the timeline for the proposed **Amendments** to the DOI Plan for Coupland ISD.

DOI Amendment Timeline	
4/3/2024	<p><b>Public Meeting</b>                      On April 3, 2024 the Coupland ISD district SBDM committee held a public meeting to consider the proposed amendments, receive public input, and approve the amendments to the district's DOI plan.</p>
4/11/2024	<p><b>District of Innovation Plan Approved by Board of Trustees</b>                      On May 10, 2022 the Board of Trustees will vote on the renewal of the Coupland ISD District of Innovation Plan. A copy of the approved District of Innovation Plan will be provided to Texas Education Agency for posting on its website.</p>

## Flexible Calendar

(TEC25.0811)

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### **Currently:**

*Students may not begin school before the 4th Monday of August.*

### **Proposed:**

*To allow for a calendar that fits the local needs of our community, we would like to consider a flexible calendar option which may include an early start date.*

- Students may begin earlier than the fourth Monday of August. This earlier start date will allow a better balance between semesters, more instructional days prior to mandatory testing, and a school end date prior to June.

## Transfer Students

(TEC25.036)

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### **Currently:**

*Transfer students are accepted for a period of one year and may not be revoked during the school year.*

### **Proposed:**

*To allow for a student transfer to be revoked at any time during the school year when it is in the best interest of the district and responds to the local needs of our community.*

- Students transfer may be revoked at any time the transfer agreement is violated. The transfer agreement addresses attendance, academic and behavioral standards along with parent involvement activities. Transfers may also be revoked if the district enrollment grows to exceed class size limitations that would require hiring additional staff.

## Teacher Certification

(TEC §21.003, TEC §21.053)

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### **Currently:**

*A public school employee must have the appropriate credentials for his or her current assignment unless the appropriate permit has been issued. The credentials appropriate to each assignment are set forth in the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) rules at 19 Administrative Code Chapter 231.*

### **Proposed:**

*To allow our core teachers to teach an elective course without the appropriate credential.*

- Teachers with qualified experience could be eligible to teach an elective course through a local teaching certification. In addition, flexibility in this area will assist the District in offering courses in which students have an interest and students can earn state credit rather than local credit. A certified teacher will be permitted to teach outside their field. The District will only utilize this exemption for electives.

## April 2024 Amendments

The proposed amended DOI was presented to the Coupland ISD Site-Based Decision-Making Committee (SBDM) for consideration on April 3, 2024, and it was approved by a majority of the committee. The CISD Board of Trustees reviewed and approved the amended DOI Plan at the Regular Board of trustees Meeting on April 11, 2024. The amended plan retains the expiration date of May 10, 2027.

Coupland ISD proposes flexibility and seeks an exemption in the following areas:

### Teacher Certification

~~(TEC §21.003, TEC §21.053)~~

#### Currently:

~~A public school employee must have the appropriate credentials for his or her current assignment unless the appropriate permit has been issued. The credentials appropriate to each assignment are set forth in the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) rules at 19 Administrative Code Chapter 231.~~

#### Proposed:

~~To allow our core teachers to teach an elective course without the appropriate credential.~~

~~• Teachers with qualified experience could be eligible to teach an elective course through a local teaching certification. In addition, flexibility in this area will assist the District in offering courses in which students have an interest and students can earn state credit rather than local credit. A certified teacher will be permitted to teach outside their field. The District will only utilize this exemption for electives.~~

### Teacher Certification

(TEC §21.003; §21.051; §21.053; §21.057)

#### Currently:

Texas Education Code Sec. §Sec. 21.003. CERTIFICATION REQUIRED.

(a) A person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern or teacher trainee, librarian, educational aide, administrator, educational diagnostician, or school counselor by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued as provided by Subchapter B.

(b) Except as otherwise provided by this subsection, a person may not be employed by a school district as an audiologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, physician, nurse, school psychologist, associate school psychologist, licensed professional counselor, marriage and family therapist, social worker, or speech language pathologist unless the person is licensed by the state agency that licenses that profession and may perform specific services within those professions for a school district only if the person holds the appropriate credential from the appropriate state agency

Texas Education Code §Sec. 21.051. RULES REGARDING FIELD-BASED EXPERIENCE AND OPTIONS FOR FIELD EXPERIENCE AND INTERNSHIPS.

(a) In this section, "teacher of record" means a person employed by a school district who teaches the majority of the instructional day in an academic instructional setting and is responsible for evaluating student achievement and assigning grades.

Texas Education Code §Sec. 21.053. PRESENTATION AND RECORDING OF CERTIFICATES.

(a) A person who desires to teach in a public school shall present the person's certificate for filing with the employing district before the person's contract with the board of trustees of the district is binding.

(b) An educator who does not hold a valid certificate may not be paid for teaching or work done before the effective date of issuance of a valid certificate.

Texas Education Code §Sec. 21.057. PARENTAL NOTIFICATION.

(a) A school district that assigns an inappropriately certified or uncertified teacher to the same classroom for more than 30 consecutive instructional days during the same school year shall provide written notice of the assignment to a parent or guardian of each student in that classroom.

(b) The superintendent of the school district shall provide the notice required by Subsection (a) not later than the 30th instructional day after the date of the assignment of the inappropriately certified or uncertified teacher.

**Proposed:**

The district will establish its own local qualification requirements to have the option to issue a local certification for classroom teachers. The exemption is to specifically allow the district to issue local teaching permits without intervention by the Commissioner to review the issued permits. The exemption is to allow the district to establish local requirements including the current requirements in Sec 21.055 for teacher preparation (including all background checks, training and classroom management preparation) to enhance our ability to compete for teaching resources in the area. Additionally, Texas Education Code §21.003 and §21.053 outlines state certification standards for teachers. A teacher certification waiver, state permit application or other documentation will not be submitted to the Texas Education Agency.

Local Requirements and Process:

Due to the geographic location of Coupland ISD and being surrounded by much larger school districts, CISD will also allow the district to recognize out-of-state certifications for all levels and all certification areas. Additionally, a certified teacher may teach a grade level or content area for which he or she is not certified.

Local qualifications that may be considered include but are not limited to:

- Professional work experience
- Formal training and education in the content area
- Active, relevant professional industry certification or license
- Combination of work experience, training and education

Implementation guidelines for teachers hired under local qualifications are as follows:

- High quality, certified teachers must be considered first.
- Campus principals must submit a written request to the superintendent to employ a non-certified teacher along with evidence of meeting the local qualifications.
- Employees will be employed under a non-chapter 21 contract for a term of one school year with School Board approval.
- Professional development plans will be developed with an emphasis on classroom management and effective instructional practice.
- Locally certified teachers will be encouraged to attain certification in the area they are locally certified. The district will reimburse the teacher for the SBEC testing fee upon successfully passing the certification exam.
- Employees will be appraised under the appraisal system used for all other teachers in the district.
- Employees will only be able to be hired with a locally determined certification for a maximum of three years per teaching assignment.

**Benefit:**

Coupland ISD is committed to hiring high-quality, certified teachers. However, current teacher certification requirements and a decreasing applicant pool restrict the district's ability to hire teachers to teach in difficult to fill positions or to fill last-minute vacancies. CISD will benefit by having access to a broader applicant pool, including community college instructors, university professors, and internal applicants

seeking assignments outside of their certification area. This exemption will allow the district to have more flexibility to hire staff to meet the academic needs of our students.

## **School District Depositories**

(TEC §42.205)

### **Currently:**

Texas Education Code Subchapter G. School District Depositories Sec. §45.205 TERM OF CONTRACT.

(a) Except as provided by Subsection (b), the depository bank when selected shall serve for a term of two years and until its successor is selected and has qualified.

(b) A school district and the district's depository bank may agree to extend a depository contract for two additional three-year terms. An extension under this subsection is not subject to the requirements of Section 45.206.

(c) The contract term and any extension must coincide with the school district's fiscal year.

### **Proposed:**

The district will only send depository services out to bid if the district determines contract pricing becomes uncompetitive or there is some operational or financial reason to send the district's banking services out for bid. With this exemption in place, none of the additional requirements related to the bid or request for proposal detailed in Sec 45.206 through 45.209 would be applicable. Refer to Coupland ISD Board Policy BDAE.

### **Benefit:**

This exemption is to allow the district's existing bank contract to be extended beyond the total 8-year allowable contract term if the district determines contract pricing remains competitive and there is no operational or financial reason to send the district's banking services out for bid. This exemption lessens the administrative burden related to preparing and reviewing a Request for Proposal (RFP) when there is a limited number of banking institutions available to bid on the district's business. This will further mitigate any impact to employees that would have to change direct deposit instructions each time a new depository occurs and allows the district flexibility with respect to banking relationships.

## **Student/Teacher Ratios; Class Size**

(TEC §25.112; §25.113; §25.114)

### **Currently:**

Texas Education Code Sec. §25.112. CLASS SIZE.

(a) Except as otherwise authorized by this section, a school district may not enroll more than 22 students in a prekindergarten, kindergarten, first, second, third, or fourth grade class.

Texas Education Code Sec. §25.113. NOTICE OF CLASS SIZE.

(a) A campus or district that is granted an exception under Section 25.112(d) from class size limits shall provide written notice of the exception to the parent of or person standing in parental relation to each student affected by the exception

Texas Education Code Sec. §25.114. STUDENT/TEACHER RATIOS IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES; CLASS SIZE.

(a) In implementing the curriculum for physical education under Section 28.002(a)(2)(C), each school district shall establish specific objectives and goals the district intends to accomplish through the curriculum, including, to the extent practicable, student/teacher ratios that are small enough to enable the district to:

- (1) carry out the purposes of and requirements for the physical education curriculum as provided under Section 28.002(d); and

(2) ensure the safety of students participating in physical education.

**Proposed:**

CISD will make every attempt to keep all PK-4 classrooms to a 22:1 ratio and will allocate staff based on a district ratio of 22:1. Several factors must be considered before adding another teacher to a grade level in order to maintain the 22:1 ratio, including age of students, time of year, available resources, availability of qualified applicants, etc. In the event a PK-4 classroom exceeds this ratio, the district will allow class size to go to 24:1 if it is determined this is the best course of action for the students. When a class exceeds 22:1, a waiver will not be filed with the Texas Education Agency, but the Superintendent will provide a report to the Board at the next board meeting following 30 instructional days of the class exceeding 22:1.

The 22:1 ratio does not apply to physical education classes. In such subjects, CISD will consider student/teacher ratios appropriate to carry out the curriculum and ensure student and staff safety.

**Benefit:**

The district would no longer have to submit annual class size waivers that are continuously approved by TEA and do multiple communications to parents each six weeks allowing the district to redirect resources more effectively.