

## **1. School Start Date**

(EB LEGAL) (Ed. Code 25.0811)

### Currently

Students may not begin school before the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of August. For many years this was the rule; however, districts had the option of applying for a waiver to start earlier. The vast majority of districts applied for the waiver and would begin the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday, some even going as early as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday.

The Texas tourism groups lobbied to have this stopped because they believed it was hurting their tourism business. Therefore, several years ago the legislature took away all waivers and dictated that districts may not begin until the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday, with no exceptions.

### Proposed (DOI renewal approved by Board of Trustees on February 22, 2021)

To allow for a calendar that fits the local needs of our community, we would like to consider moving the mandatory start date back one week which would better benefit our students.

- a. Students will begin no earlier than the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of August.
- b. Teachers will begin no earlier than the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of August.
- c. This will allow the first and second semesters to be closer in the number of days of instruction.
- d. The goal is to improve the district attendance rate and student success through the flexibility in the calendar.

## **2. Submitting Waivers for Kindergarten – Grade 4 Class Size**

(EEB LEGAL) (Ed. Code 25.111) (Ed. Code 25.112) (Ed. Code 25.113)

### Currently

Kindergarten – 4<sup>th</sup> Grade classes are to be kept at a 22 student to 1 teacher ratio according to state law. When a class exceeds this limit, the district must complete a waiver with the Texas Education Agency. These waivers are never rejected by TEA. This is a bureaucratic step that serves no purpose.

Along with the waiver, it is required that a letter is sent home to each parent in the section that exceeds 22:1 ratio, informing them the waiver has been submitted. Many times, soon after the waiver is submitted, students move out of the district and we are below the 22:1 ratio.

### Proposed (DOI renewal approved by Board of Trustees on February 22, 2021)

While we certainly believe that small class size plays a positive role in the classroom, we do not believe it has a negative effect when you only add one or two more students. Many times, it is not the number of the students but the makeup and chemistry of the classroom which influence the learning environment.

- a. VISD will attempt to keep all K-4<sup>th</sup> core classrooms to a 22:1 ratio. However, in the event the class size exceeds this ratio, the superintendent will report to the Board of Trustees.
- b. In the event a K-4<sup>th</sup> core classroom reaches 25:1, the campus will notify the parents of the students in the classroom and inform them of the situation.
- c. A TEA waiver will not be necessary when a K-4<sup>th</sup> classroom exceeds the 22:1 ratio.
- d. This gives VISD the flexibility without having the bureaucracy of waivers within the Texas Education Agency.

### **3. Teacher Certification**

(DK LEGAL, DK LOCAL, DK EXHIBIT) (Ed. Code 21.003, 21.057)

#### Currently

In the event a district cannot locate a certified teacher for a position or a teacher is teaching a subject outside of their certification, the district must submit a request to the Texas Education Agency. TEA then approves or denies this request. There is a lot of bureaucracy and unnecessary paperwork involved in the process.

Proposed (DOI renewal approved by Board of Trustees on February 22, 2021)

In order to best serve VISD students, decisions on certification will be handled locally.

- a. The campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request to allow a certified teacher to teach one subject out of their certified field. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possess which qualify this individual to teach this subject.
- b. An individual with experience in a CTE field could be eligible to teach a vocational skill or course through a local teaching certificate. The principal will submit the request to the superintendent with all the individual's credentials. The superintendent will then approve the request if they feel the individual could be an asset to students. The superintendent will then report this action to the Board of Trustees prior to the individual beginning any employment. Local teaching certificates will be for one year. The employee will be at-will.
- c. This will allow more flexibility in our scheduling and more options for our students in class offerings.

### **4. Inter-District Transfers**

(FDA LEGAL, FDA LOCAL) (Ed. Code 25.036)

#### Currently

Inter-district transfers, if approved, are for one school year.

Proposed (DOI amendment approved by Board of Trustees on February 21, 2022)

Transfer students are expected to follow the attendance requirements and all policies of the district. In the rare event a student has excessive absences, excessive discipline, assigned DAEP, or other behavior the campus principal feels is detrimental to the success of the student or campus, the student's transfer may be immediately revoked and the student returned to the district where they reside or another education setting at the discretion of the parent.

### **5. Probationary Contracts**

(DCA LEGAL) (Ed. Code 21-102)

#### Currently

A probationary contract may not exceed one year for new teachers to our district who have been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment by the district. Under this circumstance, the district must either give the teacher a term contract or terminate their contract after their first year in the district.

Proposed (DOI renewal approved by Board of Trustees on February 22, 2021)

Van ISD would like to have the ability to renew the probationary contract one additional one-year period, for a maximum of two school years, for all teachers that are new to the district who have been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of eight years preceding employment by the District.