

Bridgeport Independent School District

Local Innovation Plan

2017-2022

Adopted January 16, 2017

Updated February 12, 2018



An Empowering District Working Together to Make Success a Reality

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INTRODUCTION

House Bill 1842, passed in the 84th Texas Legislative Session, provides Texas public school districts the opportunity to amend certain state requirements at the local level to better meet the needs of their unique student populations. Bridgeport ISD (BISD) intends to follow the Texas Education Code in all other areas. BISD's local Innovation Plan is comprehensive and touches numerous areas in the TEC, and because BISD seeks to maximize local control of educational decisions for students, BISD seeks exemption from the permissible provisions of the TEC included and explained in this Local Innovation Plan. BISD's Local Innovation Plan will begin with the 2017-2018 school year and conclude at the end of the 2021-2022 school year unless the plan is terminated or amended by the BISD Board of Trustees in accordance with HB1842 Any future amendments will adhere to the same term of the original plan.

On January 16, 2018, the Bridgeport ISD District Advisory Council (DAC) met to review the District of Innovation Plan. Amendments to the plan were recommended by the DAC to be presented to the BISD Board at its regular meeting on February 12, 2018.

BISD DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLANNING COMMITTEE 2016-17

Eddie Bland, Superintendent

Gina Florence, Assistant Superintendent

Kurt Kronenberger, Assistant Superintendent

Patricia Hernandez, Director of Special Programs

Danny Henson, Athletic Director

Jennifer Ragland, HS Volleyball Coach

Hughlen White, Band Director

Becky DeShazo, HS Career and Technology Teacher

Matt Joiner, Associate Dean Weatherford College

Chris Heasley, City of Bridgeport Department of Parks and Recreation

Bunny Perry, Community Member

Robert Sivley, Community Member

Christina Garza, Community Member

Martha Bock, BES Principal

Alyssa Meekins, BES Teacher

Lee Snodgrass, BES Parent

Rita Lemoine, BIS Principal

Shelly Moody, BIS Teacher

Melanie McGehee, BIS Parent

Travis Whisenant, BMS Principal

Erica Weber, BMS Instructional Coach

John Richey, BMS Parent

Jaime Sturdivant, BHS Principal

Katy Mussulman, BHS Teacher

Pam Lanfear, BHS Parent

Karl Little, ALC Principal

Jamie Paradise, ALC Teacher

Melissa Ureste, ALC Support Staff

BISD DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2017-18

Adam Hile, Assistant Superintendent
Patricia Hernandez, Director of Special Programs
David Correll, Business Representative
Nathan Byers, Business Representative
Susan Boyd, Community Representative
Steven Phillips, Community Representative
Melissa Phillips, Parent
Kailynn Hudson, Parent
Amy Davis, Parent
Mallory Marr, Campus Administrator
Jessica Diffie, Teacher
Jamie Paradise, Teacher
Joey Reyes, Teacher
Shellie Read, Teacher
Rebecca Koch, Teacher
Aaron Stewart, Teacher
Charlotte Townsend, Teacher
Cynthia Alvarez, Paraprofessional
Julie Green, Counselor

TIMELINE

October 17, 2016

Bridgeport ISD Board of Trustees discussed rules and procedures for being an Innovation District.

Board takes action to approve resolution to initiate consideration for being designated as an Innovation District.

Board held public hearing to discuss becoming District of Innovation and appoints District of Innovation Planning Committee to develop a Local Innovation Plan.

November 7, 2016

District of Innovation Planning Committee met to discuss the Local Innovation Plan procedures and possible areas of need to be addressed in a Local Innovation Plan for BISD.

December 5, 2016

District of Innovation Planning Committee met to discuss district needs and draft a preliminary BISD Local Innovation Plan proposal.

December 12, 2016

Board to take action to approve notifying the Texas Commissioner of Education of their intent to vote on adopting BISD's final Local Innovation Plan.

December 13, 2016

Proposed BISD District of Innovation Plan posted on the BISD website.

January 12, 2017

District Advisory Committee conducts a public meeting to consider final version of the BISD Local Innovation Plan.

January 16, 2017

Proposed BISD Local Innovation Plan presented to the BISD Board of Trustees for consideration and approval.

January 17, 2017

BISD submits approved Local Intervention Plan to the Commissioner of Education.

January 16, 2018

BISD District Advisory Committee meets to consider amendments to the Local Innovation Plan.

February 12, 2018

Proposed BISD Local Innovation Plan amendments presented to the BISD Board of Trustees for consideration and approval.

BISD LOCAL INNOVATION PLAN

I. Teacher Certification

(DK LEGAL, DK LOCAL, DK EXHIBIT) (TEC 21.003, 21.053, 21.057)

Currently

TEC 21.003 states in the event a district cannot locate a certified teacher for a position or a teacher is teaching a subject outside of their certification, the district must submit a request to the Texas Education Agency and/or State Board for Educator Certification for an emergency certification. TEA then approves or denies this request.

TEC 21.053 states a teacher must present his/her certificate to the District before an employment contract will be binding. This prohibits the District from paying an educator for teaching 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 certified or uncertified teacher is assigned to a classroom for more than 20 instructional days.

Proposed

This exemption from the current state teacher certification requirements that inhibit the BISD's ability to hire teachers for hard-to-fill teaching positions will allow the district to establish local qualification and training requirements. This will enrich applicant pools in specific content areas if certified teachers are not available to teach those courses. In addition, this exemption will afford the District the flexibility to hire professionals in certain trades or vocations to teach the crafts of those trades or vocations (such as welding, fine arts, health sciences, law, etc.) if certified teachers are not available to teach those courses.

Local Guidelines

1. BISD will maintain its current expectations for employee certification and is committed to hiring individuals with appropriate certification for the position in question. Where that is not reasonably possible, the District will have the flexibility to hire individuals who are knowledgeable in the area and equipped to effectively perform the duties of the position in question.
2. In core classes, the campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request to allow a certified teacher to teach a subject and/or grade level out of their field. The certified teacher must have a minimum of 12 college hours in the subject they will teach.
3. In elective classes, including CTE classes, the campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request to allow an individual to teach a subject or specific course. The principal must specify credentials, work experience, or life experience the individual possesses that would qualify them to teach the proposed subject.
4. Teachers teaching outside of their certification area will be provided teacher mentoring, increased observations and feedback, professional development, or other supports.
5. The superintendent will report this action to the Board at the first board meeting following the assignment.

II. Probationary Contracts

(DCA LEGAL) (TEC 21.102(b))

Currently

TEC 21.102(b) states a probationary contract may be renewed for two additional one-year periods, for a maximum permissible probationary contract period of three school years, except that the probationary period may not exceed one year for a person who has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment by the district.

Proposed

This exemption from probationary contracts being limited to one year for a person who has been employed as a teacher or administrator in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment by the district will allow BISD extended time for the evaluation and training of new personnel. BISD is committed to effectively managing teacher contracts and this exemption will provide the district with the flexibility to keep all professional employees new to the district on probationary contracts for a maximum permissible period of three school years.

Local Guidelines

1. For experienced teachers, counselors, or nurses new to the district that have been employed in public education for at least five of the eight previous years, a probationary contract may be issued for up to three years.
2. All other teachers hired in the District may remain on probationary states for three years, an may be issued a fourth year of probation in accordance with TEC 21.102(c).

III. Planning and Preparation Time

(DL LEGAL) (TEC 21.404)

Currently

TEC 21.404 requires each classroom teacher to take 450 minutes within each two-week period for instructional preparation, including parent-teacher conferences, evaluating students' work, and planning. A planning and preparation period under this section may not be less than 45 minutes within the instructional day. During a planning and preparation period, a classroom teacher may not be required to participate in any other activity.

Proposed

This exemption from the mandated teacher planning and preparation requirements will allow BISD teachers to request that a planning and preparation period be altered to meet the individual needs of the teacher (i.e. duration and timing). Only the teacher can make this request.

Local Guidelines

1. BISD will create master schedules that include at least 450 minutes of teacher preparation time every 2 weeks with a minimum of 45 minutes each day.
2. Teachers may request a change in their schedule based on instructional needs of students, scheduling changes for extra duties, or other campus or student needs. This request must be made in writing to the campus principal.
3. The campus principal may grant this request or work collaboratively with the teacher to create a schedule with appropriate preparation time that meets the needs of the teacher and the campus.

IV. Minimum Minutes of Instruction

(EB LEGAL/LOCAL, EC LEGAL/LOCAL) (TEC 25.081, TEC 25.082)

Currently

TEC 25.081 strikes language requiring 180 days of instruction and requires districts and charter schools to provide at least 75,600 minutes of instruction (including intermissions and recess). The bill also allows school districts and charter schools to add minutes as necessary to compensate for minutes of instruction lost due to school closures caused by disaster, flood, extreme weather conditions, fuel curtailment, or another calamity.

Proposed

This exemption will provide BISD the flexibility to adjust minutes of instruction will assist with personalizing learning to better meet individual student needs. It also has the added benefit of allowing the possibility of an altered length of a school day, which may include, for example, a later start/early release time to accommodate additional professional development/collaboration opportunities professional and support staff in our district.

Local Guidelines

1. BISD will gather input from the DAC and campus principals/staff to develop a calendar that addresses student instruction and focused professional development in conjunction with required instructional minutes requirement.
2. The majority of school days will be scheduled to meet the 420 minutes of instruction requirement and the number of days will be scheduled to be as close as possible to the 75,600 minutes of instruction.
3. Individual days with a length less than 420 minutes may be scheduled throughout the calendar to incorporate time for professional development or parent conferences as needed.
4. The proposed calendar will be posted for public comment prior to Board approval.

V. Uniform School Start Date *(EB LEGAL) (TEC 25.0811)*

Currently

TEC 25.0811 states a school district may not begin school before the 4th Monday of August. However, for many years districts had the option of applying for a waiver to adopt an earlier start date.

Proposed

This exemption will allow BISD the flexibility to make a local decision on each school year start date to best meet the needs of the students and local community. This empowers BISD to personalize learning, increase college and career readiness, and balance the amount of instructional time per semester. In addition, by having the flexibility in the start and end of the school year, students will be able to enroll in college courses that start in early June, thereby increasing college and career readiness.

Local Guidelines

1. BISD will gather input from the DAC and campus principals/staff to develop a calendar that addresses student instruction and focused professional development in conjunction with required instructional minutes requirements.
2. The start date of each school year will be determined with input from the staff and community. The start date may occur on or after the second Monday of August based on input.
3. Alignment of the district calendar with neighboring districts, dual credit college partners, and STAAR timelines will be considered.
4. The proposed calendar will be posted to public comment prior to Board approval.

VI. 90 Percent Attendance Rule

(FEC LOCAL) (TEC 25.092)

Currently

TEC 25.092 currently requires students attend class 90 percent of the school days in order to earn credit. School Attendance Committees may consider extenuating circumstances in order to reinstate credit or provide opportunities for students to make up time. .

Proposed

The exemption from the 90 percent attendance rule will not penalize students who miss class due to extra/co-curricular activities, academic activities, or other extenuating circumstances.

The requested exemption from Section 25.092 does not in any way impact or change existing compulsory attendance requirements or University Interscholastic League ("UIL") rules. Moreover, opting out of Section 25.092 in no way limits or modifies a teacher's right to determine the finality of a grade in accordance with Texas Education Code Section 28.0214, nor does it restrict or alter a teacher's right to assign grades in accordance with Texas Education Code Section 28.0216.

Local Guidelines

1. BISD will continue to encourage students to be in attendance for a minimum of 90% of the instructional time during a given semester.
2. When considering percentage of attendance, the principal and counselor will not consider school-sponsored extra/co-curricular activities, academic activities, or other extenuating circumstances such as religious exemptions or serious illness.
3. If the student otherwise is present for less than 90% of instruction, the school will convene an Attendance Committee in order to consider a plan for recovery of time and/or credit as specified in TEC 25.092.

VII. Class Size Ratio

(EEB LEGAL) (TEC 25.112) (TEC 25.113)

Currently

TEC 25.112 requires Kindergarten – 4th Grade classes to be kept at a 22 student to 1 teacher ratio. When a class exceeds this limit, the district must complete a waiver with the Texas Education Agency.

TEC 25.113 requires a letter is sent home to parents 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.

Proposed

This exemption allows BISD the time to staff campuses with effective teachers by granting local control over class size ratios. Small class sizes enable effective teachers to provide more individualized attention to each student.

Local Guidelines

1. BISD will make every attempt to begin each school year with enough teachers to establish a student to teacher ratio of at least 22:1 or less in each K-4 homeroom class.
2. In the event that any class size in grades K-4 reaches a ratio greater than 22:1 during the school year, the superintendent will report this information to the Board. Decisions regarding appropriate student to teacher ratios will be made at the local level, taking into consideration the age and grade level of the students, the subject matter of the class, the needs of the individual teachers and student groups, and the availability of additional instructional staff members.
3. In the event that any class size in grades K-4 reaches a ratio of 24:1 or greater during the school year, the superintendent will report this information to the Board. The Board will take action to reduce the student to teach ratio for that grade level.
4. A TEA waiver request will not be filed when a K-4 classroom exceeds the 22:1 ratio.
5. Parents of students in K-4 classrooms that exceed a ratio of 22:1 will continue to be notified as per TEC 25.113.

VIII. Student Discipline Provisions

(FO LEGAL/LOCAL) (TEC 37.0012)

Currently

TEC 37.0012 requires the designation of a Campus Behavior Coordinator on each campus. This designee is responsible for maintaining student discipline and providing notice of disciplinary actions to parents.

Proposed

Campus principals and assistant principals already serve in this capacity. Naming an additional Campus Behavior Coordinators would not benefit the district.

Local Guidelines

1. BISD will maintain administrative staff on each campus to handle the duties outlined in TEC 37.0012 for the Campus Behavior Coordinator. The Board will make local decisions as to the ratio of administrators to the number of students on each campus.
2. Campus administrators will be charged with the duties of maintaining student discipline and contacting parents of disciplinary action as outlined in TEC 37.0012.

IX. Long Range Energy Plan
(CL LEGAL) (TEC 44.902)

Currently

TEC 44.902 requires the board of trustees of a school district to establish a long-range energy plan to reduce the district's annual electric consumption by five percent beginning with the 2008 state fiscal year and consume electricity in subsequent fiscal years in accordance with the district's energy plan.

Proposed

This exemption will allow Bridgeport ISD to establish a local plan to implement energy savings. BISD has already embraced an aggressive energy management plan and such long-range plan would create redundancies.

Local Guidelines

1. BISD will strive to conserve energy through initial, short-term capital costs that may reduce lifetime costs of fixtures and energy-reliant equipment.
2. The Board will be responsible for evaluating the plan and determining what changes, if any are needed to reduce the energy costs for the district with accordance with local budgets.

X. Interdistrict Transfers

(FDA LOCAL) (TEC 25.036)

Currently

TEC 25.036 states that students attending a district through an interdistrict transfer may apply for transfer annually. This is interpreted that the interdistrict transfer must be for a term of one school year.

Proposed

On rare occasions, student behavior warrants suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion. In addition, student attendance may fall below the TEA truancy standard. In these rare cases, Bridgeport ISD seeks exemption from the one-year transfer commitment.

Local Guidelines

1. BISD will continue to accept transfers as space and local policy allows.
2. An interdistrict transfer student may have such transfer status revoked by the Superintendent at any time during the year if the student is assigned discipline consequences of suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion.
3. In addition, students not meeting the State's 90% attendance standard may also be subject to immediate revocation of the transfer status.