

Paradise ISD
District of Innovation Plan (HB 1842)
2016-2017
(Amended by board approval on July 15, 2019)

During of the 84th Legislative Session, HB 1842 was passed in order to provide more local control in certain areas. HB 1842 allows a traditional public school to utilize the exemptions in Education Law that charter schools currently are entitled to. We feel this is a great opportunity for our local district to create a plan based on the needs of our students and community that will remain in effect for the next five years (2017-2022).

District Innovation Team

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|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Mac Edwards | Superintendent |
| 2. Patti Seckman | Assistant Superintendent |
| 3. Joyce Hardy Ph. D | Dyslexia/Testing Coordinator |
| 4. Robyn Gibson | Elementary Principal |
| 5. Josh Rutledge | Elementary Assistant Principal |
| 6. Kristin Gage | Intermediate Principal |
| 7. Greg Fletcher | Junior High Principal |
| 8. Mark Mathis | High School Principal |
| 9. Rayma Young | High School Assistant Principal |
| 10. Mirenda Lowery | Elementary Teacher |
| 11. Heidi Bragg | Intermediate Teacher |
| 12. Traci Woodard | Junior High Teacher |
| 13. Megayla O’Rear | High School Teacher |
| 14. Alicia Perez | Parent |
| 15. Shelly Johnson | Parent |

1. School Start Date

(EB Legal) (Ed. Code 25.0811)

Current Law

Students are prohibited from starting school before the 4th Monday of August. For years, this was strictly a local decision.

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 4th Monday, with no exceptions.

Proposed

To develop a calendar that fits the needs of the community of Paradise. We have developed a calendar that we feel meets the students, community, and staff needs.

- a. Students will begin no earlier than the 2nd Monday of August.
- b. This start date will provide more educational days prior to state testing.
- c. This will allow the first and second semesters to be somewhat equal 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. Teacher Certification

(DK Legal, DK Local, DK Exhibit) (TEC.21.003)

Current Law

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. In certain circumstances, a district can use a local one-year permit.

Proposed

In order to best serve PISD 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 in one class section of the master schedule. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses in which would 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 proposal will provide more flexibility in our scheduling and more options for our students in class offerings.

3. Kindergarten – Grade 4 Class Size

(TEC 25.112a-g) (TEC 25.113a-b) (EEB Legal)

Current Law

TEC 25.112 requires districts to maintain a class size of 22 students or less for Kindergarten – 4th Grade classes. When any class exceeds this limit, the district must complete and file a waiver with the Texas Education Agency.

TEC 25.113 requires district to notify parents of waivers or exceptions to class size limits.

Proposed

At the beginning of each school year, Paradise ISD will meet the suggested student to teacher ratio of 22:1 per K-4 homeroom class. In the event that any class size exceeds this ratio during the school year, the superintendent will report this information to the Board of Trustees. The campus principal will report to the parents of the affected students. The determination of whether to add another teacher to bring the class under the 22:1 mandate will be made by the district administration and this recommendation will be reported to the Board of Trustees.

1. A TEA waiver will not be filed when a K-4th classroom exceeds the 22:1 ratio.

4. Minimum Minutes of Instruction

TEC 25.081 (HB 2610)

Current Law

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.

Proposed

Pre-Kindergarten Exemption:

Benefits for PISD PK 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 173-day calendar. We would like to request that we be allowed to offer a 180-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 180-minute exemption will result in the students receiving 31,140 minutes of instruction during their half-day program.

Local Guidelines for PK Program: PISD will offer a PK schedule consisting of two three and one half-hour sessions of 180 minutes, which allows the teacher to teach two groups of students while still having the required conference period and 30-minute duty free lunch.

This exemption will provide PISD the flexibility to adjust minutes of instruction by assisting with personalizing learning to better meet individual student needs. It also has the added benefit of allowing the possibility of an altered length of a school day, which may include, for example, a later start/early release time to accommodate additional professional development/collaboration opportunities professional and support staff in our district.

5. Student Discipline Provisions

(FO Legal & Local) (Ed. Code Sec. 37.0012)

Current Law

Senate Bill 107 requires the designation of a campus behavior coordinator on each campus. This designee is responsible for maintaining student discipline and the implementation of Chapter 37, Subchapter A.

Proposed

This exemption will allow PISD to abstain from the state requirements that each school have a designated campus behavior coordinator, and it will free the district from this particular legislative requirement that was put into place as a solution to a non-existent problem in PISD. Campus principals and assistant principals already serve in this capacity and a bureaucratic requirement to designate someone for this position is not necessary.

6. School District Depositories Contract

(TEC 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 two-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.

Rationale for the Exemption:

This exemption is to allow the district's existing bank contract to be extended beyond the total 6-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.

Local Guidelines:

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 PISD Board Policy BDAE.](#)

7. Transfer Students

Current Law

- (a) *Any child, other than a high school graduate, who is younger than 21 years of age and eligible for enrollment on September 1 of any school year may transfer annually from the child's school district of residence to another district in this state if both the receiving district and the applicant parent or guardian or person having lawful control of the child jointly approve and timely agree in writing to the transfer.*
- (b) *A transfer agreement under this section shall be filed and preserved as a receiving district record for audit purposes of the agency.*

Proposed

The District shall be exempt from state law requiring a transfer to be for a one-year period. Therefore, the Superintendent may revoke a student's transfer at any time during a school year if the student does not maintain acceptable levels of attendance, academic achievement, and compliance with the District's Student Code of Conduct as defined in FDA (LOCAL).