

PRAIRIE VALLEY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

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DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLAN (HB 1842) 2017-2022

During the 84th Legislative Session, HB 1842 was passed in order to provide more local control in certain areas. HB 1842 allows a traditional public school to utilize the exemptions in Education Law that charter schools are currently entitled to. We feel this is a great opportunity for Prairie Valley ISD to create a plan based on the needs of our students and district for the next five years (2017-2022).

Goal #1 School start date

(TEC 25.0811a) (EB LEGAL)

Statutes that relate to this goal.

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 the community or the wishes of the local Board of Trustees who represent community interests in this matter.

Innovation Strategies

1. Prairie Valley ISD exercises its ability under HB 1842 from the 84th Legislature to begin instruction before the fourth Monday in August. This change will create better flexibility in the creation of the district calendar as well as allowing more opportunities in scheduling meaningful and relevant staff development days.
2. The earlier start date will allow the district to move instructional days that occur after state mandated testing dates to the front of the school year and thus increase instruction time prior to STAAR/EOC testing.
3. The earlier start date will provide more balance to the first 3 six weeks grading periods during the first semester.

Goal #2 Length of School Day

(TEC 25.082a) (SAAH 3.8.1)

Statutes that relate to this goal.

TEC 25.082a states that a school day must be 7 hours each day including recesses and intermissions.

SAAH 3.8.1 states that a school day must be at least 420 minutes including recesses and intermissions. School districts are subject to this requirement.

The current rules allows no flexibility in the design of district and campus schedules.

Innovation Strategies

1. The opportunity to exempt from the 420 minute school day requirement will provide the district the opportunity to provide each campus the flexibility of creating a daily schedule that will better serve the students and teachers on each campus. This flexibility will give local control to the district in meeting the yearly requirement of 75,600 minutes in relation to the district calendar for each specific school year.
2. This exemption will provide greater flexibility than the current 6 day waiver maximum that relates to the length of the school day.
3. The opportunity to be exempt from the 7 hour day requirement will allow the district to create more flexibility within the daily schedule for students and staff. This flexibility will be used to create a unique bell schedule instead of the static schedule required of schools by this mandate.
4. The district will provide teachers and administrators the opportunity for weekly and monthly staff development opportunities through the creation of these unique schedules.

Goal #3 Certification – General

(TEC 21.003a) (DBA LEGAL) (DBA Local)

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan

TEC 21.003 (a) states 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.

Innovation Strategies

1. For grades 6-12, in all subjects except Special Education and ESL/Bilingual, the campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request for a local certification that will allow a certified teacher to teach one subject in a related field for which he/she is not certified. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses that would qualify the individual to teach the proposed subject.
2. The current certification requirement severely limits the districts options to hire professionals with work related experience or degrees to teach a variety of courses from CATE and STEM related courses along with other required courses needed throughout the district. In order to maximum the opportunities for students to take such courses, the district will consider the qualifications necessary to create a local requirement for these course instead of the requirements set forth in TEC 21.033(a). This exemption will allow the district to:
 - a. Consider part time professionals to teach courses
 - b. Opportunity for professionals to transition from other work related jobs to the teaching profession.
 - c. Increase the number of CATE and STEM type courses available.
 - d. Trade related professionals the ability to teach related courses.
3. The superintendent will report this action to the Board of Trustees at the first board meeting following these assignments.
4. A teacher certification waiver, state permit applications, or other paperwork will not be submitted to the Texas Education Agency.

Goal #4 Transfer Students

(TEC 25.035) (FDA Local)

Under TEC 25.036, a transfer is interpreted to be for a period of one school year.

Innovation Strategies:

1. Prairie Valley ISD maintains a transfer policy under FDA (LOCAL) requiring nonresident students wishing to transfer to file a transfer application each school year. In approving transfer requests, the availability of space and instructional staff, availability of programs and services, the student's disciplinary history records, work habits, and attendance records are also evaluated. Transfer students are expected to follow the attendance requirements and the rules and regulations of the District. TEC 25.036 has been interpreted to establish the acceptance of a transfer as a one year commitment by the District. The District is seeking to eliminate the provision of a one year commitment in accepting transfer applications for the following circumstances:
 - a. Student behavior warrants suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion;
 - b. Unacceptable academic performance; Students must maintain a passing average of 70 in each class.
 - c. Student attendance falls below the TEA truancy standard.