



Peaster Independent School District

Local Innovation Plan 2022-2027

INTRODUCTION

House Bill (HB) 1842, passed during the 84th Legislative Session, permits Texas public school districts to become Districts of Innovation and to obtain exemption from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code. On August 30, 2022, the Peaster Independent School District's Board of Trustees ("Board") passed a Resolution to Adopt a District of Innovation 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 students and the community.

Potential benefits of becoming a District of Innovation include:

- **Flexibility:** Districts will have the flexibility to implement practices that support local needs, including exemptions from certain mandates such as the uniform school start date and required minutes of instruction.
- **Local control:** Districts decide which flexibilities best suit their local needs.
- **Autonomy:** Districts must submit a District of Innovation Plan to the commissioner of education, but approval is not required.

On August 30, 2022, the Board appointed a District of Innovation Committee ("Committee") comprised of diverse leaders representing a cross-section of the District's stakeholders including teachers, principals, parents, community members, and administrators. The Committee met on October 31, 2022 to discuss and draft the Local Innovation Plan ("Plan").

District of Innovation Committee Members:

<i>Lance Johnson</i>	<i>Superintendent</i>
<i>Sheri Payne</i>	<i>Executive Assistant, PEIMS Coordinator, and Human Resources</i>
<i>Stephanie McElroy</i>	<i>Director of Special Services</i>
<i>Becky Glenn</i>	<i>Principal, Peaster Elementary School</i>
<i>Steven Valkenaar</i>	<i>Principal, Peaster Junior High School</i>
<i>Doug McCollough</i>	<i>Principal, Peaster High School</i>
<i>Rebecca Williams</i>	<i>Elementary Teacher</i>
<i>Jackie Pilgrim</i>	<i>Elementary Teacher</i>
<i>Amanda McDaniel</i>	<i>JH Teacher</i>
<i>Liz Farmer</i>	<i>JH Teacher</i>
<i>Kristin Aleksick</i>	<i>HS Teacher</i>
<i>Jesse Martinez</i>	<i>HS Teacher</i>
<i>Jennifer Davic</i>	<i>Non-Teaching Member</i>
<i>David Hart</i>	<i>Business Owner</i>
<i>Brandi Baldwin</i>	<i>Community Member</i>
<i>Tracey Cain</i>	<i>Parent</i>
<i>Traci Hamlin</i>	<i>Parent</i>

TERM

The term of the Plan is for five years, beginning December 1, 2022, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. If, within the term of this Plan, other

areas of operations are to be considered for flexibility as part of HB 1842, the Board will appoint a new committee to consider and propose additional exemptions in the form of an amendment to the Plan. Any amendment adopted by the Board will not extend the term of this Plan. The District may not implement two separate plans at any one time.

District Mission/Vision/Commitments/Goals

The Local Innovation Plan is guided by and aligned with the Board of Trustee’s Mission, Vision, Commitments, and Goals:

District Vision

Growing Our Tradition of Excellence

District Mission

Peaster ISD prepares students for success in the 21st century by engaging them in rigorous and relevant learning opportunities that promote excellence. Our expectation is that all students and staff will achieve their potential and become independent lifelong learners.

District Commitments:

1. We are committed to learning daily, personal responsibility, leadership, growth and service for all students and staff.
2. We are committed to providing a safe, secure student-centered environment that upholds tradition, instills respect and builds character.
3. We are committed to maintaining excellence in a growing community grounded in respect, unity, compassion, faith and family.

PEASTER ISD GOALS

GOAL 1:

PEASTER ISD WILL PROVIDE AN ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH STUDENTS ENGAGE IN MEANINGFUL LEARNING.

GOAL 2:

PEASTER ISD WILL EXHIBIT A CULTURE WHERE POSITIVE CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT IS VALUED WITHIN OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY.

GOAL 3:

PEASTER ISD WILL BE A COMMUNITY WHERE POSITIVE, RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS ARE VALUED.

Timeline of Events

August 30: Board holds public hearing to discuss possibility of pursuing District of Innovation Plan
Board takes action to pursue District of Innovation Plan
Board approves District of Innovation Committee members

September 7: District of Innovation Committee develops draft plan

October 31: District Advisory Committee votes and approves the final plan in a public meeting.

November 1: Innovation plan posted for public view/Board notifies Commissioner of intent to vote on Plan

December 1: Board votes on District of Innovation plan

December 2: District post plan to website

Areas of Exemption and Innovation

With regard to each area of innovation, the District declares exemption from the listed statutory provisions, as well as any implementing rules or regulations promulgated pursuant to those statutory provisions by any state agency or entity, including but not limited to the Commissioner of Education, Texas Education Agency, State Board for Educator Certification, and State Board of Education:

- Uniform School Start Date - First Day of Instruction
- Minimum Minutes of Instruction
- Educator Certification Requirement
- Probationary Contracts
- Teacher and Administrator Appraisal System
- Student/Teacher Ratios and Class Size
- District-Level Planning and Decision-Making
- Campus-Level Planning and Decision Making
- Teacher Mentors
- Campus Behavior Coordinator Designation
- Out-of-School Suspension for Students Below Grade 3
- Removal of Unwanted Visitors
- Transfer Students
- Bank Depositories
- Retire/Rehire Teacher
- Minimum Attendance for Class Credit or Final Grade
- Teacher Contract Days

- Local School Health Advisory Committee
- Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs
- Exemptions From Future TEC Requirements

Uniform School Start Date - First Day of Instruction - Texas Education Code §25.0811

Current Requirements: *First Day of Instruction* – A school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August, no exceptions.

Proposed Flexibility: *Flexible Calendar* –Peaster ISD will waive the fourth Monday of August start date in an effort to create greater flexibility in the school calendar which will enable the district to be more responsive to students needs, and professional development needs, by balancing the amount of instructional time in the semesters, allowing teachers to better pace and deliver instruction, and providing training as needed throughout the school year. Local Guidelines: The District Education Improvement Committee will provide input into the development of the school calendar, and the recommended school calendar is subject to Board approval.

Minimum Minutes of Instruction - Texas Education Code §25.081, §25.082

Current Requirement: House Bill (HB) 2610, passed by the 84th Texas Legislature, amends the Texas Education Code (TEC) §25.081, by striking language requiring 180 days of instruction and replacing with new language requiring districts and charter schools to provide at least 75,600 minutes of instruction annually and 420 minutes of instruction daily. The bill allows school districts and charter schools to add minutes as necessary to compensate for minutes of instruction lost due to school closures caused by disaster, flood, extreme weather conditions, fuel curtailment, or another calamity. However, it eliminated any options to pursue state waivers to reduce the minimum number of minutes per day to allow flexibility to pursue early releases for parent–teacher conferences, teacher professional development or innovative scheduling due to events.

TEC § 25.082 requires that each school day be at least 7 hours long (including intermissions and recess).

Proposed Flexibility: The flexibility to adjust minutes of instruction will assist with personalizing learning to better meet individual student needs, staff needs, and provide the district fluidity when facing unforeseen circumstances. In the event of an act of God, such as inclement weather, or a national/state/local security issue that prevents PISD from holding class, the district seeks flexibility under this section to make decisions that are best for the staff, students, parents, and the community. The District seeks relief from this section in order to provide staff development before the start of instruction, as well as additional days throughout the school year. These non-instructional days may be purposefully placed throughout the calendar to allow teachers to plan

instruction based on student instructional data in addition to engaging in relevant, targeted professional development. The District seeks additional flexibility to schedule early release days in the calendar in order to provide for student and District needs, which may include, but not limited to, additional professional development, unique instructional arrangements, teacher collaboration, teacher/parent conferences, releasing prior to a holiday and other special occasions, or other school related activities.

Educator Certification Requirement - Texas Education Code §TEC 21.044, §21.003

Current Requirements: 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 certification or permit issued by the appropriate state agency.

Proposed Flexibility:

a. The District will maintain its current expectations for employee certification. The District will make every attempt to hire individuals with appropriate certification for the position in question; however, where that is not reasonably possible, 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.

b. The campus principal may submit to the Superintendent a request for local certification that will allow an already certified teacher, or an individual who holds a current bachelors degree, to teach a course or grade level for which he/she is not certified. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials or life experience the teacher possesses that would qualify this individual to teach the proposed subject.

c. An individual with experience and appropriate certifications and/or licensure in the content of an elective course could be eligible to teach a vocational skill or elective course through a local teaching certificate. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials or life experience the teacher possesses that would qualify this individual to teach the proposed subject. Examples: an experienced homebuilder teaching a building trades course, a licensed corrections officer teaching a criminal justice course, or a retired CPA teaching an entry level accounting course.

d. Whenever possible, instructional planning for the uncertified teacher's course will be created in partnership with certified teachers in the same field. Uncertified teachers will be provided teacher mentoring, and may be subject to increased observations and feedback, professional development or instructional resources, or other supports.

e. Teacher certification waiver requests, state permit applications, or other paperwork will not be submitted to the Texas Education Agency. The District will ensure that all individuals assigned to teach have the knowledge and resources necessary to be successful. The Superintendent will

notify the board during August Board meeting or upon hiring each school year of those in an alternative certification program or not in compliance with TEC 21.053

Probationary Contracts - Texas Education Code §21.102b

Current Requirements: Under current guidelines, probationary periods for newly hired teachers who have been in public education for at least five of the previous eight years cannot exceed one year. This limited period is insufficient in some cases to fully determine the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom.

Proposed Flexibility: Relief from Texas Education Code 21.102 will permit the District the option to issue a probationary contract for a period of up to three years for experienced teachers, counselors or nurses newly hired in PISD. This will allow PISD to better evaluate a teacher's effectiveness.

Teacher and Administrator Appraisal System - Texas Education Code §21.352, §21.354

Current Requirements: The state of Texas has used the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) teacher appraisal system since 1997. The state issued a new teacher and principal appraisal system in 2016-2017, the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS) and the Texas Principal Evaluation and Support System (T-PESS).

Proposed Flexibility: A committee of administrators and teachers would have the option to develop a principal and a teacher evaluation system that would be a combination of PDAS, T-TESS, T-PESS and other best practices to develop a local instrument and/or process that fits the needs and goals of PISD.

PISD will utilize a locally developed teacher and principal evaluation tool.

- a. This instrument will be developed with input from central administration, campus administration, and teachers. It will use staff input, PDAS, T-TESS, T-PESS, and any other relevant best practice.
- b. Peaster ISD will follow DNA (LOCAL) guidelines for annual or less than annual evaluation requirements, exceptions & eligibility, frequency, and annual review process.
- c. Every teacher will receive a minimum 5 walk-throughs per year.
- d. Principals will continue to be evaluated annually on a locally developed plan.
- e. These locally developed plans should reflect the strengths, areas of concern, and goals for PISD.

Student/Teacher Ratios and Class Size Texas Education Code 25.112, 25.113, Sec. 25.112 (a)

Current Requirements: Except as otherwise authorized by this section, a school district may not enroll more than 22 students in a kindergarten, first, second, third, or fourth grade class
Innovation

Proposed Flexibility: As a fast-growth district, Peaster ISD carefully analyzes growth predictions to make responsible staffing decisions to support engaging instruction in the classroom.

PISD recognizes the value of reasonable class sizes in elementary grade levels and will continue with the priority to maintain a student-to-teacher ratio of 20:1 per Kindergarten-4th grade homeroom class. Local considerations will include timing of enrollment of new students, consistency of instruction for students in the grade level, availability of high-quality applicants, and availability of space and resources.

When a class exceeds the 22:1 limit, the Texas Education Code requires districts to obtain board approval and apply for a waiver through the Texas Education Agency. This flexibility will eliminate the requirement of the waiver process and support student success through allowing local decisions regarding the division of classes, disrupted instruction, and/or finding quality applicants.

District-Level Planning and Decision-Making Texas Education Code §11.252

Current Requirements: Texas Education Code § 11.252 DISTRICT-LEVEL PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING. (a) Each school district shall have a district improvement plan that is developed, evaluated, and revised annually, in accordance with district policy, by the superintendent with the assistance of the district-level committee established under Section 11.251. The purpose of the district improvement plan is to guide district and campus staff in the improvement of student performance for all student groups in order to attain state standards in respect to the achievement indicators adopted under Sections 39.053(c)(1)-(4). The district improvement plan must include provisions for: (1) a comprehensive needs assessment addressing district student performance on the achievement indicators, and other appropriate measures of performance, that are disaggregated by all student groups served by the district, including categories of ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sex, and populations served by special programs, including students in special education programs under Subchapter A, Chapter 29; (2) measurable district performance objectives for all appropriate achievement indicators for all student populations, including students in special education programs under Subchapter A, Chapter 29, and other measures of student performance that may be identified through the comprehensive needs assessment; (3) strategies for improvement of student performance that include: (A) instructional methods for addressing the needs of student groups not achieving their full potential; (B) methods for addressing the needs of students for special programs, including: (i) suicide prevention programs, in accordance with Subchapter O-1, Chapter 161, Health and Safety Code, which includes a parental or guardian notification procedure; (ii) conflict resolution programs; (iii) violence prevention programs; and (iv) dyslexia treatment

programs; (C) dropout reduction; (D) integration of technology in instructional and administrative programs; (E) discipline management; (F) staff development for professional staff of the district; (G) career education to assist students in developing the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for a broad range of career opportunities; and (H) accelerated education; (4) strategies for providing to middle school, junior high school, and high school students, those students' teachers and school counselors, and those students' parents information about: (A) higher education admissions and financial aid opportunities; (B) the TEXAS grant program and the Teach for Texas grant program established under Chapter 56; (C) the need for students to make informed curriculum choices to be prepared for success beyond high school; and (D) sources of information on higher education admissions and financial aid; (5) resources needed to implement identified strategies; (6) staff responsible for ensuring the accomplishment of each strategy; (7) timelines for ongoing monitoring of the implementation of each improvement strategy; (8) formative evaluation criteria for determining periodically whether strategies are resulting in intended improvement of student performance; and (9) the policy under Section 38.0041 addressing sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children. (b) A district's plan for the improvement of student performance is not filed with the agency, but the district must make the plan available to the agency on request. (c) In a district that has only one campus, the district- and campus-level committees may be one committee and the district and campus plans may be one plan. (d) At least every two years, each district shall evaluate the effectiveness of the district's decision making and planning policies, procedures, and staff development activities related to district- and campus-level decision-making and planning to ensure that they are effectively structured to positively impact student performance. (d-1) Expired. (e) The district-level committee established under Section 11.251 shall hold at least one public meeting per year. The required meeting shall be held after receipt of the annual district performance report from the agency for the purpose of discussing the performance of the district and the district performance objectives. District policy and procedures must be established to ensure that systematic communications measures are in place to periodically obtain broad-based community, parent, and staff input and to provide information to those persons regarding the recommendations of the district-level committee. This section does not create a new cause of action or require collective bargaining. (f) A superintendent shall regularly consult the district-level committee in the planning, operation, supervision, and evaluation of the district educational program.

Proposed Flexibility: Site-based decision-making has existed in Texas for over 30 years. The original intent of classroom teachers making informed decisions has been replaced with a list of compliance measures that have removed meaning and relevance from this district decision-making process. The requirements in content and format of the district improvement plan have shifted an otherwise important planning process into a bureaucratic process that detracts from the importance of thoughtful planning and implementation.

PISD has a strong history of involving teachers, administrators, parents, community members and students in the decision-making process. Under the Local Innovation Plan, the prescriptive list of requirements in the district improvement plan will be replaced by meaningful and relevant areas identified for improvement, and/or maintenance, as they pertain to the districts

vision, mission, commitments, and goals. Those items listed in TEC 11.251 detailing the selection of representatives for the District Improvement Committee will continue to be implemented as available. But, in the event the district cannot find willing committee members required by TEC 11.251, the district will maintain flexibility to engage in meaningful collaboration with stakeholders that are available. Those items listed in TEC 11.252 of a compliance nature will no longer be implemented and be replaced by relevant strategic plan components.

Campus-Level Planning and Decision-Making Texas Education Code §11.253

Current Requirements: Texas Education Code §11.253 CAMPUS PLANNING AND SITE-BASED DECISION-MAKING. (a) Each school district shall maintain current policies and procedures to ensure that effective planning and site-based decision-making occur at each campus to direct and support the improvement of student performance for all students. (b) Each district's policy and procedures shall establish campus-level planning and decision making committees as provided for through the procedures provided by Sections 11.251(b)-(e). (c) Each school year, the principal of each school campus, with the assistance of the campus level committee, shall develop, review, and revise the campus improvement plan for the purpose of improving student performance for all student populations, including students in special education programs under Subchapter A, Chapter 29, with respect to the achievement indicators adopted under Sections 39.053(c)(1)-(4) and any other appropriate performance measures for special needs populations. (d) Each campus improvement plan must: (1) assess the academic achievement for each student in the school using the achievement indicator system as described by Section 39.053; (2) set the campus performance objectives based on the achievement indicator system, including objectives for special needs populations, including students in special education programs under Subchapter A, Chapter 29; (3) identify how the campus goals will be met for each student; (4) determine the resources needed to implement the plan; (5) identify staff needed to implement the plan; (6) set timelines for reaching the goals; (7) measure progress toward the performance objectives periodically to ensure that the plan is resulting in academic improvement; (8) include goals and methods for violence prevention and intervention on campus; (9) provide for a program to encourage parental involvement at the campus; and (10) if the campus is an elementary, middle, or junior high school, set goals and objectives for the coordinated health program at the campus based on: (A) student fitness assessment data, including any data from research-based assessments such as the school health index assessment and planning tool created by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; (B) student academic performance data; (C) student attendance rates; (D) the percentage of students who are educationally disadvantaged; (E) the use and success of any method to ensure that students participate in moderate to vigorous physical activity as required by Section 28.002(l); and (F) any other indicator recommended by the local school health advisory council. (e) In accordance with the administrative procedures established under Section 11.251(b), the campus-level committee shall be involved in decisions in the areas of planning, budgeting, curriculum, staffing patterns, staff development, and school

organization. The campus-level committee must approve the portions of the campus plan addressing campus staff development needs. (f) This section does not create a new cause of action or require collective bargaining. (g) Each campus-level committee shall hold at least one public meeting per year. The required meeting shall be held after receipt of the annual campus rating from the agency to discuss the performance of the campus and the campus performance objectives. District policy and campus procedures must be established to ensure that systematic communications measures are in place to periodically obtain broad-based community, parent, and staff input, and to provide information to those persons regarding the recommendations of the campus-level committees. (h) A principal shall regularly consult the campus-level committee in the planning, operation, supervision, and evaluation of the campus educational program.

Proposed Flexibility: The original intent of campus site-based decision-making has been replaced with a list of compliance measures that have removed meaning and relevance from this campus decision-making process. The requirements in content and format of the Campus Improvement Plan have shifted an otherwise important planning process into a bureaucratic process that detracts from the importance of thoughtful planning and implementation.

PISD has a strong history of involving teachers, administrators, parents, community members and students in the decision-making process. Under the Local Innovation Plan, the prescriptive list of requirements in the campus improvement plan will be replaced by meaningful and relevant areas identified for improvement, and/or maintenance, as they pertain to the districts vision, mission, commitments, and goals. Those items listed in Section 11.251 detailing the selection of representatives for the Campus Improvement Committee will continue to be implemented as available. However, in the event the campus cannot find willing committee members required by TEC 11.251, the district will maintain flexibility to engage in meaningful collaboration with stakeholders that are available. Those items listed in Section 11.253 that are of a compliance nature will no longer be implemented and be replaced by relevant campus strategic plan components.

Professional Development / Mentor Teachers TEC §21.451; TEC §21.458

Current Requirements:

TEC §21.451 prescribes staff development requirements for educators. These requirements impede the District's ability to provide timely professional development to employees based on newly emerging issues, data, and student needs.

TEC §21.458 sets eligibility requirements for teacher mentors and mentees. 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 mentor-mentee 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.

Proposed Flexibility: The District will exercise local discretion in determining the areas of need, content, duration, and frequency for professional development for its instructional and non-instructional staff. The District will exercise local discretion in assigning teachers to serve as mentors based on a variety of factors, including experience, knowledge, and areas of instruction targeted for improvement or innovation.

Behavior Coordinator Exemption - Texas Education Code § 37.0012

Current Requirements: State law requires districts to name one individual per campus to serve as a behavior coordinator. This requirement can create inefficiencies and limit the effectiveness of our administrators. The burden of placing this on one person is not sustainable, and the possible delays it creates for staff, students, and families should be avoided.

Proposed Flexibility: Local Guidelines and Innovations Strategies: Peaster ISD is seeking a more collaborative approach to behavior management where the principal may delegate the duties to campus administrator(s) to best serve the needs of students and families.

Removal of Unwanted Visitors Texas Education Code §37.105

Current Requirements: For unruly guests at school functions or events, a school district must first give a 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. Texas Education Code §37.105 A school administrator, school resource officer, or school district peace officer of a school district may refuse to allow a person to enter on or may eject a person from property under the district's control if the person refuses to leave peaceably on request and the person poses a substantial risk of harm to any person; or the person behaves in a manner that is inappropriate for a school setting. Prior to refusing entry or ejecting any person, the administrator, resource officer, or peace officer must issue a verbal warning to the person that the person's behavior is inappropriate and may result in the person's refusal of entry or ejection and the person persists in that behavior. In addition, at the time a person is refused entry or rejected, the district must provide written notice regarding the appeal process.

Proposed Flexibility: PISD will make all reasonable attempts to diffuse situations in the case of unruly guests, at school and District functions and events; however, in the case of situations where immediate action must be taken, the District would allow designated staff members the authority to remove an attendee whose behavior is deemed inappropriate without warning or written notice regarding the appeal process.

Transfer Students Full Year Requirement- Texas Education Code 25.036

Current Requirements: (a) Any child, other than a high school graduate, who is younger than 21 years of age and eligible for enrollment on September 1 of any school year may transfer annually from the child's school district of residence to another district in the state if both the receiving district and the applicant parent or guardian or person having lawful control of the child jointly approve and timely agree in writing to the transfer.

(b) A transfer agreement under this section shall be filed and preserved as receiving district record for audit purposes of the agency.

Proposed Flexibility: The District shall be exempt from state law requiring a transfer to be for a one-year period. Therefore, the Superintendent and Campus Administration may revoke a student's transfer at any time during a school year if the student does not maintain acceptable levels of attendance, academic achievement, and compliance with the District's Student Code of Conduct as defined in FDA (LOCAL). In addition, students who have been accepted as a transfer student may have such status revoked by the Superintendent and Campus Administration at any time, including when the student has been assigned discipline consequences of suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion.

School District Depository Contracts Texas Education Code §45.205, §45.206

Current Requirements: The depository for the District shall serve for a term of two years and until its successor is selected and has qualified. A district and its depository bank may agree to extend the contract for two additional two-year terms. Per S.B. 754, passed by the 85th Texas Legislature, effective September 1, 2017, TEC §45.205 will allow the District to extend a depository contract for three additional two-year terms. The contract term and any extension must coincide with the district's fiscal year. An extension is not subject to the requirements of TEC 45.206, 45.205 and 45.

Proposal Flexibility: Peaster ISD utilizes services provided by the bank on a daily basis. PISD will continue to use the local depository for the District without rebidding. At the end of each two-year term, the District and its depository bank may agree to extend the contract for multiple additional two-year periods. The District must review the contract to ensure the best value and support for the District, and obtain Board approval for each of the two-year periods. Nothing in this process would hinder the District's ability to undertake bidding at the end of any of the two-year periods. The District believes it can operate most optimally if it is not limited to two or even three additional two-year extensions of its depository contract, allowing the Superintendent and Board of Trustees more time for planning for student progress, instructional strategies, and innovative options for the District's educational goals.

Retire/Rehire Minimum Salary - Texas Education Code 21.002, 21.402, 21.415

Current Requirements: Currently, all districts, when hiring a retired educator must pay them their salary based upon the TEA minimum salary pay scale; in addition, the districts are required to pay a TRS surcharge.

Proposed Flexibility: PISD would like the opportunity to hire an eligible retired educator and pay them below the TEA minimum pay scale while also paying the required TRS surcharge. We believe that by hiring an eligible retired educator our students, campuses, and district will reap the rewards of having a veteran educator who is still involved and passionate in the education process. In addition, the district will be able to have an experienced educator at a significantly less cost than had we paid them based upon the TEA minimum pay scale plus the TRS surcharge. Thus, by hiring an eligible retired educator PISD will be adding value in the schools and will be making sound fiscal decisions for our district's stakeholders

Minimum Attendance for Class Credit or Final Grade - 90% Rule - Texas Education Code §25.092

Current Requirements: State law currently requires students attend class 90 percent of the school days on a district calendar to earn credit. The law requires districts to award class credit to students based on the time a student is present in a classroom for instruction, rather than mastery of content and subject proficiency.

Proposed flexibility:

The 90 percent rule is an arbitrary percentage, which means school districts award credit based on seat time rather than based on content mastery. Flexibility in abstaining from the requirement means the district will not have to penalize students who miss class due to enriching activities, academic activities, or other extenuating circumstances that support PISD's goal to educate the whole child. Exemption from the 90% requirement will provide educational advantages to students of the District by promoting active learning through innovation in methods, locations, and times instruction may be delivered to students. PISD may accommodate for students with legitimate scheduling conflicts and addressing the needs of an at-risk student, thereby reducing dropout potential. A student who is in attendance for at least 75 percent but less than 90 percent of the days a class is offered may be given credit or a final grade if the student completes a plan approved by the school's principal that provides for the student to meet the instructional requirements of the class.

Exemption from Section 25.092 will likely foster greater innovation to promote active learning and improve student outcomes. In addition, the exemption will allow PISD to meet the social and emotional issues PISD encounters when serving students who find themselves in situations that place them in alternative school.

Through blended learning opportunities and flexible scheduling, PISD may offer to provide students credit for courses based on content mastery, not the amount of time the student spends in the classroom. This exemption would allow the district to provide innovative options to promote student engagement in course material in flexible ways, ultimately allowing learning to happen anytime, anywhere apart from the traditional way of delivering instruction.

Relief from Section 25.092 does not in any way impact or alter existing compulsory attendance requirements or University Interscholastic League ("UIL") rules. Moreover, opting out of Section 25.092 in no way limits or modifies a teacher's right to determine the finality of a grade in accordance with Texas Education Code Section 28,0214, nor does it restrict or alter a teacher's right to assign grades in accordance with Texas Education Code Section 28.0216.

Teacher Contract Days Texas Education Code §21.401

Current Requirements: Texas Education Code §21.401 currently requires a contract between the District and an educator to be for a minimum 10 months. Additionally, an educator employed under a 10-month contract must provide a minimum of 187 days of service. This inhibits the local districts ability to build a calendar that provides the greatest flexibility to meet the LEA's staff development and planning needs.

Proposed Flexibility:

- a. PISD teacher contract days will be based on the yearly needs of the student calendar, professional development goals and needs, and learning objectives of PISD students.
- b. Flexibility provided by this plan will allow teacher contract days to be a range from no less than 180 days and no more than 187 days in any given staff calendar year. This stems from an attempt to provide flexibility to better align teacher service days to instructional days.
- c. The Districtwide Improvement Committee will be provided with calendar options annually that indicate the required number of staff days in order to provide input and feedback.
- d. The Board of Trustees will be notified annually of the number of staff days in the calendar before taking action on the school calendar.
- e. Teacher salaries will not be affected by the number of staff days, student days, workdays, and professional development days if the calendar reflects an expectation of employment for days less than 187 days.
- f. Teacher salaries will not be affected by the number of staff days, student days, workdays, and professional development days if the calendar reflects an expectation of employment for days up to 187, but in a previous year the expectation was for less days. For example, year one of this plan a teacher works 186 days and in year three the calendar changes to 187 days.

LOCAL SCHOOL HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL AND HEALTH EDUCATION INSTRUCTION

Texas Education Code §28.004

Current Requirements: Sec. 28.004 of this code requires The Board of Trustees of each school district shall establish a local School Health Advisory Council to assist the District in ensuring that local community values are reflected in the District's health education instruction. This section requires the establishment of a School Health Advisory Council and outlines the duties of this council.

Proposed Flexibilities: The District takes exemption from the requirement to establish a School Health Advisory Council and the subsequent duties of that council. The District will utilize the District and campus improvement committees to seek feedback regarding health-related curriculum, food service, budget, and other related items as needed.

DISCIPLINARY ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS Texas Education Code §37.008(7)

Current Requirements: TEC §37.008(7) states that a DAEP employs only teachers who meet all certification requirements established under Subchapter B, Chapter 21. This statute limits the District's ability to be innovative when providing a DAEP setting when needed.

Proposed Flexibilities: The District takes exemption from Sec. §37.008(7). Since there will be a limited number of students assigned to DAEP and all academic responsibilities and resources are provided to the student by his/her teacher of record for each course, an additional certified teacher is not required. The campus administrator will ensure that DAEP staff have the support necessary to properly supervise the students assigned to the program and will lend assistance of teachers with specific certification as needed.

Exemptions from Future TEC Mandates

To best serve our local Peaster ISD community, staff, and students, Peaster ISD includes a provision in our Local Innovation Plan for the District to maintain control over any future, eligible Texas Education Code mandates, which may be exempted by a two-thirds majority of the Peaster ISD Board of Trustees.