

Covington ISD



District of Innovation Plan

February 2018-2023

Board Approved
April 9, 2018

The District takes exemption from Section 21.003 and shall allow any certified teacher that the District feels will meet the needs of its students and provide for flexibility in employment and assignments to teach up to 3 periods per day outside their area of certification. Also, if a certified teacher cannot be recruited in the high need area, the district may employ a person with an appropriate degree to fill the position for up to one year. Rationale: It is sometimes difficult or impossible to recruit fully certified individuals for some part-time positions and/or high need positions such as Spanish. Having this flexibility allows for uninterrupted staffing of high need positions and for staffing the occasional extra section of a class or additional elective classes with limited sections.

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.

As long as a person employed by a district before September 1, 2011, to perform marriage and family therapy, as defined by Section [502.002](#), Occupations Code, is employed by the same district, the person is not required to hold a license as a marriage and family therapist to perform marriage and family therapy with that district.

(c) The commissioner may waive the requirement for certification of a superintendent if requested by a school district as provided by Section [7.056](#). A person who is not certified as a superintendent may not be employed by a school district as the superintendent before the person has received a waiver of certification from the commissioner. The commissioner may limit the waiver of certification in any manner the commissioner determines is appropriate. A person may be designated to act as a temporary or interim superintendent for a school district, but the district may not employ the person under a contract as superintendent unless the person has been certified or a waiver has been granted.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 82 (S.B. [158](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2007.

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1134 (H.B. [1386](#)), Sec. 5, eff. June 17, 2011.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 443 (S.B. [715](#)), Sec. 8, eff. June 14, 2013.

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1135 (S.B. [168](#)), Sec. 1, eff. June 19, 2015.

The District takes exemption from provisions of paragraph (b) limiting newly hired teachers with 5 years of experience in the last 8 years to only one year under a probationary contract. The District will reserve the right to provide up to three years of probationary status to any newly hired certified person. Rationale: At times the District is faced with hiring someone that has not taught more than one or two years in any one district but that has 5 years experience. Should such a person need additional years under probationary status to develop into a teacher the District feels is worthy of a term contract the District should have the right to determine that on a local, case by case basis.

Sec. 21.102. PROBATIONARY CONTRACT. (a) Except as provided by Section 21.202(b), a person who is employed as a teacher by a school district for the first time, or who has not been employed by the district for two consecutive school years subsequent to August 28, 1967, shall be employed under a probationary contract. A person who previously was employed as a teacher by a district and, after at least a two-year lapse in

district employment returns to district employment, may be employed under a probationary contract.

(a-1) A person who voluntarily accepts an assignment in a new professional capacity that requires a different class of certificate under Subchapter B than the class of certificate held by the person in the professional capacity in which the person was previously employed may be employed under a probationary contract. This subsection does not apply to a person who is returned by a school district to a professional capacity in which the person was employed by the district before the district employed the person in the new professional capacity as described by this subsection. A person described by this subsection who is returned to a previous professional capacity is entitled to be employed in the original professional capacity under the same contractual status as the status held by the person during the previous employment by the district in that capacity.

(b) A probationary contract may not be for a term exceeding one school year. The probationary contract may be renewed for two additional one-year periods, for a maximum permissible probationary contract period of three school years, except that the probationary period may not exceed one year for a person who has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment by the

district.

(c) An employment contract may not extend the probationary contract period beyond the end of the third consecutive school year of the teacher's employment by the school district unless, during the third year of a teacher's probationary contract, the board of trustees determines that it is doubtful whether the teacher should be given a continuing contract or a term contract. If the board makes that determination, the district may make a probationary contract with the teacher for a term ending with the fourth consecutive school year of the teacher's employment with the district, at which time the district shall:

(1) terminate the employment of the teacher; or

(2) employ the teacher under a continuing contract or a term contract as provided by Subchapter D or E, according to district policy.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995. Amended by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 440, Sec. 1, eff. June 20, 2003; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1232, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 728 (H.B. [2018](#)), Sec. 5.002, eff. September 1, 2005.

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1010 (H.B. [2380](#)), Sec. 1, eff. June 17, 2011.

The District shall calculate minimum service based on 78,540 minutes rather than 187 days. Rationale: Since the legislature has provided a mechanism to use minutes to calculate instruction time for students it is rational to do the same for teacher service. If instruction days are lengthened with the total number being reduced it would be unfair to teachers to continue to require them to provide the same amount of instructional time in fewer days and still be required to serve the same overall number of contract days This helps increase local control and should improve recruiting and retention efforts. **Teacher salaries will not be reduced by this action.**

Sec. 21.401. MINIMUM SERVICE REQUIRED. (a) A contract between a school district and an educator must be for a minimum of 10 months' service.

(a-1) to (a-4) Expired.

(b) **An educator employed under a 10-month contract must provide a minimum of 187 days of service.**

(c) The commissioner, as provided by Section 25.081(b), may reduce the number of days of service required by this section. A reduction by the commissioner does not reduce an educator's salary.

(d) Subsections (a) and (b) do not apply to a contract between a school district and an educational diagnostician.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995. Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 592, Sec. 1.05, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 949, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 396, Sec. 1.30, eff.

Sept. 1, 1999.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 82 (S.B. [158](#)), Sec. 2, eff.

September 1, 2007.

The District takes exemption from 25.0811. Start date to be determined on a year to year basis. Rationale: This action helps to balance the number of days in each semester and maximizes instructional time

Sec. 25.0811. FIRST DAY OF INSTRUCTION. (a) Except as provided by this section, a school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August. A school district may:

(1) begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August if the district operates a year-round system under Section [25.084](#); or

(2) begin instruction for students for a school year on or after the first Monday in August at a campus or at not more than 20 percent of the campuses in the district if:

(A) the district has a student enrollment of 190,000 or more;

(B) the district at the beginning of the school year provides, financed with local funds, days of instruction for students at the campus or at each of the multiple campuses, in addition to the minimum number of days of instruction required under Section [25.081](#);

(C) the campus or each of the multiple campuses are undergoing comprehensive reform, as determined by the board of trustees of the district; and

(D) a majority of the students at the campus or at each of the multiple campuses are educationally disadvantaged.

(b) Notwithstanding Subsection (a), a school district that does not offer each grade level from kindergarten through grade 12 and whose prospective or former students generally attend school in another state for the grade levels the district does not offer may start school on any date permitted under Subsection (a) or the law of the other state.

(c) Repealed by Acts 2006, 79th Leg., 3rd C.S., Ch. 5, Sec. 9.03, eff. May 31, 2006.

Added by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 909, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Amended by:

Acts 2006, 79th Leg., 3rd C.S., Ch. 5 (H.B. [1](#)), Sec. 9.02, eff. May 31, 2006.

Acts 2006, 79th Leg., 3rd C.S., Ch. 5 (H.B. [1](#)), Sec. 9.03, eff. May 31, 2006.

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 708 (H.B. [2171](#)), Sec. 1, eff. June 15, 2007.

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 277 (H.B. [1555](#)), Sec. 1, eff. June 17, 2011.

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The District takes exemption from Section 25.082 Paragraph (a). The District will not hold class for less than 4 hours on any instructional day and will ensure that the District meets the required minimum of 75,600 minutes of instruction during the year. Rationale: Instructional and organizational effectiveness and local control.

Sec. 25.082. SCHOOL DAY; PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE; MINUTE OF SILENCE.
(a) A school day shall be at least seven hours each day, including intermissions and recesses.

(b) The board of trustees of each school district and the governing board of each open-enrollment charter school shall require students, once during each school day at each campus, to recite:

(1) the pledge of allegiance to the United States flag in accordance with 4 U.S.C. Section 4; and

(2) the pledge of allegiance to the state flag in accordance with Subchapter C, Chapter [3100](#), Government Code.

(b-1) The board of trustees of each school district and the governing board of each open-enrollment charter school shall require that the United States and Texas flags be prominently displayed in accordance with 4 U.S.C. Sections 5-10 and Chapter [3100](#), Government Code, in each campus classroom to which a student is assigned at the time the pledges of allegiance to those flags are recited. A district or school is not required to spend federal, state, or local district or school funds to acquire flags required under this subsection. A district or school may raise money or accept gifts, grants, and donations to acquire flags required under this subsection.

(c) On written request from a student's parent or guardian, a school district or open-enrollment charter school shall excuse the student from reciting a pledge of allegiance under Subsection (b).

(d) The board of trustees of each school district and the governing board of each open-enrollment charter school shall provide for the observance of one minute of silence at each campus following the recitation of the pledges of allegiance to the United States and Texas flags under Subsection (b). During the one-minute period, each student may, as the student chooses, reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity that is not likely to interfere with or distract another student. Each teacher or other school employee in charge of students during that period shall ensure that each of those students remains silent and does not act in a manner that is likely to interfere with or distract another student.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995. Amended by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 126, Sec. 1, 2, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 881 (H.B. [773](#)), Sec. 1, eff. June 14, 2013.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1140 (S.B. [2](#)), Sec. 42, eff. September 1, 2013.

The District takes exemption from 25.112 and establishes a maximum class size in K-4th grades of 24 students. Rationale: Local control. To ensure financial stability and to allow for proper planning and preparation in adding additional staff members, classrooms, etc. and eliminate need to request a waiver from TEA

SUBCHAPTER D. STUDENT/TEACHER RATIOS; CLASS SIZE

Sec. 25.111. STUDENT/TEACHER RATIOS. Except as provided by Section [25.112](#), each school district must employ a sufficient number of teachers certified under Subchapter B, Chapter [21](#), to maintain an average ratio of not less than one teacher for each 20 students in average daily attendance.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

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 kindergarten, first, second, third, or fourth grade class. That limitation does not apply during:

(1) any 12-week period of the school year selected by the district, in the case of a district whose average daily attendance is adjusted under Section [42.005\(c\)](#); or

(2) the last 12 weeks of any school year in the case of any other district.

(b) Not later than the 30th day after the first day of the 12-week period for which a district whose average daily attendance is adjusted under Section [42.005\(c\)](#) is claiming an exemption under Subsection (a), the district shall notify the commissioner in writing that the district is claiming an exemption for the period stated in the notice.

(c) In determining the number of students to enroll in any class, a school district shall consider the subject to be taught, the teaching methodology to be used, and any need for individual instruction.

(d) On application of a school district, the commissioner may except the district from the limit in Subsection (a) if the commissioner finds the limit works an undue hardship on the district. An exception expires at the end of the school year for which it is granted.

(e) A school district seeking an exception under Subsection (d) shall notify the commissioner and apply for the exception not later than the later of:

(1) October 1; or

(2) the 30th day after the first school day the district exceeds the limit in Subsection (a).

(f) If a school district repeatedly fails to comply with this section, the commissioner may take any appropriate action authorized to be taken by the commissioner under Section 39.131.

(g) Expired.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995. Amended by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 889, Sec. 1, eff. June 14, 2001.

Amended by:

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 1347 (S.B. [300](#)), Sec. 2, eff. June 19, 2009.

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. The notice must be in conspicuous bold or underlined print and:

(1) specify the class for which an exception from the limit imposed by Section [25.112](#)(a) was granted;

(2) state the number of children in the class for which the exception was granted; and

(3) be included in a regular mailing or other communication from the campus or district, such as information sent home with students.

(b) The notice required by Subsection (a) must be provided not later than the 31st day after:

(1) the first day of the school year; or

(2) the date the exception is granted, if the exception is granted after the beginning of the school year.

Added by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 889, Sec. 2, eff. June 14, 2001.

The District takes exemption from the requirement to hold a minimum of 4 meetings per year under Sec. 28.004(d-1)The CISD committee shall meet at least once each year. Rationale: As a small district committee members are intimately aware of the needs of the District's students and are often able to review and revise the District's plan in a single meeting. This should be a matter for the local board of trustees and the committee members to determine.

Sec. 28.004. LOCAL SCHOOL HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL AND HEALTH EDUCATION INSTRUCTION. (a) The board of trustees of each school district shall establish a local school health advisory council to assist the district in ensuring that local community values are reflected in the district's health education instruction.

(b) A school district must consider the recommendations of the local school health advisory council before changing the district's health education curriculum or instruction.

(c) The local school health advisory council's duties include recommending:

(1) the number of hours of instruction to be provided in health education;

(2) policies, procedures, strategies, and curriculum appropriate for specific grade levels designed to prevent obesity, cardiovascular disease, Type 2 diabetes, and mental health concerns through coordination of:

(A) health education;

(B) physical education and physical activity;

(C) nutrition services;

(D) parental involvement;

(E) instruction to prevent the use of tobacco;

(F) school health services;

(G) counseling and guidance services;

(H) a safe and healthy school environment; and

(I) school employee wellness;

(3) appropriate grade levels and methods of instruction for human sexuality instruction;

(4) strategies for integrating the curriculum components specified by Subdivision (2) with the following elements in a coordinated school health program for the district:

(A) school health services;

(B) counseling and guidance services;

(C) a safe and healthy school environment; and

(D) school employee wellness; and

(5) if feasible, joint use agreements or strategies for collaboration between the school district and community organizations or agencies.

(d) The board of trustees shall appoint at least five members to the local school health advisory council. A majority of the members must be persons who are parents of students enrolled in the district and who are not employed by the district. One of those members shall serve as chair or co-chair of the council. The board of trustees also may appoint one or more persons from each of the following groups or a representative from a group other than a group specified under this subsection:

- (1) public school teachers;
- (2) public school administrators;
- (3) district students;
- (4) health care professionals;
- (5) the business community;
- (6) law enforcement;
- (7) senior citizens;
- (8) the clergy;
- (9) nonprofit health organizations; and
- (10) local domestic violence programs.

(d-1) The local school health advisory council shall meet at least four times each year.

(e) Any course materials and instruction relating to human sexuality, sexually transmitted diseases, or human immunodeficiency virus or acquired immune deficiency syndrome shall be selected by the board of trustees with the advice of the local school health advisory council and must:

(1) present abstinence from sexual activity as the preferred choice of behavior in relationship to all sexual activity for unmarried persons of school age;

(2) devote more attention to abstinence from sexual activity than to any other behavior;

(3) emphasize that abstinence from sexual activity, if used consistently and correctly, is the only method that is 100 percent effective in preventing pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, infection with human immunodeficiency virus or acquired immune deficiency syndrome, and the emotional trauma associated with adolescent sexual activity;

(4) direct adolescents to a standard of behavior in which abstinence from sexual activity before marriage is the most effective way to prevent pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and infection with human immunodeficiency virus or acquired immune deficiency syndrome; and

(5) teach contraception and condom use in terms of human use reality rates instead of theoretical laboratory rates, if instruction on contraception and condoms is included in curriculum content.

(f) A school district may not distribute condoms in connection with instruction relating to human sexuality.

(g) A school district that provides human sexuality instruction may separate students according to sex for instructional purposes.

(h) The board of trustees shall determine the specific content of the district's instruction in human sexuality, in accordance with Subsections (e), (f), and (g).

(i) Before each school year, a school district shall provide written notice to a parent of each student enrolled in the district of the board of trustees' decision regarding whether the district will provide human sexuality instruction to district students. If instruction will be provided, the notice must include:

(1) a summary of the basic content of the district's human sexuality instruction to be provided to the student, including a statement informing the parent of the instructional requirements under state law;

(2) a statement of the parent's right to:

(A) review curriculum materials as provided by Subsection (j); and

(B) remove the student from any part of the district's human sexuality instruction without subjecting the student to any disciplinary action, academic penalty, or other sanction imposed by the district or the student's school; and

(3) information describing the opportunities for parental involvement in the development of the curriculum to be used in human sexuality instruction, including information regarding the local school health advisory council established under Subsection (a).

(i-1) A parent may use the grievance procedure adopted under Section [26.011](#) concerning a complaint of a violation of Subsection (i).

(j) A school district shall make all curriculum materials used in the district's human sexuality instruction available for reasonable public inspection.

(k) A school district shall publish in the student handbook and post on the district's Internet website, if the district has an Internet website:

(1) a statement of the policies adopted to ensure that elementary school, middle school, and junior high school students engage in at least the amount and level of physical activity required by Section [28.002](#)(1);

(2) a statement of:

(A) the number of times during the preceding year the district's school health advisory council has met;

(B) whether the district has adopted and enforces policies to ensure that district campuses comply with agency vending machine and food service guidelines for restricting student access to vending machines; and

(C) whether the district has adopted and enforces policies and procedures that prescribe penalties for the use of e-cigarettes, as defined by Section [38.006](#), and tobacco products by students and others on school campuses or at school-sponsored or school-related activities; and

(3) a statement providing notice to parents that they can request in writing their child's physical fitness assessment results at the end of the school year.

(1) The local school health advisory council shall consider and make policy recommendations to the district concerning the importance of daily recess for elementary school students. The council must consider research regarding unstructured and undirected play, academic and social development, and the health benefits of daily recess in making the recommendations. The council shall ensure that local community values are reflected in any policy recommendation made to the district under this subsection.

(1-1) The local school health advisory council shall establish a physical activity and fitness planning subcommittee to consider issues relating to student physical activity and fitness and make policy recommendations to increase physical activity and improve fitness among students.

(m) In addition to performing other duties, the local school health advisory council shall submit to the board of trustees, at least annually, a written report that includes:

(1) any council recommendation concerning the school district's health education curriculum and instruction or related matters that the council has not previously submitted to the board;

(2) any suggested modification to a council recommendation previously submitted to the board;

(3) a detailed explanation of the council's activities during the period between the date of the current report and the date of the last prior written report; and

(4) any recommendations made by the physical activity and fitness planning subcommittee.

(m-1) Expired.

(m-2) Expired.

(n) Any joint use agreement that a school district and community organization or agency enter into based on a recommendation of the local school health advisory council under Subsection (c)(5) must address liability for the school district and community organization or agency in the agreement.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995. Amended by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 907, Sec. 2, eff. June 14, 2001; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 944, Sec. 1, 2, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 784 (S.B. [42](#)), Sec. 2, eff. June 17, 2005.

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1377 (S.B. [530](#)), Sec. 2, eff. June 15, 2007.

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 729 (S.B. [283](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2009.

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1235 (S.B. [736](#)), Sec. 1, eff. June 17, 2011.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 892 (H.B. [1018](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2013.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1321 (S.B. [460](#)), Sec. 3, eff. September 1, 2013.

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 181 (S.B. [97](#)), Sec. 37, eff. October 1, 2015.
