

Pampa ISD District of Innovation Plan

District Goal: Excellence in Academics - Accelerate student academic achievement to ensure students are college and career ready.

District Goal: Staff Quality - Ensure a high-performing faculty and staff to accomplish our mission.

Introduction

House Bill 1842, passed during the 84th Legislative Session, permits Texas public school districts to become Districts of Innovation (DOI) and to obtain exemption from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code. The DOI concept allows for a return of local control to school districts and provides an opportunity to gain the flexibility that state charter schools already experience. On September 19, 2016, the Pampa ISD District Leadership Team (DLT) received information concerning the District of Innovation process, and on September 26, 2016, the Pampa ISD Board of Trustees also received DOI information at their regular Board meeting. On October 17, 2016, the District Leadership Team considered many possible innovations allowed by law and narrowed the list for PISD consideration to the five innovations listed in the plan.

The Board of Trustees authorized the District Leadership Team to continue their work in developing a final DOI plan on October 24, 2016, at their regularly scheduled board meeting. Input was sought from all district stakeholders at seven campus meetings held between October 27 and November 3, 2016. The District Leadership Team met on November 10 to consider campus input and write the final draft of the plan reflected in this document. The plan will be posted online from November 11, 2016, through December 11, 2016. On December 15, 2016, the District Leadership Team will hold a public meeting to vote on the final District of Innovation plan. If the plan passes by a majority, the Pampa ISD Board of Trustees will consider its adoption at its regular December board meeting on December 19, 2016.

Term of Plan

The term of the plan is five years with implementation beginning January 23, 2017, and ending January 22, 2022. The plan may be amended, rescinded, or renewed only in the same manner as required for initial adoption of a local innovation plan under TEC §12A.005.

PAMPA ISD INNOVATIONS

Probationary Contracts – Experienced Teachers New to District **(TEC §21.102b) (DCA LEGAL)**

Manner in which the statute inhibits district goals

TEC§21.102b states that for experienced teachers new to a district, the probationary period may not exceed one year if the person has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the previous eight years. This one-year time period is not sufficient to evaluate the teacher’s effectiveness and provide opportunities for growth before contract decisions are made.

Innovation Strategies:

- a. For experienced teachers new to the district who have been employed in public education for at least five of the eight previous years, a probationary contract may be issued for up to two years from the date of employment with Pampa ISD.
- b. TEC §21.101 defines a “teacher” as “principal, supervisor, classroom teacher, school counselor, or other full-time professional employee who is required to hold a certificate issued under Subchapter B or a nurse.”

Teacher Certification – Local District Teaching Certificate **(TEC §21.003a) (TEC §21.057) (DK LEGAL)**

Manner in which the statute inhibits district goals

TEC §21.003(a) states that a person may not be employed as a teacher by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued by the appropriate state agency.

TEC §21.057 requires districts to provide written notice to parents when an inappropriately certified teacher is assigned to the same classroom for more than 30 consecutive instructional days during the same school year.

Innovation Strategies:

- a. The campus principal may submit to the Superintendent a request to allow a certified teacher to teach one subject out of his/her field. The principal must submit the reason for the request in writing along with the credentials the certified teacher possesses which would qualify the individual to teach the subject. If the Superintendent grants the request, he/she will report the action to the Board at the next regularly scheduled board meeting.
- b. The CTE/College-Career Readiness Coordinator (C/CCRC) may submit to the Superintendent a request to grant a local district teaching certificate to an individual with experience in a CTE or

special-skill related field. The C/CCRC will submit the request in writing along with the individual's qualifications. If the Superintendent deems the individual to be qualified, he/she will grant the request and report the action to the Board at the next regularly scheduled board meeting. Local district teaching certificates will be issued in one-year terms, and teachers will continue in probationary status until the appropriate state certification is obtained.

- c. The high school campus principal may submit to the Superintendent a request to allow a Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board qualified teacher to teach a class or classes for which the individual is qualified. The principal must submit the request for a local teaching certificate in writing along with the credentials the teacher possesses. If the Superintendent deems the individual to be qualified, he/she will grant the request and report the action to the Board at the next regularly scheduled board meeting. Local district certificates will be issued in one-year terms, and teachers will continue in probationary status until the appropriate state certification is obtained.
- d. The campus principal may submit to the Superintendent a request to allow a certified teacher to teach a class or classes for which he/she holds an appropriate out-of-state certificate. If the superintendent deems the individual to be qualified, he/she will grant the request and report the action to the Board at the next regularly scheduled board meeting. Local district certificates will be issued in one-year terms and teachers will continue in probationary status until the appropriate state certification is obtained.
- e. Whenever possible, lesson plans for an uncertified teacher will be created through a mentor-mentee partnership.
- f. All certification actions of the superintendent will be reported to the Board of Trustees in open session, and the board agenda, minutes, and related reports will be available to the public to serve as parent notification.

Teacher Contract Days **(TEC §21.401b)**

Manner in which the statute inhibits district goals

TEC §21.401b defines a 10-month contract as 187 days. With the passage of TEC §25.081, which changed the required time of instruction for students from days to minutes, legislators did not address the issue of equalizing the required contract days for teachers in proportion to the minutes required for students.

Innovation Strategies:

- a. Pampa ISD may reduce the required service days for a 10-month teacher contract from 187 days to 182 days with no decrease in pay. This will in effect raise the daily pay rate for teachers without any additional cost to the district.
- b. The innovation provides a recruitment and retention incentive for teachers while allowing additional days during the summer months to seek out professional development if a teacher wishes to gain expertise in his/her field or teaching craft.

Minimum Minutes of Instruction per Day **(TEC §25.081e)**

Manner in which the statute inhibits district goals

TEC §25.081 currently requires that each school day must be 420 minutes long in order to count for ADA calculations and funding purposes and to accumulate instructional minutes toward the 75,600 minutes of instruction required for students annually.

Innovation Strategies:

- a. The superintendent may alter the length of an instructional day on a limited basis when it is locally determined as necessary or beneficial to the district and its stakeholders.
- b. Pampa ISD does not have any intention to shorten the school day on a regular basis or without specific purpose (i.e. bad weather, professional development, early dismissal for events of community interest, etc).
- c. To the greatest extent possible, shortened days would 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.

School Start Date **(TEC §25.0811)**

Manner in which the statute inhibits district goals

TEC §25.0811 currently requires that a school district may not begin student instruction before the 4th Monday in August. The current process allows little flexibility in the design of annual calendars to fit the needs of the district and community stakeholders.

Innovation Strategies:

- a. Pampa ISD students will begin instruction no earlier than the 3rd Monday of August.
- b. Teacher professional development days will begin no earlier than the 2nd Monday of August. (Teachers who are new to the profession or new to the district require additional training and are exceptions to this provision.)
- c. A district committee made up of teachers will continue to work with Administration to develop a proposed calendar to present to the Board of Trustees for consideration and adoption.