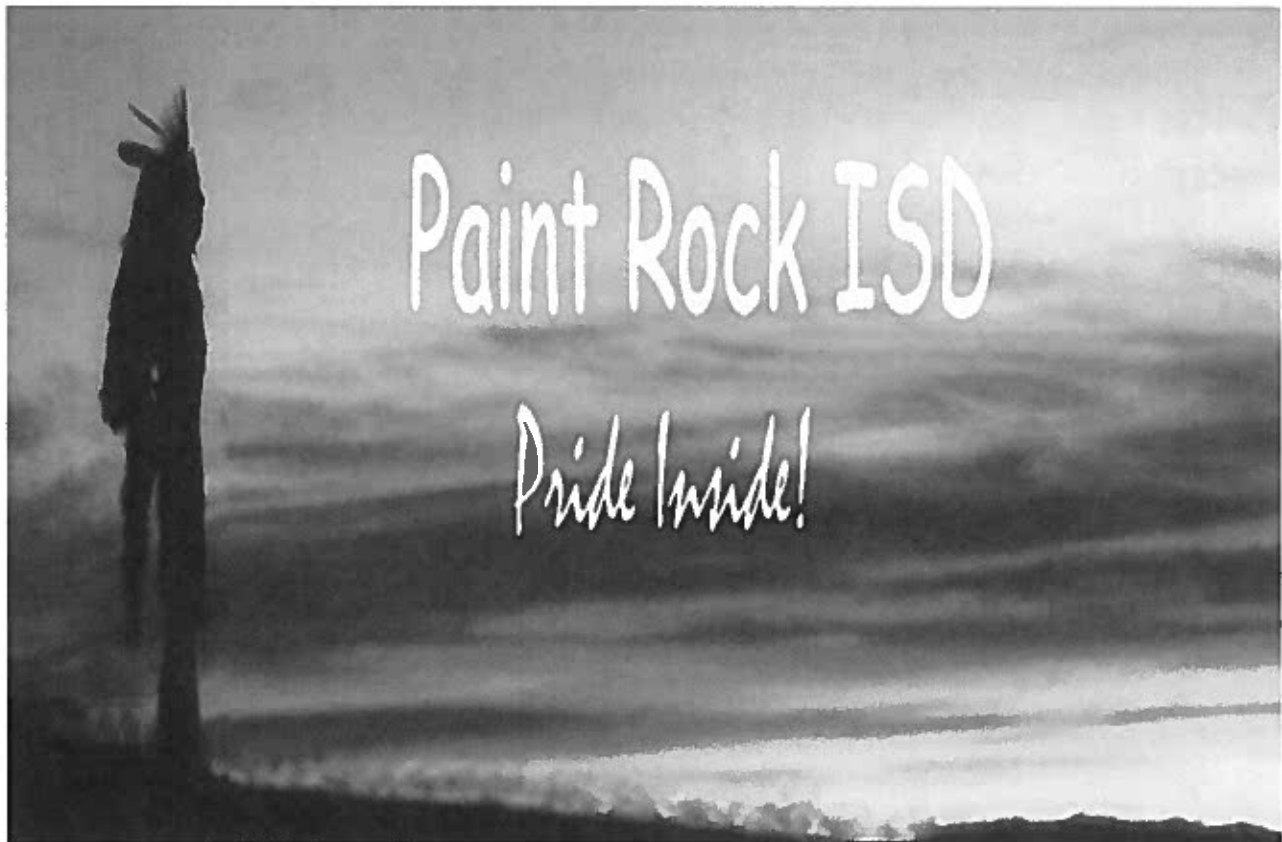


**Paint Rock ISD**

**District of Innovation**

**Plan**

**2017-2022**



## **Paint Rock ISD as a District of Innovation**

### **House Bill 1842**

This District of Innovation plan relates only to the specific exemptions outlined below. The term of the Plan is for 5 years, beginning May 23, 2017 and ending May 22, 2022, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with applicable law. The district will adhere strictly to the Texas Education Code in all other areas. If it becomes apparent that changes to this plan are necessary, the district will reconvene the District of Innovation Planning Committee to discuss and potentially enact those changes.

House Bill (HB) 1842 was passed in the 84th Texas Legislative Session. This law gives Texas public school districts an opportunity to modify state requirements to meet the needs of their students. As a District of Innovation, Paint Rock ISD will have the increased flexibility necessary to customize student learning experiences. Every student is unique. If implemented properly, the unprecedented innovation enabled by HB 1842 can create a different schooling experience for every child. As a school district that puts the needs of students first, Paint Rock ISD cherishes the ability to make important educational decisions locally.

PRISD seeks, via this process, to fully bring to life the district's vision for the future. Parents, community and business partners have been involved throughout the process of developing our innovation plan, providing feedback regarding what they want for their children's educational experience. As we begin to transform their dreams for their children into reality, local educators and district officials must be positioned to leverage allowed flexibility and reduce or avoid barriers that could otherwise prevent us from doing our best work on their behalf.

This plan requires us to evolve, to think drastically differently about critical systems in place in our school district. HB 1842 allows us to re-examine, free of unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles, how we teach, how we recruit and retain talent, how we organize ourselves, how we involve our families, how we grow as a learning organization, and what kinds of educational experiences we provide.

HB 1842 allows districts to exempt themselves from a limited subset of requirements imposed by the Texas Education Code (TEC) "that inhibit the goals of the plan and from which the district should be exempted on adoption of the plan. . .". The purpose of HB 1842 is to spur innovation in school districts, and it the desire of Paint Rock ISD to become a more innovative district as a result of pursuing District of Innovation status. Because PRISD seeks to make best use of local control of educational decisions for the benefit of students, we seek exemption from the following permissible provisions of the TEC as allowed in the statute:

**Timeline for Paint Rock ISD "District of Innovation Plan"**

<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Action</u></b>	<b><u>Notes</u></b>
May 27, 2016	DOI discussion with District/Campus Site-Based Committee	Done
August 16, 2016	DOI discussion with Faculty & Staff	Done
February 13, 2017	PRISD School Board approval of Resolution	Done
February 13, 2017	Public Hearing to consider pursuing DOI Plan	Done
February 13, 2017	Board Approval of DOI Committee	Done
March 6, 2017	Public Hearing on District of Innovation Activities	Done
March 9, 2017	SBDM/DOI Committee Meeting regarding DOI	Done
March 21, 2017	SBDM/DOI Advisory Committee holds Public Meeting and passes plan by unanimous vote	Done
April 10, 2017	PRISD School Board gives Primary Approval unanimously	Done
April 21, 2017	Plan sent to Commissioner	Done
April 21, 2017	Plan posted on both PRISD web sites for 30 days	Done
May 22, 2017	PRISD School Board approves final plan by 2/3 majority	

# District of Innovation

## Advisory Committee

Ron Cline	Superintendent
Allison Tonne	Principal (PK-12)/Parent
Mincy Briley	Counselor
Fisher Pyburn	Spec. Ed. Teacher/Coach/Dean of Students
Jackie Timmerman	Special Education Teacher
Teagie Branch	ELA Teacher
Rebecca Quiroz	Kindergarten Teacher
Kinsley Lester	3/4/5 Teacher/Parent
Jordan Soliz	Kindergarten Teacher/Coach
Chris Walker	Science Teacher
Jordyn Fischer	ELA Teacher/Coach/AD
Houston Hendryx	History Teacher
Debbie White	Receptionist
Jean Hennig	Cafeteria Worker/Parent
Maria Gonzalez	Parent

RESOLUTION TO CONSIDER DESIGNATION AS DISTRICT OF INNOVATION

WHEREAS Education Code 12A.001 provides that a district is eligible for designation as a district of innovation if the district's most recent performance rating under Section 39.054 reflects at least acceptable performance, and that consideration of designation as a district of innovation may be initiated by a resolution adopted by the board of trustees of the district; and

WHEREAS the Paint Rock Independent School District's most recent performance rating under Education Code 39.054 reflects at least acceptable performance.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of Paint Rock Independent School District by adoption of this resolution initiates the process under Education Code Chapter 12A to become a District of Innovation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that after this resolution is signed by the Board, a public hearing shall be held within 30 days to consider whether the District should develop a local innovation plan for the designation of the District as a district of innovation and that within 30 days of the public hearing the Board of Trustees of Paint Rock Independent School District shall appoint an innovation plan committee to develop a local innovation plan or decline to pursue designation as a district of innovation.

Adopted this 13<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2017, by the Board of Trustees of the Paint Rock Independent School District.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Presiding Officer

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

Term of Plan: 5/23/2017 - 5/22/2022

Plan applies to:  Entire District  
 Campus (list) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

**Chapter 11 – School Districts**

**Subchapter D. Powers and Duties of Board of Trustees of Independent School Districts**

- §11.1511 (b)(5), (14) Specific Powers and Duties of Board
- §11.162 School Uniforms

**Subchapter F. District-Level and Site Based Decision-Making**

- §11.251 Planning and Decision-Making Process
- §11.252 District-Level Planning and Decision-Making
- §11.253 Campus Planning and Site-Based Decision-Making
- §11.255 Dropout Prevention Review

**Chapter 21 – Educators**

**Subchapter A – General Provisions**

- §21.002 Teacher Employment Contracts
- §21.003 Certification Required
- §21.0031 Failure to Obtain Certification; Contract Void

**Subchapter B – Certification of Educators**

- §21.051 Rules Regarding Field-Based Experience and Options for Field Experience and Internships.
- §21.053 Presentation and Recording of Certificates
- §21.057 Parental Notification

**Subchapter C – Probationary Contracts**

**Subchapter D – Continuing Contracts**

**Subchapter E – Term Contracts**

**Subchapter H – Appraisals and Incentives**

- §21.352 Local Role
- §21.353 Appraisal on Basis of Classroom Teaching Performance
- §21.354 Appraisal of Certain Administrators
- §21.3541 Appraisal and Professional Development System for Principals

**Subchapter I – Duties and Benefits**

- §21.401 Minimum Service Required
- §21.402 Minimum Salary Schedule for Certain Professional Staff
- §21.4021 Furloughs

- §21.4022 Required Process for Development of Furlough Program or Other Salary Reduction Proposal
- §21.403 Placement on Minimum Salary Schedule
- §21.4031 Professional Staff Service Records
- §21.4032 Reductions in Salaries of Classroom Teachers and Administrators
- §21.404 Planning and Preparation Time
- §21.405 Duty-Free Lunch
- §21.406 Denial of Compensation Based On Absence for Religious Observance Prohibited
- §21.407 Requiring or Coercing Teachers to Join Groups, Clubs, Committees, or Organizations: Political Affairs
- §21.408 Right To Join or Not To Join Professional Association
- §21.409 Leave Of Absence for Temporary Disability
- §21.415 Employment Contracts
- Subchapter J – Staff Development**
- §21.451 Staff Development Requirements
- §21.452 Developmental Leaves of Absence
- §21.458 Mentors

**Chapter 22 – School District Employees and Volunteers**

**Subchapter A – Rights, Duties, and Benefits**

- §22.001 Salary Deductions for Professional Dues
- §22.002 Assignment, Transfer, or Pledge of Compensation
- §22.003 Minimum Personal Leave Program
- §22.006 Discrimination Based on Jury Service Prohibited
- §22.007 Incentives for Early Retirement
- §22.011 Requiring or Coercing Employees to Make Charitable Contributions

**Chapter 25 – Admission, Transfer, and Attendance**

**Subchapter C – Operation of Schools and School Attendance**

- §25.0811 First Day of Instruction
- §25.0812 Last Day of School
- §25.083 School Day Interruptions
- §25.092 Minimum Attendance for Class Credit or Final Grade

**Subchapter D – Student/Teacher Ratios; Class Size**

- §25.111 Student/Teacher Ratios
- §25.112 Class Size
- §25.113 Notice of Class Size
- §25.114 Student/Teacher Ratios in Physical Education Classes; Class Size

**Chapter 37 – Discipline; Law and Order**

**Subchapter A – Alternative Setting for Behavior Management**

- §37.0012 Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator
- §37.002 Removal by Teacher

**Chapter 44 –Fiscal Management**

**Subchapter B – Purchases; Contracts**

- §44.031 Purchasing Contracts
- §44.0331 Management Fees Under Certain Cooperative Purchasing Contracts
- §44.0352 Competitive Sealed Proposals
- §44.042 Preference to Texas and United States Products
- §44.043 Right To Work
- §44.047 Purchase or Lease of Automated External Defibrillator

**Subchapter Z – Miscellaneous Provisions**

- §44.901 Energy Savings Performance Contracts
- §44.902 Long-Range Energy Plan to Reduce Consumption of Electric Energy
- §44.903 Energy-Efficient Light Bulbs in Instructional Facilities
- §44.908 Expenditure of Local Funds

**Chapter 45 – School District Funds**

**Subchapter G – School District Depositories**

- §45.205 Term of Contract
- §45.206 Bid Or Request for Proposal Notices; Bid and Proposal Forms
- §45.207 Award of Contract
- §45.208 Depository Contract; Bond
- §45.209 Investment of District Funds

**Other**

Please list any additional exemption required for your Innovation District Plan:

- 37.005, 37.006, 37.008, 37.006
- 25.036
- Commissioner's Ruling re: Academic Student Transfers



## **Uniform School Start Date**

(EB LEGAL) (Ed. Code 25.0811)

### **Currently**

The District may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the 4th Monday of August.

### **Proposed**

The flexibility provided by permitting an earlier start date will allow Paint Rock ISD to annually determine, at the local level, what start date best meets the needs of the students and community. This enables us to personalize learning, increase college and career readiness, balance the amount of instructional time per semester, and provide more flexible professional development opportunities for our staff.

In addition, this change will help enable students to enroll in college courses that start in early June, avoiding a hurdle that otherwise might hinder students' college and career readiness. Removing the uniform start date would also allow PRISD to start classes on a Wednesday or Thursday, as a short week, easing the transition to schooling for students entering pre-k /kindergarten, as well as transitioning through the elementary schools, middle school, and high school.

Because we serve a large number of students that reside outside our district, it also allows us to synchronize our district start times with those of the districts where our students reside. Presently when our calendar varies from that of the home campus it results in some of our transfer students and/or their parents believing that they should go by the home district's schedule which results in miscommunication and students missing school.

PRISD is also a member of a special education small school cooperative. Since other member districts are also considering becoming Districts of Innovation and starting school early, this would allow our students to do so as well. If not, our students may not be able to receive the same instructional days as the other schools in the coop.

Students will start school no earlier than the 2nd Monday in August.

## **Minimum Minutes of Instruction and Length of School Day**

(EC LEGAL & EB LEGAL) (Ed. Code 25.081) (Ed. Code 25.082)

### **Currently**

House Bill (HB) 2610, passed by the 84th Texas Legislature, amended Texas Education Code TEC §25.081 by striking language requiring 180 days of instruction and replacing this language with language requiring the District to provide at least 75,600 minutes of instruction (including intermissions and recess) each school year. Additionally, TEC §25.082(a) currently requires that a school day be at least seven hours each day, including intermissions and recesses.

### **Proposed**

Exemption from the 7-hour school day requirement would allow PRISD the flexibility needed to alter the school day schedule whenever it was locally determined as beneficial to the district and its stakeholders. While there is an existing waiver process available to request exemption from this requirement, the waiver is limited to a 6-day maximum per school year.

Exempting PRISD from the 75,600 minute annual requirement would give the district a significant amount of local control over scheduling without the fear of diminishing state funding or losing credit for instructional time that might cause the district to fall out of compliance with the annual minute requirements. This would allow the district the flexibility to schedule non-instructional days into the schedule to allow for teachers to analyze student data and engage in targeted, relevant professional development.

PRISD does not intend to shorten the school day on a regular basis, or without specific purpose. To the greatest extent possible, "early release" days will be planned ahead of time and noted in the district calendar which is approved by the Board of Trustees and published and distributed to stakeholders in advance of the school year and continuously published using school media.

## **Class Size in Pre-Kindergarten through 4th Grade**

(EEB LEGAL) (Ed. Code 25.112) (Ed. Code 25.113) (Ed. Code 25.114)

### **Currently**

Texas Education Code § 25.112 requires enrollment in Pre-Kindergarten through 4th Grade classes to be limited at 22 students. If maintaining this limit creates an undue hardship, the District may request a waiver from the Texas Education Agency. Texas Education Code § 25.113 requires written notice to be sent home to parents each time a waiver is granted. Many times, soon after the waiver is submitted, situations change and we are below the 22:1 ratio.

### **Proposed**

As a district that is constantly changing, it has become a common need to Paint Rock ISD to apply for a class size waiver. While we believe that a small class size may play a positive role for students, this must be balanced with the logistics of the timing of adding staff, and mindfulness must be given to the best teacher to student ratio that can be achieved given the total number of students. Many times it is not the number of the students but the makeup and chemistry of the classroom that most influence the learning environment. Research shows that the teacher in the classroom has the greatest impact on student learning, as opposed to absolute class size. Under our district of innovation plan, in the event the class size exceeds the 22 student limit for pre-kindergarten through 4th grade classes, a TEA waiver will not be necessary. This plan emphasizes the importance of flexible environments and student learning based upon student needs. It grants flexibility in class size at all times for regrouping for success, small groups, large groups, etc. It also works to minimize paperwork requirements in order to free up time to place additional focus on student success. An exemption from the class size ratio requirements of Texas Education Code (TEC), §25.112, will allow the ability to group students based upon academic, social, and emotional needs without adding ongoing filings of waivers when the need arises.

When exceeding a 22:1 student-teacher ratio in a PK-4th grade classroom, district policy will be to constantly evaluate the possible need to add additional staff. We will follow this guide throughout this process:

23:1 – Inform the Superintendent

24:1 – Inform the Superintendent and Board of Trustees

25:1 – Inform the Superintendent, Board of Trustees, and notify parents

## **90 Percent Attendance Rule**

(FEC LOCAL) (Ed. Code 25.092)

### **Currently**

Texas Education Code 25.092 requires students to attend class for at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered in order to earn class credit or be given a final grade for the class.

### **Proposed**

The 90 Percent Rule is an arbitrary standard, which means school districts award credit based on seat time rather than based on content mastery. Abstaining from the requirement means the district will no longer be required to penalize students who miss class due to extra/co-curricular activities, academic activities, or other extenuating circumstances. This exemption will allow the district to promote student engagement, as well as social and emotional development, by encouraging more students to participate in such activities. It will also allow PRISD administrators to award credit to students because they can show they understand the concepts, rather than because they have attended a certain number of school days. The proposal would allow counselors and administrators to refocus efforts on students who are truly at risk, while simultaneously providing rigor and relevance in the curriculum. Exemption from this requirement will provide educational advantages to students of the district by promoting learning through innovation in the methods, locations, and times instruction may be delivered to students, thereby accommodating students with legitimate scheduling conflicts, reducing dropouts, and increasing the number of qualifying graduates. PRISD will also explore other innovative ways to demonstrate content mastery, given this exemption. This exemption supports the districts overarching goals and provides the flexibility needed to implement tools, resources, and training that support personalized learning for both students and teachers.

Exempting the District from the 90 Percent Rule does not, in any way, impact or alters existing compulsory attendance requirements or University Interscholastic League ("UIL") rules. Moreover, opting out of Section 25.092 in no way limits or modifies a teacher's right to determine the finality of a grade in accordance with Texas Education Code Section 28.0214, nor does it restrict or alter a teacher's right to assign grades in accordance with a District grading policy adopted pursuant to Texas Education Code Section 28.0216.

## **Teacher Certification**

(DK LEGAL, DK LOCAL, DK EXHIBIT) (Ed. Code 21.003) (Ed. Code 21.051)

### **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 and provide notification to parents of each student assigned to a classroom taught by the non-certified teacher.

### **Proposed**

PRISD is committed to placing a life changer in every classroom. In order to best serve PRISD students, decisions on certification will be handled locally. The current state teacher certification requirements inhibit the district's ability to hire teachers to teach hard-to-fill, high demand, dual credit, and career and technical/STEAM (applied Science, Technology, Engineering, and Arts & Mathematics) courses, as well as our math, bilingual education classes and courses taught in languages other than English. These requirements also inhibit the district's ability to hire teachers moving in with out-of-state credentials. In order to enable more students to obtain the educational benefit of such course offerings, the district seeks to establish its own local qualification requirements and its own requirements for training of professionals and experts to teach such courses in lieu of the requirements set forth in law. By obtaining exemption from existing teacher certification requirements, the district will have the flexibility to hire community college instructors, university professors, or internal applicants seeking assignments outside of their traditional certification area for full and/or part time course loads. This will enrich applicant pools in specific content areas and afford more students the opportunity to take dual credit courses if certified teachers are not available to teach those courses. In addition, this exemption will afford the district the flexibility to hire professionals in certain trades or vocations to teach the crafts of those trades or vocations (such as welding, fine arts, health sciences, law, journalism, etc.) if certified teachers are not available to teach those courses, or their quality of expertise would benefit the students in that area.

This current system inhibits the district's ability to hire teachers to teach hard-to-find positions as well as elective positions. It does not consider the unique instructional and/or financial needs of our district. Paint Rock ISD is a rural 1A school district in which teachers must teach multiple courses, but we are still limited on courses and the variety of course offerings. To offer additional course offerings and flexible scheduling which would benefit our students and community, the district must establish local qualification requirements. This exemption from

the existing teacher certification requirements would allow the district to have the flexibility to hire community instructors or internal applicants seeking assignments outside of their certifications. In addition, this exemption would allow the district the flexibility to hire professionals in certain trades, vocations, or fields to teach those trades, vocations, or languages (such as welding, fine arts, health science, criminal justice, law, Spanish, etc.) if certified teachers are not available.

### Innovation Strategies

- The campus principals may submit to the superintendent a request to allow a certified teacher to teach a subject(s) out of his or her certified field. The principals must provide reasoning for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses which qualify this individual to teach this subject. The superintendent will report this action to the Board of Trustees at the first board meeting following the assignment.

- 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 of the individual's credentials. The superintendent will then approve the request if he or she believe that the individual could be an asset to the students. The superintendent will then report this action to the Board of Trustees prior to the individual beginning employment. Local teaching certificates will require an employment agreement rather than a contract.

- An individual with a college degree or certification in a trade could be eligible to teach a course related to his or her expertise or experience through a local teaching certificate. The principal will submit the request to the superintendent with all of the individual's credentials. The superintendent will then approve the request if he or she believes that the individual could be an asset to the students and district. The superintendent will then report this action to the Board of Trustees prior to the individual beginning employment. Local teaching certificates will require an employment agreement rather than a contract. applicants seeking assignments outside of their certifications. In addition, this exemption would allow the district the flexibility to hire professionals in certain trades, vocations, or fields to teach those trades, vocations, or languages (such as welding, fine arts, health science, criminal justice, law, journalism, Spanish, etc.) if certified teachers are not available.

PRISD is also looking to allow consideration of part-time professionals to teach courses – specifically trade related professionals the ability to teach related courses. The superintendent will determine whether it is in the best interest of the district to certify the individual. The superintendent will notify the school board.

PRISD is also looking to allow experienced teachers to be able to, when needed, to teach one course outside of their existing teaching field(s). These would be primarily in the area of elective courses. When this took part in CTE courses, we would want to still be able to get CTE funding for these courses.

## **Probationary Contracts**

(DCA Legal) (Ed. Code 21.102(b))

### **Currently**

Under current guidelines, probationary periods for newly hired teachers who have been in public education for at least five of the previous eight years cannot exceed one year.

### **Proposed**

This limited time period is insufficient in some cases to fully determine the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom. Relief from Texas Education Code 21.102 will permit the district the option to issue a probationary contract for a period of up to two years for experienced teachers, counselors or nurses newly hired in PRISD.

## **Planning and Preparation Time**

(DL Legal) (Ed. Code 21.404)

### **Currently**

Teachers are entitled to at least 450 minutes within each two-week period for preparing to teach, conducting parent conferences, and evaluating students' work.

### **Proposed**

In an effort to implement PLCs and Opportunity Culture within PRISD, flexible scheduling is a requirement. Having flexibility in planning and preparation time helps in creating schedules where select teachers can reach more students and have more planning time on teacher teams. All teachers will have appropriate planning and preparation time, but flexibility is requested.



## **School Day Interruptions & Limits on Time for Remedial Tutorials**

(Ed. Code 25.083b) (Ed. Code 25.092)

### **Currently**

Students across Paint Rock ISD have individual needs throughout their educational career. A portion of our responsibility is to tailor instruction to students in a manner that meets their needs to the maximum extent possible. Texas Education Code 25.083(b) is related to guidelines for school day interruptions and limits the amount of time students can be removed from a class for remedial tutorial to ten percent. Section 25.092 stipulates that a student in any grade level 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 that the class is offered.

### **Proposed**

The foundational purpose of education in Paint Rock ISD is to provide challenging, meaningful instruction in each classroom. However, a contradiction in policy and practice arises from the policies referenced above. The State of Texas requires all students to pass STAAR Reading and Math assessments during their 5th and 8th grade years (Student Success Initiative) and 5 End of Course (EOC) assessments to be eligible for graduation.

Students that either fail to meet the passing standard or show a trend (based on data) towards not passing one or more of the high stakes tests are required to receive intense remediation. Therefore, in specific situations, students need the assistance of instructional specialists during the school day. Exemption from the policies referenced above will provide students the opportunity to register for classes of their choice, while at the same time receiving the necessary supplemental instruction needed for academic success. The exemption will provide Paint Rock ISD the opportunity to ensure that our students are prepared for transition to subsequent grade levels, and ultimately to obtain eligibility for high school graduation.

\*These actions in no way alter policies related to compulsory attendance requirements.

## **District-Level Planning & Decision Making**

(Education Codes 11.251, 11.252 & 11.253)

### **Currently**

Texas Education Code 11.252 establishes the make-up of district and campus site-based decision making committees.

### **Proposed**

Paint Rock ISD would like flexibility in TEC 11.252 as the committee make up limits the degree of parent involvement in the district decision-making process. We would like flexibility in the make-up of the committee for district decision-making to give opportunity for greater parental involvement. We would also like to get more parental representation from the parents of our transfer students who make up virtually 80% of our entire student body.

PRISD is so small our District and Campus Site-based Committees are in fact the same as allowed by current Texas Education Code.

## **Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs/Suspensions**

(Education Codes 37.005, 37.006 & 37.008)  
FOCA (LEGAL); FOB (LEGAL)

### **Currently**

TEC 37.008 requires each school district to provide a disciplinary alternative education program that provides for the students who are assigned to that program to be separated from students who are not assigned to the program.

TEC 37.006 states that an elementary student may not be placed in a DAEP with any other student who is not an elementary student. However, students younger than 10 may only be placed in a DAEP if they commit an expellable offense under 37.007.

TEC 37.008 requires Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs to employ only teachers who meet all certification requirements

### **Proposed**

While Paint Rock ISD will make every attempt to comply with the existing education code, exemption from this requirement would allow the district to better utilize staff and facilities by allowing junior high and high school DAEP students to attend the same classroom as junior high and high school In School Suspension (ISS) students when necessary.

Exemption from this requirement (Ed. Code 37.006) would allow the district to make common sense decisions about which students are age appropriate to be in the same room together and allow the district to better utilize existing staff and facilities in the event of an elementary DAEP placement. PRISD is currently in a multi-district educational cooperative for DAEP services but this coop does not serve students below 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Currently when an elementary student is placed in DAEP, it pulls staff away from the secondary DAEP or ISS because we cannot send that student to the DAEP Cooperative at Fairview and thus must provide DAEP services on our main campus for any elementary students assigned. This exemption would allow us to continue to use both rooms for ISS and DAEP.

Exemption from this requirement (Ed. Code 37.008) would allow the district to better utilize staff. Although we do currently have all certified staff for DAEP assigned to our DAEP Fairview campus, we utilize teacher aides for a portion of the day with ISS. In the event that we need to combine DAEP and ISS students, that room would be staffed by non-certified staff for most of the day, but certified teachers would still provide work and work directly with the students at various times during the day.

## **Inter-District Transfers**

*(FDA LOCAL) (Education Code 25.036)(Commissioner's Ruling)*

### **Currently**

Currently, under Texas Education Code 25.036, a district may choose to accept, as transfers, students who are not entitled to enroll in the district, but TEC 25.036, has been interpreted to require a transfer to be for a period of one school year.

About 80 percent of all of the students that attend PRISD in grades PK-12 are actually transfer students from other school districts. Often these students come to us searching for a second chance, a restart or an opportunity to get away from situations that they got involved with in their previous district. We don't mind being that place where a student who needs a fresh start can get one, but should that student transfer to our school and then not take advantage of their second chance, we need to be able to revoke that students transfer to PRISD and not have to wait until the end of the year to do it.

### **Proposed**

Paint Rock ISD maintains a transfer policy under FDA (Local) requiring nonresident students wishing to transfer to file a transfer application each school year. In approving transfer requests, the availability of space and instructional staff, availability of programs and services, the student's disciplinary history records, work habits, grades, testing results, and attendance records are also evaluated. Transfer students are expected to follow the attendance requirements, rules, and regulations of the district. TEC 25.036 has been interpreted to establish the acceptance of a transfer as a one-year commitment by the district. The district is seeking to eliminate the provision of a one-year commitment in accepting transfer applicants. On rare occasions, student behavior warrants suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion. In addition, student attendance may fall below the TEA truancy standard. In these rare cases, Paint Rock ISD seeks exemption from the one year transfer commitment.

Nonresident students who have been accepted as inter-district transfer students may have such transfer status revoked by the Superintendent at any time during the year if the student is assigned discipline consequences of suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion. In addition, students not meeting the State's 90% attendance standard may also be subject to immediate revocation of the transfer status.

## **Teacher Mentors** *(Education Code 21.458)*

### **Currently**

Currently, under Texas Education Code 21.458, a district may only utilize as mentor teachers those teachers that have three or more years teaching experience.

### **Proposed**

Texas Education Code 21.458 limits the number of teachers who can serve as mentors and restricts teachers with exceptional skills or experience in the subject matter from sharing their knowledge with novice teachers. We want to remove the restriction as to how many years a person must teach before be able to serve as a mentor teacher.

## **Drug-Free School/Student Drug Testing** (Education Code 37.006, 37.007)

### **Currently**

Texas Education Law (Education Code 37.006) states that a student may be placed at a DAEP or expelled (Education Code 37.007) if he/she “sells, gives, or delivers to another person or possesses or uses or is under the influence of marihuana or a controlled substance...”. However, it is vague on the consequences for a student that test positive for such drug use that is not “under the influence of”, in “possession of”, currently “using” said drug on school grounds, at school activities, or within 300 feet of said school grounds/property. It may be argued that students may test positive for drug use even though they were not using, in possession or under the influence on or near school property. Students that do test positive for illegal drugs, at some point in time used said drugs or at the very least were in close contact with said drugs. Regardless though, the school has a vested interest in promoting the health and well-being of each and every one of its students and has a duty to the parents of these students’ parents to both notify them of concerns and work with them to help their student/child. Schools, parents, students, and the community are all negatively affected by students using illegal drugs regardless of whether it is at or away from school.

Programs like D-Fy-It and others have proven that when schools and communities take an active role in discouraging drug use among teenagers they can improve the lives of those students and the communities. Effective programs to keep students off drugs include an education component, a counseling component, a reward system for positive behavior, consequences for negative behaviors, positive alternatives to take part in and the ability to empower the student him/herself to avoid situations where drugs are available and used. When students know that they will be randomly tested for drugs and that their continued ability to be in extra-curricular activities is contingent upon testing negative, they are more likely to avoid drugs and situations where others are consuming/providing drugs. It gives them “an out” when someone asks if they want to do drugs. They can say “I can’t... my school drug tests us”.

Parents want to give their child the opportunity to stay off drugs. They want to have their children attend school in a drug-free environment.

Texas and Federal law does not allow a public school district to test ALL of its students for drug use. However, the courts have held that extra-curricular programs at a public school are voluntary and thus a public school district can randomly drug test all of its students that participate in extra-curricular activities. At PRISD, we have developed a plan to randomly drug test our students in grades 7-12 that participate in extra-curricular activities including football, basketball, cross country, golf, tennis, track, student council, NHS, DECA, FCCLA, FFA,

cheerleading, etc.. At Paint Rock High School about 90% of the students participate in extra-curricular activities of some kind or another.

### **Proposed**

PRISD wants to be able to place a student who tests positive for an illegal drug during a drug screening under Texas Education Code 37.006, because “the continued presence of the student in the regular classroom threatens the safety of other students... or will be detrimental to the educational process”. Students who may be using illegal drugs are clearly “detrimental to the educational process”. We are not asking TEA for permission to drug test, legally we don’t need TEA’s permission. What we are asking for through the “District of Innovation” process is clarification with regards to student discipline measures when it comes to a student that may test positive for illegal drug usage that they may be placed in the DAEP the same as if they had been caught “under the influence” or in possession of those same illegal drugs.

PRISD wants to establish a student drug testing program where all students that participate in extra-curricular activities and all transfer students in grades 7-12 will be tested for drug use. Students that test positive will be provided an opportunity to retest within five days to screen out any false positives. Students that test positive for illegal drugs may be placed in DAEP and/or have their transfer status revoked. Students that test positive will also be suspended from all extra-curricular programs and referred for drug/substance abuse counseling at their own expense. The students parent(s) will be informed of all testing and test results for their child/children only. Every student who participates in extra-curricular activities will be tested at least once a year with additional random testing taking place throughout the year.

## **School District Depositories Contract**

(Education Code 45.205, 45.206, & 45.208)

### **Currently:**

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.

### **Proposed:**

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.

- PRISD only has one bank within the boundaries of the district. The nearest bank is about 50 miles away round-trip.
- The Paint Rock First State Bank was established over 100 years ago and one of its first clients was Paint Rock ISD, which was established in the community over 20 years before the bank opened. The school district has been doing business at that bank ever since (about 107 years). The bank and the school have seen each other through both the best and worst of times. The bank "looks out for that little school house down the street..." because they know that if the school ever closes, so does the town...".
- Because of the small size of our little district, most banks don't even want to serve our district. Only in the past few years has PRISD amassed a fund balance of over a million dollars.
- No one can remember the last time that the district even received a bid for the school's business from any other bank(s) even though they are solicited each time the depository contract comes up for bid again.



**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 PRISD ISD Board Policy BDAE. No other bank even submitted a bid to provide for the district's banking services this year when it was up for renewal.

## **Energy Efficient Light Bulbs in Instructional Facilities**

(Education Codes 44.901 & 44.903)

### **Currently:**

TEC Code: Subchapter A- School District Fiscal Management Sec. 44.903. ENERGY-EFFICIENT LIGHT BULBS IN INSTRUCTIONAL FACILITIES. (a) In this section, "instructional facility" has the meaning assigned by Section 46.001.

(b) A school district shall purchase for use in each type of light fixture in an instructional facility the commercially available model of light bulb that:

- (1) uses the fewest watts for the necessary luminous flux or light output;
- (2) is compatible with the light fixture; and
- (3) is the most cost-effective, considering the factors described by Subdivisions (1) and (2).

### **Proposed:**

Rationale for the Exemption:

Removal of the mandate prevents unnecessary financial obligation to retrofit older bulbs and fixtures for facilities not undergoing renovation.

The district is currently bidding out projects to update the electrical infrastructure of the buildings on campus. It is an extremely costly process as the buildings and electrical wiring on campus date back from the 1930's until as new as 2009. As the buildings and electrical systems are being updated, we are putting in modern energy efficient lighting systems. The energy savings are one of the beneficial reasons for the modernization but safety is our first priority. The costs to update the systems all at once is prohibitive for our small rural district. Our elementary school is scheduled to be rewired this summer. Previously rejected bids have placed this cost as high as \$750,000 for just one of the three oldest buildings on campus. We simply cannot afford this expenses all at once.

## Summary

This District of Innovation Plan will reduce restrictions and help PRISD to better support our students, employees, and families in more innovative ways. Nudging our district toward the locally-customized environment our students deserve will enable us to better prepare them according to their individualized needs and their unique talents and traits. Through HB 1842, PRISD will be able to utilize innovative approaches to making the best decisions for our children because we will be able to make them locally.

In many cases, the implementation of exemptions from the TEC will require the revision of PRISD policies. PRISD will utilize a local policy development process that includes stakeholder input. This District of Innovation Plan will be implemented upon Board approval and will be in effect for 5 years from the date of implementation. Where necessary, the superintendent of schools or designee will promulgate regulations, policies, and procedures to govern the areas for which local flexibility has been sought.

We are grateful to the legislators who campaigned for Districts of Innovation through HB 1842 and to Commissioner Morath and his team for furthering our ability to create innovative strategies. We are committed to the children of our community and pledge to implement this plan with their best interests at heart.

Paint Rock ISD reserves the right to modify the District of Innovation plan as needed as the district continues to grow and evolve, through time, population and/or culture. Future District of Innovation plan exemption modifications will be determined by the district's local committee and approved by the Paint Rock ISD Board of Trustees.

Paint Rock ISD's District of Innovation plan is designed to support the district philosophy through providing expanded opportunities to focus on distinct areas of identified student and faculty needs. Specific plans of implementation will be developed as appropriate by campuses and departments in collaboration with the district's existing strategic planning process. The plan will be continuously monitored and reviewed at the local level.