



Pettus Independent School District District of Innovation Plan Timeline

Board Resolution to Consider Designation as District of Innovation
March 27, 2017

Public Hearing to Appoint District of Innovation (DoI) Committee
April 3, 2017

DoI Planning Committee Meetings

April 11, 2017

April 18, 2017

April 25, 2017

Proposed Plan Posted on District Website

May 1, 2017

School Board notifies Texas Education Commissioner of Intent to Adopt Plan

May 30, 2017

**Public Hearing to Vote on DoI Plan by Planning Committee;
DoI Plan Presented to the Pettus ISD Board of Trustees;
School Board votes to Approve the Final DoI Plan**

June 6, 2017

**Final Approval by Board of Trustees District of Innovation Plan
sent to Texas Education Commissioner**

July 24, 2017



Mission Statement

The mission of the Pettus Independent School District is to assure that all students acquire knowledge and develop the skills and work habits to enable them to become productive members of society. PISD believes that educating its children to be productive citizens in an ever changing society necessitates an excellent educational system characterized by quality, equity, and accountability.

District of Innovation Planning Committee Members

Administrators

Jaime Velasco	Superintendent
Karla Cypert	Elementary Principal
Rickey De Leon	Secondary Principal
Carl Straube	District Assistant Principal

Parent Representatives

Rachell Aguirre	Greg Huskey
Kathy Bull	Victoria Harris
Annie Carrillo	Shannon Hodge
Jodi DeForest	Jeremy Morris
Julie Foley	Tina Salinas
Shannon Grayson	

Instructional Staff

Sheila Custer	Secondary Teacher
Donna Monson-Diaz	Elementary Teacher

Support Staff

Christina Escamilla	Elementary Paraprofessional
Janna Hall	District Librarian
Melinda Leal	Elementary Secretary
Donna Steward	Secondary ACE Coordinator

Student

John Hodge

The Pettus ISD Board of Trustees appointed members of the District Site-Based Committee to serve in writing the District of Innovation Plan. The board also extended the invitation to any parent, student, community member, or district employee who wished to serve on the committee on April 3, 2017 at a Public Meeting / Special Board Meeting.



Introduction

The 84th Legislature passed House Bill (HB) 1842, which gives traditional independent school districts most of the flexibilities available to the state's open enrollment charter schools. House Bill (HB) 1842 provides Pettus ISD an opportunity to modify state requirements at the local level in order to better meet the needs of our student population and prepare them for success and lifelong learning.

Pettus ISD took the first step in exploring this opportunity when the PISD Board of Trustees approved a resolution initiating the process on March 27, 2017. The Board then held a public hearing to consider whether the district should develop an innovation plan, at which time the Board decided to move forward in the process. A committee was appointed to develop an innovation plan, and the plan was then created. The innovation plan was posted online on May 1, 2017 for at least 30 days. The committee approved the plan on June 6, 2017 during a public hearing. The Pettus ISD Board of Trustees approved the plan on June 6, 2017 during a special called meeting for 5 years. The term of the plan is from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2022.

Innovations

Pettus ISD, in conjunction with the District of Innovation Planning Committee, proposes the following flexibilities with the Texas Education Code to provide the best educational opportunities for students at PISD.

1. First Day of Instruction

Exemption from Statutory Citation:

Texas Education Code (TEC) §25.0811 (First Day of Instruction)

Manner in which law inhibits Board Goals:

TEC §25.0811 states that a school district may not begin student instruction before the 4th Monday of August. For many years, this was the rule. However, districts had the option of applying for a waiver to start earlier, even as early as the 2nd Monday in August.

This law restricts flexibility in the design of annual calendars to fit the needs of the school district and community.

Proposal: PISD will be exempt from the first day of instruction requirements listed in TEC §25.0811. PISD will develop and seek board approval of a localized school calendar which best



meets the needs of the Pettus Independent School District's students, parents, staff, and community by incorporating the flexibility to begin instruction earlier in August. An earlier start date allows a better balance between semesters and more instructional days prior to mandatory testing. The PISD calendar development process will be localized with the District Site-Based Decision Making Committee assisting the District of Innovation Committee in the development of two or more school year calendars. The calendars will then be submitted to the district staff for a vote and the calendar with the most votes will be presented to the Board of Trustees for their review and consideration for approval. Final calendar approval, including when the PISD school starts, will be made by the locally elected PISD Board of Trustees.

2. Teacher Certification Requirements

Exemption from Statutory Citation:

- Texas Education Code (TEC) §21.003(a)
- Texas Education Code (TEC) §21.053(b)

Manner in which law inhibits Board Goals:

TEC §21.003(a) states that a person may not be employed as a teacher or other certified position unless the person holds an appropriate certificate.

TEC §21.053(b) states that an educator may not be paid for teaching or work done before the issuance of a valid certificate.

These laws restrict flexibility in the in our scheduling, and provide more options for our students in class offerings leading to industry recognized certifications.

Proposal: PISD will maintain its current expectations for employee certification and will make every attempt to hire individuals with appropriate State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC) for the position in question. In the case that an appropriately certified teacher cannot be found, the district will have the flexibility to hire individuals who are knowledgeable in the area and equipped to effectively perform the duties of the position in question.

Pettus ISD would like the ability to locally certify teachers in area of high demand to better meet the educational needs of our students. These areas would include, but are not limited to, Career and Technology Education (CTE) and languages other than English. Special Education teachers will continue to be required to hold a standard teaching certificate. Teachers with industry certifications and native speakers with qualified experience could be eligible to teach a course through a local teaching certification. Additionally, Pettus ISD will notify parents if a locally certified teacher is employed for their child's class.



This process will allow more flexibility in our scheduling, and provide more options for our students in course offerings leading to industry-recognized certifications.

3. Probationary Contracts

Exemption from Statutory Citation:

Texas Education Code (TEC) §21.102(b)

Manner in which law inhibits Board Goals:

TEC §21.102(b) states that a probationary contract 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 with the district.

Due to the unique nature of Pettus ISD, including our processes and initiatives, this period of time may not be sufficient to properly evaluate the teacher's instructional effectiveness in the classroom since teacher contract timelines demand that employment decisions must be made prior to the availability of end-of-year classroom and student performance data.

Proposal: Upon exemption from Texas Education Code (TEC) §21.102(b), all new, experienced contract certified employees to Pettus ISD subject to TEC Chapter 21, will be subject to up to a two year probationary period set out in TEC §21.102(c), in order to allow more time for the district to fairly and thoroughly assess an employee's performance. Partial years will not count toward the full year requirement. The term of employment will be based on performance.

Probationary contracts for first-year teachers will remain at up to a three-year probationary period with term of employment based on performance.

With the challenges that our district faces, this allows those teachers more time to develop professionally before a long-term decision on their employment is made.

4. Minimum Service Required

Exemption from Statutory Citation:

Texas Education Code (TEC) §21.401(a)

Texas Education Code (TEC) §21.401(b)

Manner in which law inhibits Board Goals:

TEC §21.401(a) states that a contract between a school district and an educator must be for a minimum of 10 months' service.



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TEC §21.401(b) states that an educator employed under a 10-month contract must provide a minimum of 187 days of service.

Proposal: Pettus ISD seeks the freedom to reduce the number of teacher contract days from 187 days to 185 days without an anticipated reduction in salary during the 5-year length of the district of innovation plan. The move will better align teacher contracts to the 75,600 minutes of instruction requirements for our students.

The teachers will fulfill the required 75,600 minutes of instruction and any additional professional development days as determined locally by the PISD Board of Trustees. This strategy will provide opportunities for teachers to seek out beneficial content area staff development during summer months and may improve teacher morale.

DISTRICT OF INNOVATION SUMMARY

Exemptions are NOT locked in for five years. They can be evaluated each year and changes made with Pettus ISD Board of Trustees approval.