

PENELOPE

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



District of Innovation

Proposed plan revised 08/28/2019

School Start Date
(EB Legal) (Ed. Code 25.0811(a))

FIRST DAY OF INSTRUCTION. (a) Except as provided by this section, a school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.

Rationale

Penelope ISD, who does not qualify for any of the exceptions noted in the statute, would like to have the freedom to develop a calendar that better fits the needs of the community should the committee choose. Having greater flexibility in this area would allow us to better balance the first and second semesters and provide for more instructional days prior to state testing.

School District Depositories Contract
(Ed. Code 45.205)

TERM OF CONTRACT. (a) Except as provided by Subsection (b), the depository bank when selected shall serve for a term of two years and until its successor is selected and has qualified. (b) A school district and the district's depository bank may agree to extend a depository contract for two additional two-year terms. An extension under this subsection is not subject to the requirements of Section 45.206.

Rationale

In a small district and small town, the district's choices for its depository bank are limited. Penelope ISD uses services provided by the bank on a daily basis.

Penelope ISD will continue to use the local depository for the district without rebidding as follows: 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 of the two year periods.

Teacher Certification Required (DK Legal) (Ed. Code 21.003(a))

CERTIFICATION REQUIRED. (a) A person may not be employed as a teacher by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued as provided by Subchapter B.

Rationale

Penelope ISD would like to make decisions regarding certifications locally and based on the needs of the campus and students. In the event that the district cannot locate a certified teacher for a position or teachers are teaching a subject outside of their certification, Penelope ISD would like to be afforded the flexibility to consider entering into at-will employment agreements with noncertified individuals that have field experience in a CTE, Fine Arts, STEM, or a vocational skill that would provide more options for students and flexibility in scheduling.

Penelope ISD would also like to allow a certified teacher to teach one subject outside of their certified field in the event there is a need. Penelope ISD will locally document the reasoning for the request and the credentials the certified teacher possesses which qualifies this individual to teach the subject.

INTER-DISTRICT TRANSFER STUDENTS (FDA (Local) & TEC 25.036)

TRANSFER STUDENTS. Currently, under Texas Education Code 25.036, a district may choose to accept, as transfers, students who are not entitled to enroll in the district, but TEC 25.036, has been interpreted to require a transfer to be for a period of one school year.

Penelope 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, rules, and regulations of the District. TEC 25.036

Rationale

Penelope 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, 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 exemption from the one-year commitment in accepting transfer applicants and allow the district to rescind a transfer at any time during the school year.

Upon approval of this Innovation Plan, it will be in effect up to five years.