

# **Paradise ISD**

## **District of Innovation Plan (HB 1842)**

### **2016-2017**

During of the 84<sup>th</sup> 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**

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 4<sup>th</sup> 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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. 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 – 4<sup>th</sup> 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-4<sup>th</sup> 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 31,400 minutes of instruction during their half-day program.

Local Guidelines for PK Program: PISD will offer a PK schedule consisting of two three-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.