

# **PLAINS**

## **INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**



**DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLAN**  
**2019-2024**

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 Plains 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 Plains 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 Plains 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 \_\_\_\_\_ (date) day of \_\_\_\_\_ (month), \_\_\_\_\_ (year), by the Board of Trustees.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

## District of Innovation – Committee Members

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Position / Role</u></b>
David Foote	Superintendent
Nate Wheeler	Dir. of Operations/Admin
Jorge Mendez	Principal
Traci Heflin	Principal
Sharon Mendez	Counselor
Robin Welch	Math / AVID
Chris Coulombe	CTE / Vo. Ag.
Kassie Bunton	Second Grade
David Downs	Board Member
Jolene Taylor	High School ELA
Jessica Garza	Paraprofessional
Erin Swann	Parent
Melissa Porras	Business



## District of Innovation- Overview

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The District of Innovation concept, passed by the 84<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session in House Bill 1842, gives traditional independent school districts most of the flexibilities available to Texas' open-enrollment charter schools.

Potential benefits of becoming a District of Innovation include:

- **Local control:** Districts decide which flexibilities best suit their local needs.
- **Customization:** Districts can create an innovation plan for a level of school (e.g., only high school), grade level, or a single campus.
- **Autonomy:** Districts must submit a district of innovation plan to the Commissioner of Education, but approval is not required.
- **Flexibility:** Districts will have the flexibility to implement practices similar to charter schools, including exemptions from mandates such as:
  - School start date
  - 90% attendance rule
  - Class-size ratios
  - Site-based decision- making processes
  - Certain student discipline provisions
  - Use of planning and preparation periods
  - Teacher appraisal requirements
  - Teacher certification flexibility
  - Flexibility in course scheduling

**Plains ISD feels that the development of a District of Innovation Plan will allow the District much needed flexibility to implement innovative programs and educational experiences.**



## District of Innovation – Plan & Guidelines

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### Teacher Certification:

#### **TEC Code Requiring Exemption:**

TEC 21.003 requires that a person may not be employed as a teacher by a district unless the person holds an appropriate certification or permit issued by the appropriate state agency.

#### **Benefit of Exemption for PISD:**

- The statutory certification requirements inhibit the District's ability to hire professionals with industry experience to teach Career and Technical Education (CTE), STEM Courses and non-core electives.
- Local Qualifications will allow the district to:
  - Recruit teachers from the field, including individuals from certain trades and/or vocations with industry knowledge and real world experience
  - Offer dual credit opportunities in CTE courses
  - Hire community college instructors
  - Allow experienced teachers to teach a course in an area they have qualified knowledge

#### **Local Guidelines:**

- Board Policies DK (Local) & DBA (Local)
- The District will establish local criteria, such as years of experience, qualifications, and industry certifications, to qualify for a local (district) teaching certificate.
- All Special Education and/or Bilingual teachers will continue to meet all State and Federal mandated guidelines
- Principals will submit candidates to the Superintendent with credentials. The Superintendent will determine whether it is in the best interest of the district to certify the individual. The Superintendent will notify the Board prior to beginning employment.
- At the present time, PISD would focus on non-core and CTE courses. However, in the future, the district may choose to exercise this option in other courses. Our local Board of Trustees would be able to issue the school district teaching permit for an individual teaching these courses based on qualifications certified by the superintendent. The individual qualifications would include demonstrated subject matter expertise, such as
  - Professional work experience
  - Formal training and education
  - Relevant industry license, certification, or registration
  - Any combination of work experience, training, and education or industry credential related to the subject matter he or she will be teaching.

All candidates would be carefully considered to ensure the individual has sufficient education and expertise to provide instruction necessary to meet the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for the course(s) to be taught.

Before issuing a school district teaching permit to an individual, the district would ensure that the individual completed the criminal background check in compliance with the State Board of Education (SBEC) rules. This would require the superintendent to certify to the Board of Trustees that the individual has undergone a criminal history background check and is capable of proper classroom management. In addition, the individual would be required to obtain a set number of hours in classroom management training.

## **Transfer Students:**

### **TEC Code Requiring Exemption:**

TEC 25.036: A district may choose to accept, as transfers, students who are not entitled to enroll in the district, and this code has been interpreted to require a transfer to be for a period of one school year.

### **Benefit of Exemption for PISD:**

- Discipline and character expectations can be better enforced and upheld while providing all students the opportunity to join and attend PISD.
- Attendance guidelines and classroom participation can be enforced without using additional resources and keeping personnel from other duties and responsibilities.
- Streamline the student registration process for returning transfer students

### **Local Guidelines:**

- Board Policy FDA (Local)
- Nonresident student inter-district transfer requests will only need approval from the superintendent prior to initial enrollment in PISD
- 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 a discipline action resulting in suspension, placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion
  - The student is truant
  - The student's attendance does not meet the State's 90% attendance standard for earning class credit



## **District of Innovation- Overview**

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### **First Day of Instruction:**

#### **TEC Code Requiring Exemption:**

TEC 25.0811: A school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.

#### **Benefit of Exemption for PISD:**

- District Advisory Committee will have the flexibility to start school prior to the fourth Monday in August.
- Starting one week earlier will better balance the two semesters with a natural Winter Break and create more instructional time before STAAR/EOC/AP exams.
- The balanced semesters will align with college semesters as well, allowing more opportunities for summer school, internships, and industrial certification opportunities.
- This should be a local decision and allow for stake holders concerns.

#### **Local Guidelines:**

- Board Policy EB (Local)
- The District Improvement Committee will receive parent and staff input, then decide, subject to School Board approval, the school start date.

## **Teacher Contract Minimum Service Requirements:**

#### **TEC Code Requiring Exemption:**

TEC 21.401: Current education law in Chapter 21 defines a teacher contract as a 10 month contract equivalent to 187 days.

#### **Benefit of Exemption for PISD:**

- Reducing teacher contract days from 187 to a decreased length with no effect on teacher salaries. This would be an attempt to better align the teacher days to the 75,600 minutes required of students.
  - Flexibility in aligning Teacher professional development with School Calendar
  - Would increase the daily rate the district pays teachers
  - Enhance teacher recruitment
  - Improve teacher morale

#### **Local Guidelines:**

- Board Policy DC (Local)
- PISD will present a recommendation to the PISD School Board regarding the number of contract days as a part of the total compensation and benefits program.



## **District of Innovation- Overview**

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### **90% Attendance Rule**

#### **TEC Code Requiring Exemption:**

TEC Section 25.092 requires a student must be in attendance at least 90% of the time to receive credit for a class.

#### **Benefits of Exemption for PISD:**

- Allows the District to grant credit for extenuating circumstances.
- Allows students to remain in school when they miss school to work to support their family.
- Allows students to not be penalized for working in an area that is related to a class they are enrolled in.

#### **Local Guidelines:**

- Bound Policy FEA (Local)
- The district will establish criteria to determine eligibility to this waiver
- The campus Principal will determine the student's eligibility for the exemption