



Pecos-Barstow-Toyah

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Mr. Jim Haley, Superintendent

PO Box 869 ~ 1301 S. Eddy ~ Pecos, Texas 79772
432.447.7201 ~ www.pbtisd.esc18.net

Local Innovation Plan 2017-2022

The 84th Legislative Session passed House Bill 1842, allowing Texas public school districts to become Districts of Innovation and thus permitting exemption from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code. On January 19, 2017 the PecosBarstowToyah Board of Trustees passed a Resolution to Adopt a District of Innovation (DOI) Plan to increase local control over District operations and to support innovation and local initiatives. The adoption of this plan seeks to increase the District’s flexibility in order to improve educational outcomes for the benefit of the students, staff, parents and community. Districts of Innovation may be exempted from a number of state statutes such as the following (but not limited to):

- Educator Certification
- Class Size
- Teacher Contracts
- Certain Purchasing and Contract Requirement
- First and Last Day of School
- Length of School Day

Thus giving the district:

- Greater local control as the decision makers over the educational and instructional model for students;
- Increased freedom and flexibility, with accountability, relative to state mandates that govern educational programming
- Empowerment to innovate and think differently.

Term:

The District of Innovation Plan will become effective in March 2017 and will remain in effect for five years, through March 2022, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. Any amendment to the Innovation Plan must follow the same process as the plan development. The District of Innovation Committee would consider any proposed amendment/s. Any amendment/s would require majority approval of the District of Innovation Committee, a majority approval of the District SiteBased Committee, and posting on the district website for 30 days. A 2/3 vote by the Board of Trustees would be required for final approval of any amendment/s.

DOI Advisory Committee

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>
Olivas, Luzema	Teacher	Evans, Lori	Teacher
Redmon, Karen	Teacher	Ontiveros, Art	Principal
Velez, Cindy	Teacher	Corrales, Lisa	Parent
McGraw, LeAnn	InterimPrincipal	McKinney, Analisa	Parent
Fowlkes, Stacie	Teacher	Rayos, Jenny	Parent
Matta, Nikki	Teacher	Torres, Precilla	Parent



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Mondragon, Marty	Teacher	Wimberly, Susan	Parent
Munoz, Horacio	Teacher	Aguilar, Carly	Business
Mitchell, Alicia	Principal	Flores, Belia	Business
AguilarLane, Felicia	Teacher	Galindo, Iris	Business
Chavez, Anabelle	Teacher	Apolinar, Ana	Business
Salgado, Omar	Principal	Strickling, Lee Ann	Community
Lara, Lucy	Teacher	Fields, Cynthia	ExOficio Member
Rios, Art	Teacher	Haley, Jim	Superintendent
Porras, Alma	Counselor	Richard, Teresa	Curriculum/IT Director
Ketchum, Brittina	Teacher		

Areas of Innovation

1. First and Last Day of School (EB Legal, Local) (TEC §25.0811) –

Under current Texas state law, “a school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August” (TEC 25.0811).

Removing the constraints of the current uniform start date PBT ISD would be able to determine locally and on an annual basis what is best for our community. Having the ability to modify the start date provides for increased local control of the instructional calendar to balance semester days; align classes to college courses, advanced placement exams, and state assessment timelines; and be more responsive to community needs. PBT ISD will not develop a calendar that begins before the 3rd Monday of August.

2. Campus Behavior Coordinator (FO Legal, Local) (TEC 37.0012) –

Under current Texas state law “The person designated as the CBC may be the principal of the campus or any other campus administrator selected by the principal.

Implementation of TEC 37.0012 limits the ability of children to develop positive relationships with a variety of adults who have a vested interest in their mental and emotional development and wellness. Current law restricts the ability of campus administrators and educators to focus on each student’s needs through a collaborative disciplinary approach. A collaborative disciplinary approach will be developed at the campus level and may include: educators, counselors, and administrators. The Assistant Principal/Administrator most closely related to the disciplinary situation will contact the responsible adult of student(s) involved. Each campus will undergo a development plan process that collaboratively creates a chain of communication that best meets the needs of the campus.

3. Educator Certification (DK Legal) (DK Exhibit) (DBA Legal) (DBA Local) (TEC 21.002) (TEC 21.003) –

Under Current Texas state 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.



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TEC 21.002 states that “a school district shall employ each classroom teacher, principal, librarian, nurse, or school counselor under either a probationary, continuing, or term contract.” TEC 21.003 states that “a person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern, or teacher trainee, librarian, educational aide, administrator, educational diagnostician, or school counselor by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued as provided by Subchapter b.”

In order to best serve the students of PBT ISD, decisions on certification will be handled locally.

- a. The principal may submit to the superintendent a request to allow a teacher to teach subject(s) out of their certified field. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials the teacher possesses 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. The employee will be at will.
- c. This plan will provide more flexibility in our scheduling and more options for our students in class offerings.

4. Teacher Contracts (DCA Legal) (TEC §21.401, §21.002, §21.102)

A: Length of Contract Summary of TEC (§21.401): Current education law in Chapter 21 defines a teacher contract as a 10 month contract equivalent to 187 days.

In order to best serve students, PBT ISD will reduce teacher contract days from 187 to a decreased length based on the school board adopted calendar each year with no effect on teacher salaries. A set number of teacher professional development days taken during the summer will be used as “exchange days” for days off set on the adopted calendar. This would better align the teacher days to 75, 600 minutes required of students.

- Will increase professional development opportunities for staff
- Will enhance teacher recruitment
- Will improve teacher morale

B: Probationary Contracts (DCA Legal) (TEC §21.002, §21.102): Under current Texas state law “the probationary period may not exceed one year for a person who has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment by the district.”

A one year probationary period is not a sufficient amount of time to evaluate the teacher’s effectiveness in the classroom. Currently, contracts for employees occur in March - April which demands that employment decisions must be made with very little time for evaluating teacher effectiveness and prior to state assessment results.

For experienced administrators, teachers, counselors, librarians, or nurses new to the district that have been employed as an educator in public education for at least five of the eight previous years, a probationary contract may be issued for up to two/three years from the first day of employment.



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5. Planning and Preparation Time (TEC 21.404) - Texas Education Code dictates that each classroom teacher is entitled to at least 450 minutes within each two-week period for instructional preparation, including parent-teacher conferences, evaluating student's work, and planning. A planning and preparation period under this section may not be less than 45 minutes within the instructional day.

As a district we need to have the flexibility in developing teacher schedules and planning time. In order to meet the needs of our students, some teachers may have the need to have multiple preparation periods which adds up to a minimum of 45 minutes per day and 450 minutes per two-weeks. This flexibility is especially convenient for our staff who commute to multiple campuses. Some weeks, the calendar only allows for 4 day weeks, thus the teacher would need 360 minutes over the 2 week period instead of the mandated 450 minutes.

6. Mentor Teachers (DEAA Legal) (TEC 21.458) –

Under current Texas state law “Each school district may assign a mentor teacher to each classroom teacher who has less than two years of teaching experience in the subject or grade level to which the teacher is assigned.” Also under current Texas state law the mentor “qualifications must require that to serve as a mentor a teacher must: (1) complete a research based mentor and induction training program approved by the commissioner; (2) complete a mentor training program provided by the district; and (3) have at least three complete years of teaching experience with a superior record of assisting students, as a whole, in achieving improvement in student performance.”

This provision states that the district may only assign a mentor to a teacher with less than two years of teaching experience, despite the fact that a teacher at any level of experience may benefit from a mentormentee relationship. The District needs the flexibility to assign mentors to more experienced teachers in need of assistance. The statute also sets eligibility requirements for mentor teachers, which limits the available pool of mentor teachers.

In order to better serve the needs of the district, PBT ISD will exercise local discretion in assigning a mentor that excels in areas that are targeted for improvement or innovation, such as project based learning. In addition, mentors would be exempt from the qualifications described in Subsection (b), thus increasing the pool of teachers from which the district could draw for these targeted mentoring programs. Teachers assigned to serve as mentors would be selected based on a variety of factors, including experience, knowledge, and areas of instruction targeted for improvement or innovation.

7. Teacher and Principal Evaluation (DNA Legal, Local) (TEC §21.203, §21.352, §21.354, §21.3541) –

The state of Texas has issued a new teacher appraisal system called the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS) as well as a new principal evaluation system called the Texas Principal Evaluation and Support System (T-PESS). Under current law, “the employment policies adopted by a board of trustees must require a written evaluation of each teacher at annual or more frequent intervals” (TEC §21.203).

The district would have the option to develop a local instrument and/or process to evaluate teachers and principals which meets the needs and goals of Van Alstyne ISD. This committee would also have the authority to determine the frequency of both teacher and principal evaluations. After development of the local instrument, the Board of Trustees would approve the use of the local instrument in lieu of the instrument directed by the Texas Education Agency.