

PEARSALL I.S.D.

District of Innovation Plan

Learning Today...Leading Tomorrow

Board Approved August 27, 2025

Pearsall ISD Vision

Leading the way, we will be the recognized leaders in preparing students for college, careers, and life.

Pearsall ISD Mission

In partnership with families and community, our purpose is to have a learning environment that is safe, nurturing, and student-centered where everyone is accountable and all students are empowered to succeed.

Pearsall ISD Goals

- Improve Academic Achievement for All Students
 - Create and implement a comprehensive curricular framework in all core subject areas for all students.
 - Develop and support effective instruction that focuses on high performance of all students.
 - Ensure a safe environment in which all students and staff are accountable. o Prepare all students to be college and career ready.
- Ensure Effective Communications
 - All departments will conduct a system analysis of operational processes o Develop an accountability, monitoring, and reporting structure for all departments and schools.
- Ensure Effective Communications
 - Develop and implement a district-wide plan to maximize two-way communication among school, family, and community.

Pearsall ISD Priorities

- Students will be proficient in both reading and math at every grade level. · Teachers will successfully incorporate engaging activities, which integrate technology, fine arts, and college and career readiness standards into the curriculum. · Student, parent, and community engagement rate will increase.
- District personnel retention rate will increase.
- Ongoing support, to include professional development and training, for District personnel will be provided.

TIMELINE

February 2, 2023 DOI committee will meet to review the components of the plan and vote on the plan.

February 27, 2023 Final version of the proposed plan posted to the district website

March 29, 2023 District level public meeting in accordance with the TEC 11.251 to consider the final version of the proposed plan (March School Board Meeting)

March 29, 2023 Board of Trustees vote to formally approve the innovation plan.

March 31, 2023 Superintendent gives formal notification to the Texas Commissioner of Education that the plan has been adopted.

August 14, 2025 DEIC meeting to approve DOI amendment and to approve to present to the Board of Trustees for consideration

August 27, 2025 Board of Trustees vote to formally approve the DOI amendment

COMMITTEE

1. Matthew Aguilar, Business Member
2. Melissa Bass, District Administrator
3. Gina Baker, PI Administrator
4. Joel Barbosa, PHS Assistant Principal
5. Gilbert Cantu, PJH Assistant Principal
6. Linda Chavera, District Administrator
7. Marty Cortinas, Parent Liaison
8. LaQuita Dalton, PJH Assistant Principal
9. Michelle De Leon, TFE Administrator
10. Josue Gonzalez, PJH Faculty/Staff
11. Roger Hernandez, PI Faculty/Staff
12. John Hernandez, PHS Faculty/Staff
13. Dr. Jose Juarez, District Administrator
14. Recekah Mann, Parent
15. Beatrice Nieto, Community Member
16. Sandra Nix, PHS Administrator
17. Samantha Parsons, TFE Faculty/Staff
18. Victoriana Perez, Parent
19. Juanita Rendon, Community Member
20. Omero Reyes, PHS Faculty/Staff
21. Dr. Nobert Rodriguez, Superintendent
22. Mitzy Rodriguez, PHS
23. Donna Ryder, PJH Faculty/Staff
24. Veronica Sanchez, TFE Faculty/Staff
25. Mary Joyer Ramon, TFE Assistant Principal
26. Tiffany Talamantes, District Administrator
27. Ana Valdez, TFE Faculty/Staff
28. Aleida Velasquez, PJH Administrator
29. Maria Yanez, PI Faculty/Staff

INNOVATIONS AND EXEMPTIONS

First and Last Day of Instruction: *EB Legal/Local; TEC 25.0811, 25.0812*

Currently, it is mandated that students may not begin school before the fourth Monday in August and may not end prior to May 15.

Rationale of Exemption:

The restriction of a specific start and end date prohibits the creation of a balanced and student centered calendar. This exemption would allow the district to determine locally, on an annual basis, what best meets the needs of our district.

Benefits of Exemption:

Flexibility would have the following advantages:

- A better balance between instructional days during each semester.
- More instructional days in advance of standardized assessments, such as Advanced Placement, STAAR and EOC exams.
- Additional instructional time after the last official day of school to provide accelerated instruction for students retaking a STAAR or EOC exam over the summer. · More flexibility to offer a full array of dual credit courses and better serve students, thus working more collaboratively with our institutions of higher education.
- More balanced distribution of instructional time for one-semester coursework, as students who currently take a one-semester course in the fall have fewer instructional days to master course content than students who take the same one-semester course in the spring.

Implementation Guidance:

When planning the student and staff calendars, the District shall ensure the following:

- Winter Break should serve as the midpoint of the school year.
- Adjustments to the student and staff calendars must be budget-neutral. · Each CEIC shall have the opportunity to develop calendar options. District faculty and staff shall have the opportunity to vote for a calendar option. Parents will be informed of the different calendar options. The DEIC shall take survey data and other practical concerns into consideration prior to making a final calendar recommendation to the Board of Trustees.
- Not starting school before the first Monday in August.

Probationary Contracts: DCA Legal; TEC 21.102

Currently, it is mandated that experienced teachers new to the district have a probationary period that may not exceed one year if the person has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the previous eight years.

Rationale of Exemption:

The restriction of a one-year probationary period for experienced teachers new to the District is not sufficient to evaluate the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom since teacher contract renewal timelines demand that employment decisions be made prior to District receipt of state assessment results.

Benefits of Exemption:

Flexibility would have the following advantages:

- Provide more time to support teacher growth.
- More time to gather performance data to better evaluate a teacher's effectiveness in the classroom.

Implementation Guidance:

When establishing the type of contract renewal for experienced teachers new to the District, the District shall ensure the following:

- Campus principals shall use current data to determine the type of contract renewal experienced teachers new to the District will receive.
- Experienced teachers new to the District will be limited to three years of a probationary contract.

Teacher Certification: *DBA Legal/Local, DK Legal/Local/Exhibit; TEC 21.003, 21.053, 21.057*

Currently, it is mandated that a person may not be employed as an educator by a school district unless the individual holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued by the appropriate state agency. In the event a school district cannot locate a certified teacher for a position, or a teacher is teaching a subject outside her or his certification, the district must request emergency certification from the Texas Education Agency and/or the State Board of Educator Certification. This system is complicated and does not take into account the unique financial and/or instructional needs of the district, especially for innovative classes where certification may not exist or educators with those credentials may not be readily available. Additionally, a teacher is required to present his or her certificate to the District before their employment contract will be binding, and prohibits the District from paying an educator for teaching if the educator does not hold a valid certificate at the time.

Benefits of Exemption:

Flexibility would have the following advantages:

- More ability to provide advanced specialized courses in Career & Technology Education (CTE), Dual Credit courses, and other non-core areas.
- Allow the district to take into account unique financial and/or instructional needs. · Students will have more access to specialized courses to better prepare them for their future, whether college or career.

Implementation Guidance:

When establishing use of this provision, the District shall ensure the following:

- In exceptional circumstances, when a certified educator is not found for an offered class, the campus principal shall submit to the Superintendent a request for local certification that may allow a non-certified yet highly qualified professional to teach OR a certified educator to teach a subject in a related field for which she or he is not credentialed by the state.
- The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what qualifications the individual possesses to teach the proposed subject. Emergency or financial situations creating the need for this assignment should also be noted.
- Whenever possible, lesson plans or curriculum guides to support the uncertified yet highly qualified educator will be developed or provided in partnership with certified teachers.
- In the event an uncertified yet highly qualified educator or professional is assigned to a course, the superintendent will inform the board of trustees. Parents will also be notified in writing.
- A teacher certification waiver, state permit applications or other paperwork will not be submitted to the Texas Education Agency.
- All approved requests will qualify the individual for a local teaching certificate for one academic year.
- If a request is approved for an individual that is not currently SBEC certified, the employee will be at-will.

90 Percent Attendance Rule: *FEC Local; TEC 25.092*

Currently, State law mandates a student may not be given credit or a final grade for a class unless the student is in attendance for at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. In addition, the law provides provisions for students that are in attendance at least 75 percent and less than 90 percent may be given credit or a final grade for the class if the student completes a plan approved by the campus administrator and meets the instructional requirements for the class. 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.

Benefits of Exemption:

Flexibility would have the following advantages:

- Gives flexibility in time, location, and instructional methods of meeting the needs of students that allow for blended learning.
- Empower students and parents by providing them with a voice and choice in determining how educational needs can be met.
- Increased active learning opportunities.
- Provide individual student education plans.

Implementation Guidance:

When establishing use of this provision, the District shall ensure the following:

- To allow students additional opportunities to obtain and/or recover credits in an innovative format. The district believes that a student's learning outcomes should be the determining factor in earning credit and a grade rather than measures such as "seat time" that do not consider the real objectives of the educational experience.
- 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 the 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, as approved by the campus principal or an attendance committee; that supports PISD's goal to improve achievement for all students.
- To meet the needs of 21st century learners, PISD would like to investigate the option 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 for course material in flexible ways, ultimately allowing learning to happen anytime and any place apart from the traditional way of delivering instruction. Additionally, our students attain valuable and meaningful learning from extra/co-curricular activities and experiences that currently count against the student's 90% attendance availability if a student has to miss part of the traditional school day.
- Relief from TEC 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 TEC Section 25.092 and in no way limits or modifies a teacher's right to determine the finality of a grade in accordance with TEC Section 28.0214, nor does it restrict or alter a teacher's right to assign grades in accordance with TEC Section 28.0216.

Local school Health Advisory Council and Health Education Instruction: *BDF LEGAL; TEC 28.004*

Currently, *TEC 28.004* requires the Board of Trustees of each school district to establish a local school health advisory council (SHAC) 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.

Benefits of Exemption:

Flexibility would have the following advantages:

- The district takes exemption from the requirement to establish a school health advisory council and its subsequent duties of that council.

Implementation Guidance:

The health coordinator will collaborate with district and campus improvement committees to seek feedback regarding health related curriculum, food service, budget, and other related items as needed.

School District Depositories

TEC Chapter 45 – School District Funds Sub chapter G-School District Depositories

TEC §45.205 Term of Contract

TEC §45.206 Bid or Request for Proposal Notices; Bid and Proposal Forms

Board Policy: BDAE (Legal) and BDAE (Local)

Current Statute: The depository bank for the District shall serve for a term of two years and until its successor is selected. A District and its depository bank may agree to extend the contract for two additional two-year terms. Per SB 754, passed by the 85th Texas Legislature, effective September 1, 2017, TEC Section 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. Therefore, an extension of the contract is not subject to the rebidding requirements of Education Code 45.206, Education Code 45.205 and Education Code 45.204.

District Innovation Plan: In a District within a small town, the District's choices for its depository bank are limited. With exemption from these statutes, Pearsall ISD would be able to allow the District's existing bank contract to be extended if the District determines contract pricing remains competitive and there is no operational or financial reason to send the District's banking services out to bid. At the end of each two-year term, the District and its depository bank may agree to extend the contract for multiple two additional year periods. The District must review the contract to ensure the best value and support for the District and obtain Board approval for each two-year period. Nothing in the process would hinder the District's ability to undertake bidding the District depository bank at the end of any of the two-year periods. Further, this entire Innovation Plan must be reviewed and renewed at the end of five years, including this provision. 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 and continue its strong relations with our current bank.