

Pleasanton Independent School District

Local Innovation Plan 2025-2030

Beliefs

In Pleasanton ISD, we believe:

- In providing a safe environment so every student has the opportunity to learn and be successful
- Families, staff, students and community all contribute to preparing students for their future.
- In empowering every student and staff member.

Vision Statement

Pleasanton ISD inspires learning, nurtures well-being, and empowers all students for individual success.

Mission Statement

Pleasanton ISD provides a safe, supportive, and encouraging learning environment. We collaborate with community, families, and students to promote individual growth and address the needs of the whole person. Our array of engaging learning opportunities inspires creativity, leadership, and preparation for the future

I. OVERVIEW

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.

Potential benefits of becoming a District of Innovation include:

- Flexibility: PISD will have the flexibility to implement practices that support local needs, including exemptions from certain mandates such as the uniform school start date and specific certification requirements
- Local Control: PISD will have the ability to decide which flexibilities best suit its local needs
- Autonomy: PISD must notify the Commissioner of Education when it adopts, amends, or renews its District of Innovation Plan and must list the exemptions claimed, but the plan does not require Commissioner approval.

A local innovation plan must identify requirements imposed by the Education Code that inhibit the goals of the plan from which the district should be exempted on adoption of the plan. The local innovation plan should specify the manner in which a particular statute inhibits one or more goals of the plan.

On December 10, 2019, the Pleasanton Independent School District's Board of Trustees ("Board") passed a Resolution to explore the development of 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. On January 14, 2020, the Board appointed a 15-member District of Innovation Committee comprised of diverse leaders representing a cross-section of the District's stakeholders including teachers, principals, and administrators. The Committee met on January 15, 2020 to discuss and draft the local innovation plan. On April 14, 2025, following a public meeting of the district-level committee on February 25, 2025, the Board renewed the Local Innovation Plan for a five-year term beginning May 1, 2025 and ending April 30, 2030. On November 9, 2026, the Board approved an amendment to the renewed plan to add an exemption related to student transfers. The amendment does not extend the term of the plan.

II. TERM

The term of the Plan is for five years, beginning May 1, 2025 and ending April 30, 2030, 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 HB1842, PISD will 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.

III. ORIGINAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Alison Alvarado	Pleasanton Primary School Teacher
Cheryl Barron	Assistant Superintendent of Personnel & Student Services
Nadine Barrow	Pleasanton Elementary School Teacher
Rhonda Bourland	Pleasanton Junior High Teacher
Nacona David	Atascosa McMullen COOP
Tab Dumont	Athletic Director
Shanna Greer	District Literacy Specialist
Twila Guajardo	Pleasanton High School Principal
Mary Hamble	Transportation
Amber Kostek	Pleasanton Elementary School Teacher
Alyssa Luna	Pleasanton Primary Teacher
Joey Moczygemba	Director of Food Services
Stefanie Sims	Pleasanton High School Teacher
Venus Vela	Executive Director of Curriculum & Instruction
Sarah Yarnell	Pleasanton Junior High Teacher

IV. TIMELINE OF EVENTS

December 10, 2019	Board of Trustees adopts a resolution to pursue District of Innovation Designation
January 14, 2020	District hosts a public hearing to consider developing an Innovation plan
January 14, 2020	Board of Trustees appoints the District of Innovation Committee to develop a local innovation plan
January (last two weeks)	District of Innovation Committee meets and develops plan
January (end)	District Plan posted for public view on District website for 30 days Board of Trustees notifies Commissioner of Education of intent to vote on the plan
February 17, 2020	The district-level committee (DEIC) holds a public meeting to consider the final plan and approves it by majority vote.

March 3, 2020	Board approves the final District of Innovation plan

V. AREAS OF INNOVATION

The District of Innovation Committee and the internal team will work to align strategies with innovations that will address and support the needs of the district with the allowed exemptions.

The innovation categories are:

1. First Day of Instruction

TEC §25.0811 First Day of Instruction

Related Board Policies: EB (Legal)

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan:
TEC §25.0811 states that a school district may not begin student instruction before the 4th Monday of August. The current process allows no flexibility in the design of annual calendars to fit the needs of all Pleasanton ISD stakeholders and the wishes of the local Board of Trustees who represent community interests in this matter. Historically, districts had the option of applying to TEA for a waiver to start earlier, even as early as the 2nd Monday of August. The legislature removed all waivers and dictated that districts may not begin until the 4th Monday of August, with no exceptions. By exempting TEC §25.0811 , the PISD Board of Trustees will set the first day of instruction annually when it adopts the academic calendar.

Potential Benefit:
The ability to establish an earlier start date will enable the district to better balance the amount of instructional time available in each semester and grading period. This change would allow the teachers to deliver more equitable learning experiences for students in the fall and spring semesters. The flexibility of the start date of instruction would also address the District Goal of Professional Development by allowing professional development days to be distributed throughout the school year, rather than grouped together in August. This change allows teachers more opportunity to process their learning and respond to the needs throughout the school year.

2. Educators

TEC §21.003 Certification Required –Non Foundation Courses
TEC §21.053 Presentation and Recording of Certificates
TEC §21.057 Parental Notification
TEC §37.0012 Campus Behavior Coordinator

Related Board Policies: DK (LEGAL), DBA (Local), DK (Local), DK Exhibit, FO (LEGAL)

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan:
Currently, it is mandated that a person may not be employed as an educator unless the individual holds an appropriate certificate issued by the state agency. In the event that a school district cannot locate a certified teacher for a position, the district must request emergency certification from the Texas Education Agency and/or the State Board of Educator Certification. The current process does not allow PISD flexibility for administrators or the PISD Board of Trustees to hire knowledgeable, experienced, and qualified individuals who would otherwise be able to fill specific vacancies.

TEC §21.003: A person may not be employed as a teacher by the school district unless the person holds appropriate certification or permit issued as provided.

TEC §21.053(a) A person who desires to teach in a public school shall present the person's certificate for filing with the employing district before the person's contract with the board of trustees of the district is binding. (b) An educator who does not hold a valid certificate may not be paid for teaching or work done before the effective date of issuance of a valid certificate.

TEC §21.057: A school district that assigns an inappropriately certified or uncertified teacher to the same classroom for more than 30 consecutive instructional days during the same school year shall provide written notice of the assignment to a parent or guardian of each student in that classroom.

TEC §37.0012: Senate Bill 107 requires the designation of a campus behavior coordinator on each campus. This designee is responsible for maintaining student discipline and implementing Chapter 37, Subchapter A. Currently, legal policy states, "A person at each campus must be designated to serve as the campus behavior coordinator (CBC). The person may be the campus principal or any other campus administrator selected by the principal. The CBC is primarily responsible for maintaining student discipline and implementing education Code Chapter 37."

Potential Benefit:
PISD will continue to seek traditionally certified candidates for all teaching positions. The lack of ability for the district to hire the most qualified individual to teach certain course offerings, particularly Career and Technical Education and other non-foundation courses create challenges in course offerings to meet the needs of students and our community. Additionally, a teacher is required to present their certificate before their employment contract will be binding, prohibiting the District from paying an educator for teaching, if the teacher does not hold a valid certificate at the time.

- Flexibility to establish hiring requirements affords the District the opportunity to be responsive to campus needs. (not including Bilingual, Special Education, or Foundation Courses)
- Relief from the statutes allows PISD to fill vacancies in specific settings, including advanced academics, CTE, as well as other non-foundation courses

- Allows educators who wish to teach outside of their certification the opportunity to succeed in other content areas.
- Principals may submit a request to the Superintendent to allow a non-certified yet highly qualified professional to teach a CTE course, highly specialized, hard to fill area, or a certified educator to teach a subject area in a related field for which s/he is not credentialed by the state prior to employing the applicant. The request will outline the reason for the request and document the credentials the recommended teacher possesses. Possible credentials could include
    - Professional work experience
    - Formal training and education
    - Relevant industry licensure or certification
    - Certification in another subject
- An employee hired under this exemption into a position that normally carries a certification-related stipend will not receive the stipend until certification is obtained.
- Employees that are not currently SBEC certified will be at-will.
- The District may establish procedures and timelines for employees to obtain certifications.
- State waivers for certification will not be requested.
- The District will consider these educators appropriately qualified and will not provide special notification to parents of students in identified innovative courses where the instructor does not hold a traditional teaching certificate.
- PISD assistant principals or other appropriately credentialed and trained staff will be named as CBCs to match current operating practices.

3. Grievance Policy

TEC §26.011 School District Grievance Procedures and Employee Protections
TEC §26A.001-.003 Grievance review procedures, timelines for filing and appeals, and public posting of procedures and forms.

Related Board Policies: DGBA (LEGAL, LOCAL, EXHIBIT), FNG (LEGAL, LOCAL, EXHIBIT), GF (LEGAL, LOCAL, EXHIBIT)

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan:
TEC §26.011 requires school district grievance procedures to match the structure provided by TEC §26A.001-26A.003. This grievance procedure restricts the District's ability to conduct grievances in a manner in line with the needs of the Pleasanton ISD community and limits the District's ability to respond to complaints in a timely and efficient manner using the procedures that employees, students, and community members have experience and a familiarity with.

Potential Benefit:
The district believes that a requirement for complaints to be submitted within 15 district business days from the date the grievant either knows, or with reasonable diligence, should have known, of the decision or action that is the subject of the grievance ensures prompt attention and resolution of concerns. Accuracy of information and access to individuals that are needed to provide necessary information surrounding an issue could be compromised by an extended filing period. It is imperative that grievances and complaints are filed in a timely manner to ensure the best prompt response. Pleasanton ISD will maintain its established grievance policy with procedures and timelines as outlined in its local Board's policies DGBA, FNG and GF. Such policies ensure thorough documentation of each step in the grievance process and provide adequate time for complaints to be filed, and for complaints to be heard. All records related to grievances, including submitted forms, communications, investigations, findings, resolutions, and any corrective actions are systematically maintained at the district level to ensure transparency, accountability, and compliance with legal and policy standards. The District is further committed to hearing, reviewing, and attempting to resolve all complaints, as well as to taking corrective action, where appropriate. Pleasanton ISD's long-standing grievance policy will ensure that all such complaints are carefully reviewed and that district responses are in alignment with state and federal regulations, as well as other local board policies.

4. Student Transfer Policy

TEC § 25.036 Student Transfers Between School Districts: Approval, Written Agreements, and Transfer of Student Records

Related Board Policies: FDA (legal) FDA (local)

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan:
A school district may choose to accept students who are not otherwise entitled to admission in the district on a transfer basis. The District wishes to continue accepting transfer students under this law. This provision, however, has been interpreted to require a student transfer to be for a period of one school year, and to restrict a district's ability to revoke a transfer approval mid-year.

Potential Benefit:
The District maintains a student transfer policy under Board Policy FDA (Local), which requires that all nonresident students who wish to transfer must file a transfer application each school year. In making decisions regarding applications for transfer, the policy currently permits for the consideration of the availability of space, instructional staff, the student's disciplinary history and attendance records. In addition to considering all of these factors in approving or denying a transfer request, the District also seeks the flexibility to revoke a student's transfer status during the school year based on the student's failure to meet expectations in these areas while in the District.

VI. RENEWAL OF PLAN

As the prior plan ended on April 30, 2025, (unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law) the plan must be renewed for PISD to remain a District of Innovation. This renewal term will take effect from May 1, 2025 and end April 30, 2030.

VII. RENEWAL PROCESS REQUIREMENTS

Process	Required for Renewal
Final version of the proposed plan has been available on the district's website for at least 30 days	Yes
The district-level committee established under the Texas Education Code (TEC), §11.251, has held a public* meeting to consider the final version of the proposed plan and has approved the plan by a majority vote of the committee members (*meeting must be public for renewal)	Yes
The board of trustees adopts a proposed local innovation plan by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the membership of the board	Yes
The district notifies the commissioner of approval of the plan along with a list of approved TEC exemptions by completing the TEA District of Innovation notification form.	Yes
The district shall ensure that a copy of the local innovation plan is posted on the district's website in accordance with the TEC, §12A.0071, for the term of the designation as an innovation district.	Yes
Not later than the 15th day after the date on which the board of trustees finalizes a local innovation plan either through adoption, amendment, or renewal, the district shall provide a copy of [link to] the current local innovation plan to the Texas Education Agency for posting on the agency website	Yes

VIII. PISD DISTRICT OF INNOVATION RENEWAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Cherie McBee	High School Teacher
Christopher Llamas	High School Teacher
Richard Gutierrez	High School Teacher
Priscilla Gonzales	Non-Teaching Professional
Cornelio Landin	Junior High Teacher
Garrett Lowery	Junior High Teacher
Lynse Tausch	Junior High Teacher
Christina Cervantes	Non-Teaching Professional
Tyler Gurule	Elementary Teacher
Brenda Zamora	Elementary Teacher
Amber Guerra	Elementary Teacher
Jennifer Cobb	Non-Teaching Professional
Jennifer Spaulding	Primary Teacher
Bonnie Cordova	Primary Teacher
Lea Ann Long	Primary Teacher
Elizabeth Castillo-Huizar	Primary Teacher
Abigail Parker	Non-Teaching Professional
Gene Vasquez	Parent
Curtis Vickers	Parent
Phillip Read	Community
Diana Guthrie	Community - Pleasanton Express
Chase Moore	Business – SouthTrust
Margie Mendez	Business - Insurance Co and Auto Repair Shop Owner

Cheryl Barron	Superintendent
Kari Vickers	JH Principal
Angela Acevedo	Elem Principal
Donna Minniear	Primary Principal
Nick Hinojosa	High School Principal
Keri Cooper	Special Programs Director
Jan Nott	Director of Special Education
Sarah Callihan-Lewis	Accountability/Federal Programs Coordinator

IX. TIMELINE OF EVENTS

February 25, 2025	District committee meets to discuss renewal of the DOI plan. Public meeting held to consider renewal of the plan.
February 26, 2025	PISD will post a copy of the DOI plan on the PISD website in accordance with the TEC, §12A.0071, for the term of the designation as an innovation district.
April 14, 2025	The PISD Board of Trustees adopts a proposed local innovation plan by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the membership of the board
April 17, 2025	Not later than the 15th day after the date on which the PISD Board of Trustees finalizes the DOI plan and amendment, PISD will provide a copy of [link to] the current local innovation plan to the Texas Education Agency for posting on the agency website.