

PALO PINTO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



**LOCALLY DEVELOPED
DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLAN
June 1, 2022-May 31, 2027**

Introduction

During the 84th Legislative Session, HB 1842 was passed allowing Texas public schools to become Districts of Innovation. This designation allows school districts to obtain exemptions from specific provisions of the Texas Education Code (TEC). Districts of Innovation provide opportunities for greater local control, increased flexibility governing educational programming, and empowerment to innovate and think differently. Palo Pinto ISD is exercising this opportunity to gain more local control and flexibility toward improving the overall educational experience and success for the benefit of our students and community. Careful consideration was given to the selection of the exemptions contained within this plan. All were chosen to provide opportunities for Palo Pinto ISD to personalize and enhance learning for students. This plan is specific to the exemptions as outlined. The district intends to follow the TEC in all other areas. Any revisions or changes to the innovation plan that may arise will be brought before the Local Innovation Committee/District Site-Based Decision Making (SBDM) Committee to explore the request. If the committee determines that a revision is needed, the innovation plan will then be taken back to the Palo Pinto ISD Board of Trustees for approval with the revisions. Under HB 1842, districts may identify certain requirements imposed by the TEC “that inhibit the goals of the plan and from which the district should be exempted on adoption of the plan...”. Therefore, PPISD seeks exemption from the included permissible provisions of the TEC as allowed in the statute and presented in this plan.

Local Advisory Committee for Initial Drafting and Approval

Eric J. Cederstrom, Superintendent
Teresa Mahan, Principal
Iris Burkett, Teacher
Jan Hinkson, Teacher
Natalie Rogers, Teacher
Crystal Bean, Teacher
Danita Erwin, PTO President

Local Advisory Committee for Renewal 1 (June 2022) Drafting and Approval

Wendell Barker, Superintendent
Natalie Rogers, Principal
Sarah Connelly, Teacher
Trina Toalson, Teacher
Glenda Valencia, Teacher
Kelly Korkmas, Parent
Brian Nierman, Parent
Ann Reagan, Community Representative
Melissa Potter, Community Representative
Beth Henderson, Business Representative
Lynette Babcock, Business Representative

Implementation and Duration

The Palo Pinto ISD Local District of Innovation Plan initially began with the 2017-18 school year through the 2021-22 school year. By requirement, the plan and designation may not exceed five years. Accordingly, the plan was/will be amended and/or reapproved, following all requirements for Open Meetings Act, on the following dates for the following terms:

Board Approval Date	Beginning of Plan Term	Ending of Plan Term
June 14, 2022	2022-2023 school year (June 1, 2022)	2026-2027 school year (May 31, 2027)

Further, the plan may be amended at any time by the District SBDM Team with the approval of the Board of Trustees.

PALO PINTO ISD DISTRICT OF INNOVATION TIMELINE

January 18, 2017	Board Resolution regarding District of Innovation
February 15, 2017	Public hearing and appointment of committee composition
February 20, 2017	Committee meets
February 24, 2017	Committee meets
March 3, 2017	Committee confirms draft
March 7, 2017	Committee reports to board on recommendations
March 9, 2017	Post plan to website for minimum of 30 days prior to Board Adoption
April 10, 2017	District of Innovation presented to District SBDM, open to public
April 18, 2017	Board final approval of District of Innovation Paperwork submitted to TEA
March 1, 2022	Amended/proposed plan for renewal posted on district webpage for public comment minimum of 30 days prior to Board approval; Commissioner notification of intent to renew via an e-mail including link to the proposed plan available on a district's website & intended adoption date sent to the commissioner's inbox at commissioner@tea.texas.gov and with a cc to accred@tea.texas.gov .
April 7, 2022	District SBDM committee conducted /will conduct a properly posted public comment meeting to review the plan, allow public comment per OMA guidelines, and approve amended plan by majority vote, as needed, to be presented to the Board.
June 14, 2022	Board approved /will approve plan by 2/3 affirmative vote as written for the next term of renewal; District should ensure board actions/minutes reflect that there are new exemptions, if applicable, in the plan; Superintendent notified /will notify TEA (within 15 days of Board approval) of adoption of renewal via an e-mail providing the adoption date, amendments made (list of TEC sections added or removed), the link to the landing page of the final plan available on a district's website, and attachment of updated checklist (form) of exemptions sent to the commissioner's inbox at commissioner@tea.texas.gov and with a cc to accred@tea.texas.gov . District will notify TASB Policy Service to ensure the DOI plan and policies align.

Resources for renewal:

<https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/districts-of-innovation-amendment-and-renewal.pdf>

<https://www.tasb.org/services/legal-services/tasb-school-law-esource/governance/districts-of-innovation/documents/renewing-a-district-of-innovation-plan.pdf>

CHAPTER 21 - EDUCATORS

PROBATIONARY CONTRACTS

- **Probationary Contract**

Texas Education Code

TEC §21.102: Probationary Contract

Board Policy

DCA (LEGAL)

Innovation:

- Current Law
 - Current law requires experienced teachers new to the district with five years of experience within the last eight years as a public school teacher be employed on the maximum of a one year probationary contract.
- Rationale for Innovation
 - A one year probationary period may not be sufficient time to evaluate the teacher’s effectiveness in the classroom since teacher contract renewal timelines demand that employment decisions be made prior to district receipt of state assessment and other qualifying factors.
- Innovation Strategy
 - For experienced teachers, counselors and nurses new to the district that have been employed as such in public education for at least five of the eight previous years, an eligible probationary employee may be issued a second probationary contract for a total of two possible probationary contracts. All other eligible employees new to the profession or with less than five years of experience will not be affected by this innovation strategy.

CHAPTER 21 - EDUCATORS

APPRAISALS AND INCENTIVES

- Recommended Appraisal Process and Performance Criteria
- Local Role

Texas Education Code

TEC §21.351: Recommended Appraisal Process and Performance Criteria

TEC §21.352: Local Role

TEC §21.353: Appraisal on Basis of Classroom Teaching Performance

TEC §21.354: Appraisal of Certain Administrators

TEC §21.3541: Appraisal and Professional Development System for Principals

Board Policy

DNA

DNB

Innovation:

- Current Law
 - The commissioner shall adopt a recommended appraisal process and criteria on which to appraise the performance of teachers and administrators
- Rationale for Innovation
 - Palo Pinto ISD believes it is essential to maintain flexibility in using a variety of measurements, including goal setting, observations, student growth progress toward learning objectives, and other formative assessments in determining the performance of its educators. By claiming exemption from Sec. 21.351, 23.354, and 23.3541, the district can determine locally the most appropriate appraisal instrument to evaluate its educators.
- Innovation Strategy
 - In order to promote professional development that focuses on individual growth, Palo Pinto ISD needs to maintain local flexibility to build a practice of using a variety of measurements, including goal setting, observations and student growth progress toward learning objectives that can be included in evaluations with teachers and administrators. Regardless of whether any adjustments or changes are made to the state-mandated appraisal system and laws, Palo Pinto ISD believes this issue to be a local decision as opposed to a state mandate.

CHAPTER 21 - EDUCATORS

DUTIES AND BENEFITS

- **Minimum Service Required**

Texas Education Code

TEC §21.401: Teacher Contract Days

Board Policy

DC SERIES

Innovation:

- Current Law
 - Current law located in Chapter 21 defines a teacher contract as a ten-month contract equivalent to 187 days.
- Rationale for Innovation
 - The Texas Education Code 25.081 changed student instruction from days to minutes thus creating opportunities of community defined flexibility on delivering instruction. However, Texas Education Code 21.401 has not been adjusted to change teacher contracts from days to minutes. Flexibility in teacher contract days allows for a mirroring of student, teacher, and community needs. Additionally, the ability to adjust the length of teacher contract days allows for Palo Pinto ISD to be competitive in recruiting and retaining quality employees to best serve the students and community thus creating higher teacher morale. Changes in the number of days required to fulfill the contract will not alter the teacher pay scale. Teacher daily rate will be adjusted to maintain current salary.
- Innovation Strategy
 - This exemption would allow for a locally defined contract length for teachers that would reduce contract days from 187 days without any adverse effects on teacher salaries. This stems from an attempt to provide flexibility to better align teacher service days with the requirement to provide 75,600 minutes of student instruction and still allow for quality professional development. Teachers and staff on 10-month contracts will be required to work a minimum of 7 days beyond the scheduled student calendar instructional days.
 - This strategy will:
 - increase the daily rate the district pays teachers; the daily rate may fluctuate from year to year depending on the calendar, but will not negatively affect their overall salary.
 - enhance teacher recruitment, therefore putting the district on a more level playing field with larger districts.
 - improve teacher morale.
 - provide teachers more opportunities during the year to seek out beneficial staff development that relates to their field.

CHAPTER 21 - EDUCATORS

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- **Teacher Mentors**

Texas Education Code

TEC §21.458: Teacher Mentors

Board Policy

DEAA (LEGAL)

Innovation:

- Current Law
 - Texas Education Code 21.458 requires that teacher mentors have three or more years of experience in the field along with trainings approved by the commissioner.
- Rationale for Innovation & Innovative Strategy
 - PPISD works hard to recruit and maintain appropriate staffing in an incredibly competitive market in which teacher shortages are not uncommon. Exemption from these requirements allows for any teacher in need of mentor assistance or support to be assigned a mentor. In addition, mentors being exempt from the qualifications described in Subsection (b) will increase the pool of teachers from which the district could draw for these targeted mentoring programs.

CHAPTER 25 – ADMISSION, TRANSFER, ATTENDANCE
OPERATION OF SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

• First Day of Instruction/Last Day of School

Texas Education Code

TEC §25.0811: First Day of Instruction
TEC §25.0812: Last Day of School

Board Policy

EB

Innovation:

- Current Law
 - State law prohibits school districts from starting classes before the fourth Monday in August and ending classes before May 15.
- Rationale for Innovation
 - The flexibility in the start/end dates allows Palo Pinto ISD to annually determine, at the local level, what start and end dates best meet the needs of the students and the community. This flexibility allows for: consideration of local needs regarding instructional time per semester with more instructional options, personalized learning, more balanced instructional time per semester, more instructional time prior to the state assessments administered toward the end of the school year, the district calendar to be more efficient following mandatory testing, and more flexible professional development opportunities for our staff. With the required 75,600 minutes instructional requirement, PPISD may be able to finish the school year prior to May 15.
- Innovation Strategy
 - Palo Pinto ISD will have flexibility to determine the first/last day of instruction on an annual basis that best meets the needs of the community.

CHAPTER 25 – ADMISSION, TRANSFER, ATTENDANCE
OPERATION OF SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

• School Day Interruptions

Texas Education Code

Board Policy

TEC §25.083: School Day Interruptions

EC SERIES

Innovation:

- Current Law
 - The board of trustees of each school district shall adopt and strictly enforce a policy limiting interruptions of classes during the school day for nonacademic activities such as announcements and sales promotions. At a minimum, the policy must limit announcements other than emergency announcements to once during the school day.
- Rationale for Innovation and Innovation Strategy
 - Exempting the district from the restrictions in TEC §25.083(a) will allow the district the flexibility to make necessary, albeit nonemergency, announcements throughout the day on an as needed basis. While the district keeps school day announcements to a minimum, there are occasions where announcements are necessary to communicate variations to district policies, procedures, or regulations. For example, the district may need to make nonemergency announcements regarding pick-up/drop-off locations, health and safety protocols, and/or extracurricular/cocurricular activity changes.

CHAPTER 37 – DISCIPLINE/LAW AND ORDER

ALTERNATIVE SETTINGS FOR BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

- **Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator**

Texas Education Code

TEC §37.0012: Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator

Board Policy

FO SERIES

Innovation:

- Current Law
 - Senate Bill 107 amended the Texas Education Code by adding Section 37.0012, which 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.
- Rationale for Innovation and Innovation Strategy
 - The proposal is for the district to abstain from the state requirement that each school have a designated campus behavior coordinator. PPISD’s approach to discipline is becoming more collaborative, with multiple people providing emotional and social support to students, rather than just one person. Exemption from this requirement will allow the option of increasing collaboration in regard to student discipline, as outlined in the PPISD Student Code of Conduct.

CHAPTER 45 – SCHOOL DISTRICT FUNDS

SCHOOL DISTRICT DEPOSITORIES

- **Depository Contract**

Texas Education Code

Subchapter G

TEC §45.205: Term of Contract

**TEC §45.206: Bid or Request for Proposal
Notices; Bid and Proposal Forms**

TEC §45.207: Award of Contract

TEC §45.208: Depository Contract; Bond

TEC §45.209: Investment of District Funds

Board Policy

BDAE

Innovation:

- Current Law
 - TEC Subchapter G §45.205 states (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 three 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 Innovation
 - The exemption from current statutes would allow the district's existing bank contract to be extended beyond the total 8 year allowable contract term if the district determines current contract pricing remains competitive and there is no operational or financial reason to send the district's banking services out to bid. This exemption would lessen the administrative burden related to preparing and reviewing Request for Proposals (RFP) or bid(s) when there are no other banking institutions within district boundaries available to bid on the district's business. The time saved by the superintendent and the board of trustees by not having to deal with this ministerial duty every two years will allow the superintendent and the board more time for studying and planning for student progress, instructional strategies, and innovative options for the district educational goals. In addition, this fosters goodwill in our rural community and is convenient for our employees to have a local banking option in our small town.
- Innovation Strategy
 - The District is seeking exemption from current statutes that would allow the District's existing bank contract to be extended beyond the total 8 year allowable contract term if the district determines current contract pricing remains competitive and there is no operational or financial reason to send

the district's banking services out to bid. 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 §45.206 through §45.209 would be applicable.

CHAPTER 25 – ADMISSION, TRANSFER, ATTENDANCE

ASSIGNMENTS AND TRANSFERS

- **Transfer of Student**

Texas Education Code

TEC §25.036: Transfer of Student

Board Policy

FDA

Innovation:

- Current Law
 - Palo Pinto ISD maintains a transfer policy under FDA LOCAL requiring nonresident students wishing to transfer to file an application each school year. In approving transfer requests, the availability of space and instructional staff and the student’s disciplinary history, academic records, and attendance records are evaluated. Transfer students are expected to follow the attendance requirements, rules, and regulations of the District. Violation of the terms of the agreement may result in a transfer request not being approved the following year.
- Rationale for Innovation
 - §TEC 25.036 has been interpreted to establish the acceptance of transfer as a one-year commitment by the District. Palo Pinto ISD believes that local control should be given to the District based on circumstances, such as in-district student enrollment growth within a school year, disruption of learning by transfer students not adhering to transfer criteria, the morale of staff, etc., and in the best interests of the district, its staff, its students, and its community.
- Innovation Strategy
 - The District is seeking to eliminate the provision of a one-year commitment in accepting transfer applications. The District will reserve the right to revoke/rescind the transfer of a student at any time during the year based on established District criteria. The campus principal will refer requests to rescind transfer students to the superintendent who will make the final decision to retain or rescind a transfer student.

CHAPTER 28 – COURSES OF STUDY/ADVANCEMENT

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS/CURRICULUM

- **Local School Health Advisory Council**

Texas Education Code

TEC §28.004 (d-1): Local School Health Advisory Council

Board Policy

BDF (LEGAL)

Innovation:

- Current Law
 - Texas Education Code 28.004 (d-1) mandates that the SHAC meet at least four times per school year.
- Rationale for Innovation and Innovation Strategy
 - Due to the size of the district and the SHAC leadership that keeps members informed on the health and safety needs of students, two meetings per year will be appropriate. The SHAC will meet at least once in the fall and once in the spring, with an update to the board of trustees during a regular board meeting prior to the end of the current school year.

CHAPTER 37 – DISCIPLINE/LAW AND ORDER

ALTERNATIVE SETTINGS FOR BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

- **Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs (DAEP)**

Texas Education Code

TEC §37.008: Teacher Certification Requirements

Board Policy

FOCA

Innovation:

- Current Law
 - Current TEA Guidelines and Limitations TEC §37.008(7) states that a DAEP employs only teachers who meet all certification requirements established under Subchapter B, Chapter 21.
- Rationale for Innovation
 - The district assigns few students to DAEP each year. All academic coursework/resources are provided by his/her teacher of record for each course, negating the need for an additional certified teacher.
- Innovation Strategy
 - The campus administrator will ensure that non-certified staff/individuals supervising/supporting the DAEP program have the support necessary to properly supervise the students assigned to the program and will lend assistance of teachers with specific certifications as needed.

CHAPTER 37 – DISCIPLINE/LAW AND ORDER

PROTECTION OF BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

- **Unauthorized Persons: Refusal of Entry, Ejection, Identification**

Texas Education Code

TEC §37.105: Unauthorized Persons: Refusal of Entry, Ejection, Identification

Board Policy

GKA SERIES

Innovation:

- Current Law
 - In 2017, the Texas Legislature changed the law on how school administrators can eject unruly guests from school events. This applies to parents and community members, not students. Under the law, the guest must be given, at a minimum, a verbal warning before he or she is ejected. Upon ejection, the guest must also be given notice of how he or she can appeal the ejection.
- Rationale for Innovation and Innovation Strategy
 - Palo Pinto ISD will allow designated staff members the authority to remove parents or visitors whose behavior is deemed inappropriate for a school setting without prior warning or written notice.

FIGURE: 19 TAC §102.1307(d)

Term of Plan: June 1, 2022-May 31, 2027

Plan applies to: Entire District: Palo Pinto Independent School 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:

Chapter 21 – Educators

- §21.351 Recommended Appraisal Process and Performance Criteria

Chapter 25 – Admission, Transfer, and Attendance

- §25.036 Transfer of Student

Chapter 28 – Courses of Study/Advancement

- §28.004 (d-1) Local School Health Advisory Council and Health Education Instruction

Chapter 37 – Discipline/Law and Order

- §37.008 DAEP Teacher Certification Requirements

- §37.105 Unauthorized Persons: Refusal of Entry, Ejection, Identification