

EBISD District of Innovation Plan



Posted: January 26, 2017

Approved by DOIC: January 25, 2017

Adopted by EBISD Board: March 6, 2017

East Bernard ISD is driven by the goals and objectives outlined in our district improvement plan, board goals, district mission statement, and community input. These factors drive all decisions regarding teaching and learning in EBISD.

In order to better serve our students and align our learning to EBISD goals, we have developed a five-year District of Innovation Plan to provide opportunities that allow the EBISD Board of Trustees the ability to use their best judgement to make decisions regarding the students of EBISD. EBISD is a community with diverse students and unique challenges. Giving the board and administration local control of these decisions will provide lasting effects on our students, parents, and community.

District of Innovation Plan

Term: The term of the plan is for five years, beginning August 1, 2017 and ending July 31, 2022, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. If, within the terms of this Plan, other areas of operations are to be considered for flexibility as part of HB 1842, the Board will nominate a new committee to consider and propose additional exemptions in the form of an amendment. Any amendment adopted by the Board will adhere to the same term as the original plan. The District may not implement two separate plans at any one time.

A. 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.

Proposal:

1. The campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request for 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 this individual to teach the proposed subject. Emergency or financial situations creating the need for this assignment should also be noted.

2. The current certification requirement severely limits the district's options to hire professionals with work related experience or degrees to teach a variety of courses from CTE and STEM related courses along with other required courses needed throughout the district. In order to provide more students the opportunity to take such courses and obtain professional certifications, the District seeks to establish its own local qualifications requirements instead of the requirements set forth in TEC 21.003(a). The district does not wish to be exempted from any existing laws relating to teacher contracts or teacher benefits. This exemption will allow the district to:
 - a. Consider part time professionals to teach courses
 - b. Provide an opportunity for professionals to transition from other work related jobs to the teaching profession.
 - c. Increase the number of CTE and STEM type courses available.
 - d. Grant 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 assignment.

4. A teacher certification waiver, state permit applications, or other paperwork will not be submitted to the Texas Education Agency.

5. All candidates would be carefully considered to ensure the individual has sufficient education and expertise to provide instruction necessary to meet the TEKS for the course to be taught. Qualifications would include demonstrated subject matter expertise, such as: Professional work experience, formal training and education, relevant industry license, certification, or registration or any combination of these deemed sufficient by the superintendent and Board of Trustees.

6. The district would ensure that the individual completed the criminal background check in compliance with the State Board of Education (SBEC) rules.

B. Student to Teacher Ratio, Kinder- 4th

Submitting waivers for Kindergarten – Grade 4 class size (EEB LEGAL) (Ed. Code 25.111) (Ed. Code 25.112) (Ed. Code 25.113)

Currently Kindergarten – 4th Grade classes are to be kept at a 22 student to 1 teacher ratio according to state law. When a class exceeds this limit, the district must complete a waiver with the Texas Education Agency. These waivers are not rejected by TEA and becomes more of a paperwork process. Along with the waiver, it is required that a letter is sent home to each parent in the section that exceeds the 22:1 ratio, informing them the waiver has been submitted. Many times soon after the waiver is submitted, students move out of the district and we are below the 22:1 ratio. Currently, EBISD is experiencing slow growth. However, we have been made aware of potential sub divisions and housing developments that could arise quicker than we could respond with our current facilities. For this reason, we need flexibility in our student to teacher ratio to accommodate this growth until we can expand our current facilities.

Proposal: While we certainly believe that small class size plays a positive role in the classroom, there are times when adding another teacher is not feasible such as mid-year due to increased enrollment, classroom availability, etc.

a. EBISD will attempt to keep all K-4th core classrooms to a 22:1 ratio. However, in the event the class size exceeds this ratio, the superintendent will report to the Board of Trustees.

b. In the event a K-4th core classroom reaches 25:1, the campus will notify the parents of the students in the classroom and work to reduce the ratio as soon as fiscally possible.

c. A TEA waiver will not be necessary when a K-4th classroom exceeds the 22:1 ratio.

d. This gives EBISD the flexibility without having the bureaucracy of waivers within the Texas Education Agency.

E. EBISD will be able to allow a class size of up to 25:1 in K-4 in the event student enrollment is unpredictable and unable to be resolved through current facilities.

C. Calendar- Adjust School Start, Need for local control

(EB LEGAL) (Ed. Code 25.0811)

Currently Students may not begin school 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. The vast majority of districts applied for the waiver and would begin the 3rd Monday, some even going as early as the 2nd Monday. The Texas tourism groups lobbied to have this stopped because they believed it was hurting their tourism business. Therefore, several years ago the legislature took away all waivers and dictated that districts may not begin until the 4th Monday, with no exceptions. The EBISD district improvement plan emphasizes the importance of learning, college and career readiness, and social/emotional learning. TEC Section 25.0811 inhibits these goals by prohibiting the District from beginning instruction before the fourth Monday of August.

As the dates fall for 17-18, 1st day of school will be August 28th.
So what?

- 1) No semester break in December--not enough time to complete 3 six weeks grading periods and students will have to retain information through the break for January semester exams.
 - 2) June 1st graduation date. Creates conflict for those wanting to enroll in college in June, final GPA calculations, and transcripts up to date and sent to colleges
 - 3) Limits holidays and staff development opportunities throughout the year if wanting to graduate prior to June 1
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- 1) Allows for staff development opportunities in October, January, and February. October is a crucial time as the school year has started and each school year presents new challenges, some of which are unknown until we have our students with us for a six weeks. This past year we put in an October staff day and it was used for ESL & SPED training as well as opportunities for curriculum alignment for late hires. With an 8/28 start date, we wouldn't be able to incorporate the October or January and February dates without pushing into June. (See #2 above as to why that becomes a problem.)
 - 2) Allows for 3 six weeks grading periods to end in December and semester exams completed prior to Christmas break. This is advantageous to our students who move over the Christmas break to have earned full credits prior to transfer.

- 3) The 187 teacher contract days are served not only during the year but in useful summer professional development opportunities to prepare and plan for the upcoming school year.
- 4) Allows students, teachers, and coaching staff to return to a schedule much sooner. With practices starting in early August and school later, we have kids coming up all hours for practices. It makes transportation extremely difficult for kids with many finding "things to do" to pass the time between and when their ride arrives. By having them in school sooner, their routine is more established and our school transportation is able to get them to and from home as part of their school day. It also gives us an opportunity to feed children breakfast and lunch, when they may not otherwise have it at home.

Proposal: To allow for a calendar that fits the local needs of our community, we would like to consider moving the mandatory start date ahead one week which would better benefit our students.

- a. Students will begin no earlier than the 3rd Monday of August.
- b. Teachers will begin no earlier than the 2nd Monday of August.
- c. This will allow the first and second semesters to be closer in the number of days of instruction.
- d. The goal is to improve the district attendance rate and student success through the flexibility in the calendar.
- E. Allow students to complete semester requirements prior to Christmas break for better student performance
- F. Allow students to enroll in college courses in June, thereby increasing college and career readiness

Proposed District of Innovation Timeline

Monday, January 9	<p>Board Meeting to Approve Resolution</p> <p>Public Hearing to consider developing a local innovation plan for the designation as a district of innovation.</p> <p>Board may either decline to pursue the designation or appoint an advisory committee to develop the plan</p>
Wednesday, January 18	<p>First District of Innovation Advisory Committee Meeting, 3:45pm, EBISD Board Room</p>
Thursday, January 19	<p>District of Innovation Advisory Committee Presentation of Proposed DOI Plan to Campuses. Feedback requested.</p>
Wednesday, January 25	<p>Second District of Innovation Meeting, 3:45pm to discuss any feedback and make any changes. DOI Committee vote to approve plan.</p>
Thursday, January 26th	<p>Post proposed DOI Plan on District website</p> <p>Board Letter of intent to vote submitted to TEA and Commissioners office</p>
Monday, February 13th	<p>Proposed DOI Plan is reviewed by board of trustees</p>
Monday, March 6th	<p>District of Innovation Team hosts public meeting to consider final version of EBISD Innovation Plan</p> <p>EBISD presents the proposed DOI Plan to the Board of Trustees for approval with 2/3 votes</p> <p>District sends approved plan to Commissioner of Education and TEA for final approval</p>

Committee Members

Courtney Hudgins, Superintendent
Doug Grigar, Assistant Superintendent
Jay Janczak, HS Principal
Emmett Tugwell, JH Principal
Philip Gaudette, Elem Principal
Wade Bosse, Athletic Director
Lacey Christ, Special Program Coordinator
Kimberly Sulak, HS Counselor
Rebecca Cavness, K-8 Counselor
Ruth Ellen Sharp, Assessment Coordinator
Becky Kovar, Business Manager
Daphne Fucik, Elem Teacher
Patricia Orsak, JH Teacher
Michele Grymes, HS Teacher
Audra Grigar, CTE Representative
Nancy Wasek, At-Will Staff Representative
Todd Swoboda, Community Representative