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## FRUITVALE ISD DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLAN 2017-2022

Fruitvale ISD created a Visioning Document with input from our parents, community, teachers, staff, and students. This document drives every decision made regarding teaching and learning at FISD. The Mission Statement that was developed is “Learners today, Leaders Tomorrow.” The district belief statements are as follows:

1. The Partnership of families, community members, students, and Fruitvale Independent School District employees is critical to each student’s growth and success.
2. We believe in the value of instilling work ethic, integrity, perseverance, and motivation in future generations.
3. We believe in providing a 21st century education interwoven with real world applications.
4. We believe in modeling and guiding students toward becoming good citizens.
5. We believe in unlocking each individual student’s potential.
6. We believe in a supportive and collaborative school culture for students, teachers, and families

In order to best serve our students, we have developed a five year District of Innovation Plan to provide the Fruitvale ISD Board of Trustees the ability to use their best judgment to make decisions regarding the students of Fruitvale. By giving the board local control of these decisions, the district of innovation plan will allow the board to make positive progress for the students at Fruitvale ISD.

1. First Day of Instruction-- Belief statement 5  
Exemption From: TEC §25.0811, TEC §25.0812

**TEC §25.0811** states that a school district may not begin student instruction before the 4th Monday of August. For many years this was the rule; however, districts had the option of applying for a waiver to start earlier, even as early as the 2nd Monday in August.

**TEC §25.0812** states that a school district may not schedule the last day of school before May 15.



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**Proposal:** These laws restrict flexibility in the design of annual calendars to fit the needs of the school district and community. The flexibility to begin instruction earlier in August will enable the district to develop a calendar that best meets the needs of the students in FISD. An earlier start date allows a better balance between semesters, more instructional days prior to mandatory testing, and a school end date prior to June. By ending earlier, FISD can support students who need remediation, as well as students who are entering college or trade school. An earlier school start date allows these students to register for summer classes and attend new student orientation meetings without missing instructional time.

## II. Teacher Certification Requirements--Belief Statement 5

Exemption from TEC §21.003(a), TEC §21.053, TEC §21.057

**TEC §21.003(a)** states that a person may not be employed as a teacher by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued by the appropriate state agency. In the event a district cannot locate a certified teacher for a position or a teacher is teaching subject outside of their certification, the district must request emergency certification from the Texas Education Agency and/or State Board of Educator Certification. This system is burdensome and does not take into account the unique financial and/or instructional needs of the district.

**TEC §21.053** requires a teacher to present his or her certificate to the District before their employment contract will be binding, and prohibits the District from paying an educator their salaried rate if the educator does not hold a valid certificate at the time.

**TEC §21.057** requires that the District provide written notice to parents if an inappropriately or uncertified teacher is assigned to a classroom for more than 30 consecutive instructional days.

**Proposal:** The district will maintain its current expectations for employee certification and will make every attempt to hire individuals with appropriate certifications for the position in question. However, when that is not reasonably possible, the district will have the flexibility to hire individuals for non-core subjects who are knowledgeable in the area and equipped to effectively perform the duties of the position in question. Fruitvale ISD would like the ability to locally certify teachers in areas of high demand, to better meet the educational needs of our students. These areas would include, but are not limited



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to, Career and Technology Education and languages other than English. Special Education will continue to be required to hold a standard teaching certificate. Teachers with industry certifications and native speakers with qualified experience could be eligible to teach a course through a local teaching certification. Additionally, Fruitvale ISD will notify parents if a locally certified teacher is employed for their child's class. This process will allow more flexibility in our scheduling, and provide more options for our students in class offerings leading to industry recognized certifications.