

SPRING INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT LOCAL INNOVATION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

District of Innovation was created by the 84th Legislature through Texas Education Code (TEC) Chapter 12A. The purpose of TEC Chapter 12A is to allow traditional independent school districts the opportunity to obtain exemptions from certain provisions of the TEC. Designation as a District of Innovation allows a school district to increase local control and to support innovation as a means to improve educational outcomes for the benefit of all district stakeholders.

SPRING INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT TIMELINE FOR ACHIEVING STATUS AS A DISTRICT OF INNOVATION

DATE	ACTIVITY
January 7, 2017	Board Information The Spring Independent School District Board of Trustees (Spring ISD Trustees) were provided an overview of TEC Chapter 12A District of Innovation provisions.
February 14, 2017	Resolution Adoption Spring ISD Trustees approved a resolution to initiate the process of designation as a District of Innovation.
February 14, 2017	Public Hearing Spring ISD Trustees held a public hearing to solicit input on the District of Innovation opportunity.
February 14, 2017	Committee Appointment Spring ISD Trustees appointed a Local Innovation Committee to develop a Local Innovation Plan.
February 15, 2017	Texas Education Agency Notification The Spring Independent School District will notify the Texas Education Agency of its Board of Trustees intention to develop a Spring ISD Innovation Plan.
February 21, 28, 2017 and March 2, 2017	Plan Development The Spring ISD Innovation Committee will develop the Spring ISD Innovation Plan.
March 6, 2017	District Advisory Committee Approval The Spring ISD Advisory Committee on Education (ACE) will be asked to approve the proposed Spring ISD Innovation Plan.
March 7, 2017 – April 6, 2017	District Innovation Plan Posted The proposed Spring ISD Innovation Plan will be posted online for 30 days.
April 11, 2017	Board of Trustees Approval The Spring ISD Board of Trustees will be asked to approve the proposed Spring ISD Innovation Plan.

**SPRING INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
INNOVATION PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Julie F. Hill, Chief of Staff
Jeremy Binkley, Legal Officer
Facilitators

Jason Sheffer, Board Services Director, *Logistics*

NAME	POSITION
Rodney Watson	Superintendent
Deborah Jensen	Board President
Justine Durant	Board Trustee
Rhonda Newhouse	Board Trustee
Lupita Hinojosa	Chief of School Leadership and Student Support Services
Deeone McKeithan	Chief of Human Resources
Lauren Topek	Chief of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
Leticia Gonzalez	Principal, Cooper Elementary School
LaTracey Harris	Principal, Beneke Elementary School
Michael Walker	Principal, Burchett Elementary School
Dario Villota	Principal, Twin Creeks Middle School
Rene Garganta	Principal, Spring Early College Academy
Alexander Warren	Spring ISD Education Foundation Representative
Chuck Jett	General Manager, Honda of Spring
Jaha Williams	Director, University of Houston and Parent
Valeria Midence	Clark Primary, Clark Intermediate, and Wells Middle Parent
Karla Villela	Teacher, Booker Elementary School
LaToya Patterson	Teacher, Anderson Elementary and Parent Elementary Teacher of the Year 2015
Chase Jones	Advisory Committee on Education (ACE) Representative Teacher, Twin Creeks Middle School Secondary Teacher of the Year 2016
Christine Hurley	Advisory Committee on Education (ACE) Representative
Tawnya Roupe	Advisory Committee on Education (ACE) Representative

TERM OF PLAN

The term of the Spring ISD Innovation Plan is for five years, from May 31, 2017 to May 30, 2022, covering school years 2017-2018 through 2021-2022.

SPRING INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT'S STRATEGIC PLAN EVERY CHILD 2020 – ITS COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

In accordance with state law, Spring ISD must develop a local innovation plan that provides a comprehensive educational program for the district. Spring ISD already has a comprehensive educational plan – its five-year strategic plan, Every Child 2020. Shortly before the development of Every Child 2020, the Spring ISD Board of Trustees adopted a new vision, mission, guiding principles, and core values for the District.

Vision:

Spring Independent School District will be a district of choice known for high quality academics with innovative and specialized programs that meet the needs of all students in a positive learning environment.

Mission:

Spring Independent School District prepares students to be lifelong learners, critical thinkers, and responsible citizens who display good character – ready to contribute, compete, and lead in today's global society.

Guiding Principles:

1. High-quality teaching drives student learning.
2. Literacy is the foundation of academic success.
3. The learning needs of each student must be met.
4. Students learn best in safe environments where school leaders cultivate parent and community partnerships.
5. Every district resource must center on student learning with a focus on accountability.

The Spring Way – Our Core Values:

- We base our decisions on what is **best for our students**.
- We will **strive for excellence** in all we do.
- We **build trust** through integrity and lead by example.
- We **communicate openly**.
- We **value diversity** and treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- We **win as a team**.

In May 2015 Spring ISD launched a new five-year strategic plan, Every Child 2020. Its five imperatives and commitments are:

Reach Every Student

Commitment 1: Strong Literacy Foundation for All

Commitment 2: Excellent Curriculum and Instruction

Commitment 3: Excellent Systems of Support and Acceleration

Commitment 4: Graduates Who Are 21st Century Learners

Excellence in Every School

Commitment 1: Excellent Leadership Teams in Every School

Commitment 2: Operational Excellence Across Every School and Every Department

Commitment 3: Safe and Secure Learning and Work Environments for All

High Performance from Every Employee

Commitment 1: Excellent Recruitment and Retention

Commitment 2: Comprehensive, Job-Embedded Workforce Development

Commitment 3: Culture of High Performance

Opportunities and Choice for Every Family

Commitment 1: Best-in-Class Specialized Programs

Commitment 2: Excellent Early Childhood Programs

Commitment 3: Strong College Readiness Support Structure

Engaged Stakeholders in Every Community

Commitment 1: Culture of High Community Engagement

Commitment 2: Families as Partners in Student Success

Commitment 3: Trusted Source of Information

When Spring ISD launched Every Child 2020 it rallied its community to **BELIEVE IN SPRING**. The District charged its stakeholders to embrace this message:

BELIEVE IN SPRING is about our community. It is about the potential for what can and will be.

BELIEVE IN SPRING is about continuing to capitalize on the rich history and proud traditions that have long defined our community and schools.

BELIEVE IN SPRING is about a commitment to more opportunities and choice for families.

BELIEVE IN SPRING is about new ways of thinking, teaching, and collaboration.

BELIEVE IN SPRING is the driver for what is next for Spring and for education in our community.

BELIEVE IN SPRING. Watch our progress. Hold us accountable. Help us achieve our true potential.

A Local Innovation Plan that aligns to Every Child 2020 will enable Spring ISD to enhance and accelerate its efforts to achieve its true potential and actualize its vision – a district of choice known for high quality academics with innovative and specialized programs that meet the needs of all students in a positive learning environments.

SPRING ISD INNOVATION PLAN

The Spring Independent School District Innovation Plan (Spring ISD Innovation Plan) will be aligned to the District’s vision, mission, goals, core values and five-year strategic plan, Every Child 2020.

Every Child 2020 already addresses five of the required innovation categories. The remaining two categories are: a) modifications to the school day or year and b) any other innovations prescribed by the board of trustees. The Modifications to the School Day or Year innovation will open options for restructuring of the local school calendar, length of the school year, length of the school day and length of instructional periods. The final category, Any Other Innovations Prescribed by the Board of Trustees, will provide our Board of Trustees the opportunity to customize local policies that address the unique needs of the students of the Spring Independent School District as it continues the implementation of Every Child 2020.

SPRING ISD’S STRATEGIC PLAN: EVERY CHILD 2020	TEXAS EDUCATION CODE CHAPTER 12A: INNOVATION CATEGORIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strong Literacy Foundation for All (I1) ▪ Excellent Curriculum and Instruction (I1) ▪ Excellent Systems of Support and Acceleration (I1) ▪ Graduates Who Are 21st Century Learners (I1) 	Innovative Curriculum and Instructional Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Families as Partners in Student Success (I5) ▪ Culture of High Community Engagement (I5) ▪ Trusted Source of Information (I5) 	Parental Involvement and Community Participation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Excellent Leadership Teams in Every School (I2) ▪ Safe and Secure Learning and Work Environments for All (I2) ▪ Culture of High Performance (I3) 	Campus Governance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Operational Excellence Across Every School and Every Department (I2) ▪ Excellent Recruitment and Retention (I3) ▪ Comprehensive Job-Embedded Workforce Development (I3) 	Modifications to the School Day or Year Provisions Regarding the District Budget and Sustainable Program Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Best in Class Specialized Programs (I4) ▪ Excellent Early Childhood Programs (I4) ▪ Strong College Readiness Support Structure (I4) 	Accountability and Assessment Measures That Exceed State and Federal Law Requirements
	Any Other Innovations Prescribed by the Board of Trustees

Spring Independent School District seeks to develop a Local Innovation Plan to enhance and accelerate its implementation and achievement of Every Child 2020’s five imperatives: Reach Every Student, Excellence in Every School, High Performance from Every Employee, Opportunities and Choice for Every Family and Engaged Stakeholders in Every Community. Exemptions from statutory provisions of the Texas Education Code will open the door to innovation through flexibility and local control in the way the District solidifies alignment of curriculum, instruction and assessment; ensures operational excellence in every school and department; attracts, recruits, develops, rewards and retains a high-performing workforce, provides a comprehensive portfolio of specialized PK-12 programs; and engages families, business entities and institutions of higher education as partners in the education of its students.

Adoption and implementation of the Spring ISD Innovation Plan will require the Board of Trustees to revise and/or develop board policy. Provisions changed as a result of innovations will be duly noted in policy. In addition, these innovations will be executed through detailed processes and procedures that will involve the appropriate central office and campus based stakeholders.

If during the term of the Innovation Plan, the Spring ISD Board of Trustees seeks additional exemptions, the Innovation Planning Committee must be reconvened to develop amendments to the plan. The initial process for development of the exemptions must be repeated every time the District seeks to amend the Local Innovation Plan.

During its sessions, the Spring ISD Innovation Planning Committee identified innovations it would like to see implemented through Every Child 2020. Some of the innovative ideas identified as enhancements to Every Child 2020 are:

- literacy initiatives for students and families,
- accelerated instruction in secondary mathematics,
- an increase in the number of internships and mentorships aligned to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and Career and Technical Education (CTE),
- a parent university in partnership with local institutions of higher education,
- new structures for professional development,
- creation of new instructional positions,
- a district-wide Gifted and Talented (GT) program,
- expanded career pathway offerings, and
- enhanced flexibility in the length of the school day and year to increase dual credit opportunities at local colleges and universities.

The committee then determined the exemptions from the Texas Education Code that would enable the District to achieve the innovations. The exemptions to statutory code are detailed below.

RECOMMENDED EXEMPTIONS

SPRING ISD'S EVERY CHILD 2020	TEXAS EDUCATION CODE CHAPTER 12A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strong Literacy Foundation for All (I1) ▪ Excellent Curriculum and Instruction (I1) ▪ Excellent Systems of Support and Acceleration (I1) ▪ Graduates Who Are 21st Century Learners (I1) 	Innovative Curriculum and Instructional Methods

INNOVATIVE CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS:

EXEMPTION FROM: Minimum Attendance for Class Credit or Final Grade TEC Section 25.092 and FEC(LEGAL)

INNOVATION TO: TEC Section 12A.003(b)(1)(A) Innovative Curriculum and Instructional Methods

CURRENT STATE OF THE LAW: TEC Section 25.092 states that “a student in any grade level from kindergarten through grade 12 may not be given credit or a final grade for a class unless the student is in attendance for at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered.” The 90 percent standard is an arbitrary number that bases a student’s grade or course credit on seat time not content mastery.

BENEFIT OF THE EXEMPTION:

One of the commitments from Every Child 2020 is Graduates Who Are 21st Century Learners. The strategies identified to achieve this commitment are 1) support teaching through technology practice, 2) expand team and project-based learning opportunities, 3) create interactive learning environments and 4) foster cross-cultural competencies. To achieve these strategies, the District is committed to providing its students innovative opportunities that go beyond the seats in classrooms. Opportunities for internships, mentorships, blended learning, virtual instruction, and project-based learning are academic experiences that result in content mastery, but do not conform to the 90 percent attendance restriction.

In addition, Spring ISD has longstanding co-curricular and extra-curricular programs in which many of its students are participants. Participation in these programs sometimes results in students missing part of traditional classroom attendance time. These programs provide students invaluable learning experiences that are prohibited by the seat time restriction.

Flexibility gained through this exemption will allow Spring ISD to create real-life learning experiences outside of the traditional classroom that vary in structure, location and time and are relevant and highly engaging to 21st century learners.

Relief from TEC Section 25.092 does not in any way impact or alter existing compulsory attendance requirements or University Interscholastic League (UIL) rules. While students may have flexibility in their start or end of school hours to all their participation in Career and Technical Education (CTE) and dual-credit offerings, they will still be held accountable to meet attendance standards. Moreover, opting out of this statutory provision in no way limits or modifies a teacher’s right to determine the finality of a grade on accordance with TEC Section 28.0214, nor does it restrict or alter a teacher’s right to assign grades in accordance with TEC Section 28.0216. In addition, implementation of innovative methods, processes or settings will not impact the academic objectives (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills) that students are expected to master.

SPRING ISD'S EVERY CHILD 2020	TEXAS EDUCATION CODE CHAPTER 12A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Families as Partners in Student Success (I5) ▪ Culture of High Community Engagement (I5) ▪ Trusted Source of Information (I5) 	Parental Involvement and Community Participation

No exemption recommendations at this time.

SPRING ISD'S EVERY CHILD 2020	TEXAS EDUCATION CODE CHAPTER 12A
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Excellent Leadership Teams in Every School (I2)▪ Safe and Secure Learning and Work Environments for All (I2)▪ Culture of High Performance (I3)	Campus Governance

CAMPUS GOVERNANCE:

EXEMPTION FROM: Staff Development Requirements TEC Section 21.451(b) and DMA(LEGAL)

INNOVATION TO: TEC Section 12A.003(b)(1)(A) Campus Governance

CURRENT STATE OF THE LAW: TEC Section 21.451(b) mandates that staff development for educators must be predominantly campus-based.

BENEFIT OF THE EXEMPTION:

One of the commitments from Every Child 2020 is Comprehensive, Job-Embedded Workforce Development. Trend data shows that Spring ISD hires approximately 500 new teachers every year and, as a result, a third of our teaching staff has 0 to 3 years of experience. New teachers require extensive professional development training when initially hired to work in the District. In addition, the District is currently developing district-wide initiatives that will require training of all teaching staff, i.e. restorative discipline, literacy, cultural relevance.

The flexibility to conduct district-wide trainings for a large number of new teachers annually and training for all teachers of district-wide initiatives would allow Spring ISD to more efficiently use its financial, human and material resources to equip and develop a highly effective teacher workforce.

Relief from TEC Section 21.451(b) will not impact campus-based professional development decisions made by each individual school customized to their unique needs. It would not change the job-embedded workforce development teachers currently receive. Rather it allows for teachers to network intra-, inter- and cross-campus with other colleagues across the District, generating more opportunities for collaboration, learning and collegial discourse.

CAMPUS GOVERNANCE:

EXEMPTION FROM: Student/Teacher Ratios TEC Section 25.111
Class Size TEC Section 25.112
Notice of Class Size TEC Section 25.113 and EEB(LLEGAL), BF(LLEGAL)

INNOVATION TO: TEC Section 12A.003(b)(1)(A) Campus Governance

CURRENT STATE OF THE LAW:

TEC Section 25.111 states that a school district must employ a number of teachers sufficient to maintain class sizes of not less than one teacher per 20 students. TEC Section 25.112 limits class sizes in kindergarten through grade 4 to 22 students per teacher. If a district exceeds these limits, it must notify the Commissioner of Education that it is seeking an exception for each class. TEC Section 25.113 requires a district to notify parents or guardians of each student in writing of the exception granted.

BENEFIT OF THE EXEMPTION:

Spring ISD is a district of almost 37,000 students with a mobility rate that ranges between 14 and 44 percent among its campuses. It is often challenging to maintain class sizes of 22 students per teacher. In addition, Spring ISD offers a range of services for students in need of special education services and students who need second language support. Classes are created based on student need and in many instances, the District is unable to maintain class sizes of not less than one teacher per 20 students.

Greater flexibility to structure class sizes based on the unique needs of its students would allow Spring ISD to create class sizes that meet the needs of its diverse student population. Innovative classroom configurations would allow teachers to team teach with larger class sizes, lower student class sizes when students need more support, as well a host of other instructional delivery models to provide more personalized learning structures for maximized student achievement.

These exemptions will allow the District to actualize two of its core values – we base our decisions on what is best for our students AND we value diversity and treat everyone with dignity and respect – through the creation of classroom environments that maximize learning for every child.

Relief from these statutory provisions would not change Spring ISD's staffing process. Class sizes will continue to be monitored according to the local written guidelines. What this exemption allows is local control to make those decisions without the need to seek waivers from the Texas Education Agency.

CAMPUS GOVERNANCE:

EXEMPTION FROM: Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator TEC Section 37.0012 and FO(LLEGAL)

INNOVATION TO: TEC Section 12A.003(b)(1)(A) Campus Governance

CURRENT STATE OF THE LAW:

TEC Section 37.0012 mandates the designation of a campus behavior coordinator at every school. This statute provides that the campus behavior coordinator is primarily responsible for maintaining student discipline and for the implementation of TEC Chapter 37 Discipline; Law and Order. The statute further provides that the campus behavior coordinator is responsible for promptly notifying parents of any in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, DAEP placement, expulsion, JJAEP placement or custody by a law enforcement officer.

BENEFIT OF THE EXEMPTION:

One of the commitments from Every Child 2020 is Safe and Secure Learning and Work Environments for All. The strategies identified to achieve this commitment are 1) implement improved safety and security practices in every school, 2) implement district-wide responsible citizenship practices and programs, and 3) expand and develop mentor programs and networks. Spring ISD recognizes that as it implements the strategic plan it is important to communicate that safety and security is every employee’s responsibility. To this end and coupled with the size of the schools in the District, it is virtually impossible to create safe and secure learning and work environments when responsibility for maintaining discipline rest in the hands of a single individual designated by state law. In addition, Spring ISD has implemented district-wide discipline management and character education programs. To further its mission to prepare its students to be responsible citizens who display good character, the District is currently designing a restorative discipline model.

In addition, Spring ISD’s mission is “to prepare students to be lifelong learners, critical thinkers, and responsible citizens who display good character – ready to contribute, compete, and lead in today’s global society.” The support needed to help students make good choices is provided through campus-based counselors. When students do not make the best choices, campus-based administrative teams are in place to follow the District’s Student Code of Conduct and to contact parents as needed. Together, these groups work together to provide a safe environment where students can learn and grow from the choices they make. It is a shared responsibility among the adults on each campus based on articulated standards and high expectations.

Relief from this statutory provision would enable Spring ISD to hold all campus administrators responsible for maintaining discipline, all counselors responsible for providing social and emotional supports, and all campus staff responsible for developing students to be responsible citizens who display good character.

SPRING ISD’S EVERY CHILD 2020	TEXAS EDUCATION CODE CHAPTER 12A
	Modifications to the School Day or Year

MODIFICATIONS TO THE SCHOOL DAY:

EXEMPTION FROM: Planning and Preparation Time TEC Section 21.404 and DL(LEGAL)

INNOVATION TO: TEC Section 12A.003(b)(1)(B) Modifications to the School Day or Year

CURRENT STATE OF THE LAW:

TEC Section 21.404 has been interpreted to require that “planning and preparation time must occur during the time that students at the school where the teacher is located are receiving instruction.” *Canutillo Educators Ass’n v. Canutillo Indep. Sch. Dist., Tex. Comm’r of Educ. Decision No. 042-R10-203 (April 30, 2010).*

BENEFIT OF THE EXEMPTION:

One of the commitments from Every Child 2020 is Comprehensive, Job-Embedded Workforce Development. Spring ISD is located approximately 24 miles from Houston ISD, the largest school district in the State of Texas. It shares contiguous borders with Aldine, Cypress-Fairbanks, Conroe and Klein ISDs. Consequently, the District is nestled in a highly competitive job market for teachers where teachers can switch school districts without having to move from their residences. Trend data shows that Spring ISD hires approximately 500 new teachers every year, and, as a result, a third of our teaching staff has 0 to 3 years of experience. New teachers require extensive professional development training when initially hired to work in the District. In addition, all teachers need ongoing professional growth opportunities annually. An important component of their professional growth and development involves the need to work together in reviewing

curriculum, planning instructional delivery, analyzing assessment data and developing strategies for intervention and acceleration.

Learning together with colleagues is an invaluable part of an individual teacher's professional growth and development regardless of years of teaching experience. The current restriction of planning and preparation to time during the instructional day forces the District to hire substitute teachers during the school day – a practice that is cost-prohibitive. Flexibility in the time of professional learning for teachers would allow Spring ISD to redirect those funds directly back to students; enabling the District to hold fast to its core value: We base our decisions on what is best for our students.

This exemption would not reduce the amount of planning and preparation time for teachers, but it would flex when the planning and preparation time occurs. This would allow Spring ISD to build daily schedules that allow professional development time during the instructional day. This flexibility provides the opportunity for job-embedded development such as peer observation, mentor/mentee observations, vertical team planning, videotaping of instructional delivery and grade level/department lesson planning.

At the same time, our students need the maximum amount of learning time the District can design during the instructional day. The flexibility to structure professional development time before, during, or after the instructional day for students would allow Spring ISD to provide collaborative planning during the instructional day while leveraging maximum learning time for students.

MODIFICATIONS TO THE SCHOOL YEAR:

EXEMPTION FROM: First Day of Instruction TEC Section 25.0811
Last Day of School TEC Section 25.0812 and EB(LEGAL)

INNOVATION TO: TEC Section 12A.003(b)(1)(B) Modifications to the School Day or Year

CURRENT STATE OF THE LAW:

TEC Section 25.0811 prohibits a school district in good academic standing from beginning instruction for students before the fourth Monday in August. In addition, TEC Section 25.0812 prohibits a district from ending the school year for students before May 15.

BENEFIT OF THE EXEMPTION:

Three of the commitments from Every Child 2020 are a) Excellent Curriculum and Instruction, b) Graduates Who Are 21st Century Learners, and c) Strong College Readiness Support Structure. The flexibility to begin and end the school year at a point in time that would best meet the needs of students will allow the District to both balance the number of days in each semester and finish the first semester before the winter break. These exemptions will provide relief at all of the District's high schools, especially for students who attend two of our innovative schools, Spring Early College and Wunsche High School. Many of these students are taking classes at local colleges and universities and follow the calendars at the local institutions of higher education. During the summer and upon graduation, those same students would be able to register and attend the first summer school sessions at the institutions of higher education that they are attending. The students will be able to take additional classes and accelerate their matriculation to two- and four-year institutions. As career pathways and dual credit offerings are increased across our remaining high school campuses, more students will need relief from these inhibiting statutory provisions. Spring ISD would be better able to meet all three of these commitments to its students and families.

<p>SPRING ISD'S EVERY CHILD 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Operational Excellence Across Every School and Every Department (I2) ▪ Excellent Recruitment and Retention (I3) ▪ Comprehensive Job-Embedded Workforce Development (I3) 	<p>TEXAS EDUCATION CODE CHAPTER 12A</p> <p>Provisions Regarding the District Budget and Sustainable Program Funding</p>
<p>SPRING ISD'S EVERY CHILD 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Best in Class Specialized Programs (I4) ▪ Excellent Early Childhood Programs (I4) ▪ Strong College Readiness Support Structure (I4) 	<p>TEXAS EDUCATION CODE CHAPTER 12A</p> <p>Accountability and Assessment Measures That Exceed State and Federal Law Requirements</p>

PROVISIONS REGARDING THE DISTRICT BUDGET AND SUSTAINABLE PROGRAM FUNDING and ACCOUNTABILITY AND ASSESSMENT MEASURES THAT EXCEED STATE AND FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS:

EXEMPTION FROM: Certification Required TEC Section 21.003(a)
 Failure to Obtain Certification; Contract Void TEC Section 21.0031
 Presentation and Recording of Certificates TEC Section 21.053(a)
 and DBA(LLEGAL)

INNOVATION TO: TEC Section 12A.003(b)(1)(C) Provisions Regarding the District Budget and Sustainable Program Funding and TEC Section 12A.003(b)(1)(D) Accountability and Assessment Measures That Exceed State and Federal Requirements

CURRENT STATE OF THE LAW:

TEC Section 21.003(a) mandates that an individual holds the appropriate certificate or permit to be employed by a school district in any of the following positions: teacher, teacher intern, teacher trainee, librarian, educational aide, administrator, educational diagnostician and school counselor. TEC Section 21.0031 states that any contract entered into with a person who lacks the appropriate certificate or permit is void. TEC Section 21.053(a) states that a local school board is not obligated to honor a contract or pay for teaching duties performed until a person holds and presents a valid certificate to the district.

BENEFIT OF THE EXEMPTION:

One of the commitments from Every Child 2020 is Best-in-Class Specialized Programs. One of the strategies identified to achieve this commitment is to expand the career pathways across all high schools. Expansion of the career pathways requires that the District recruit and retain teachers to provide the learning experiences. Finding individuals with the real life experiences is not difficult, but finding individuals with the needed experiences who have teacher certification or permits is extremely challenging. These individuals may not hold a baccalaureate degree, but do hold the degrees and certifications in their areas of expertise that are necessary for them to provide quality learning experiences to students. Examples of industry experts in demand are: criminal justice, automotive engineering, multimedia design, culinary arts, medical technicians.

Relief from these statutory provisions would enable Spring ISD to hire highly qualified industry professionals to teach its Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses and expand career pathway offerings in each of its high schools. It would also afford the District the opportunity to hire college and university professors directly to teach dual credit courses at our high school campuses. This could greatly expand the dual credit offerings Spring ISD could provide its students.

SPRING ISD'S EVERY CHILD 2020	TEXAS EDUCATION CODE CHAPTER 12A
	Any Other Innovations Prescribed by the Board of Trustees

No exemption recommendations at this time.

SPRING INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT AMENDMENT TO LOCAL INNOVATION PLAN

SPRING ISD'S EVERY CHILD 2020	TEXAS EDUCATION CODE CHAPTER 12A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Operational Excellence Across Every School and Every Department (I2) ▪ Excellent Recruitment and Retention (I3) ▪ Comprehensive Job-Embedded Workforce Development (I3) 	Provisions Regarding the District Budget and Sustainable Program Funding

PROVISIONS REGARDING THE DISTRICT BUDGET AND SUSTAINABLE PROGRAM FUNDING:

EXEMPTION FROM: TEC Section 22.004(i)

INNOVATION TO: TEC Section 12A.003(b)(1)(C) Provisions Regarding the District Budget and Sustainable Program Funding

CURRENT STATE OF THE LAW:

TEC Section 22.004(i) states that a school district may not make group health coverage available to its employees pursuant to TEC 22.004(b) after the date a District implements the program of coverages provided under Chapter 1579 of the Texas Insurance Code. The Texas Education Code prohibits offering comparable group healthcare to employees through a self-funded plan once a district has elected to enter TRS-ActiveCare. A TRS rule prohibits discontinuation of TRS-ActiveCare unless a district is authorized by TRS.

The current process allows no flexibility in the design of group health insurance benefits to fit the needs of all Spring Independent School District (Spring ISD) employees. This provision also prohibits the District from procuring group health insurance benefits that may provide better coverages for its employees and at a lower cost.

BENEFIT OF THE EXEMPTION:

Adoption of this exemption will allow the District to be responsive to employee needs through the ability to offer alternative group health benefits in addition to TRS-Active Care. It will allow the District the option to seek alternative group health plans that may be more affordable for our employees. Without this exemption, Spring ISD cannot seek alternative beneficial plans. The opportunity to choose between more than one plan would aid in the recruitment of prospective employees as well as the retention of current employees. Employees could choose the plan that best fits their needs and the needs of their families. The Spring ISD Board of Trustees consistently and continually seeks ways to enhance the comprehensive compensation packages offered to District employees. This exemption allows the Board to continue that tradition.