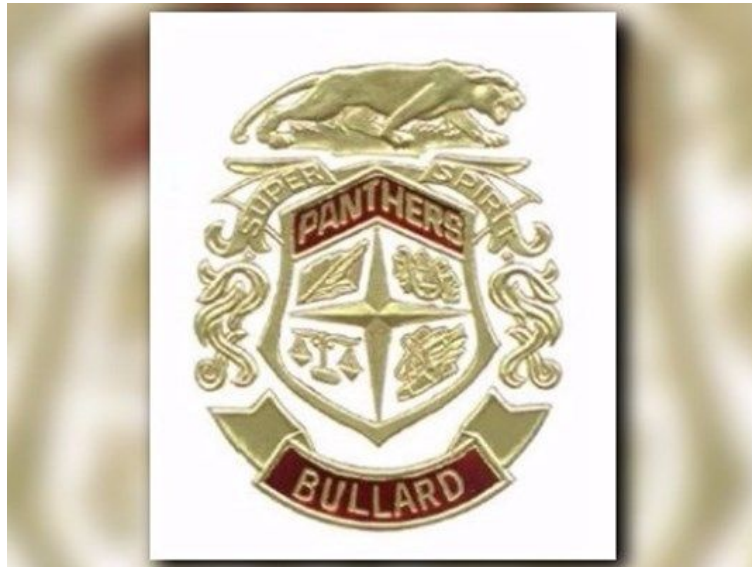


BULLARD INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



2017-2018

DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLAN

District of Innovation

House Bill 1842, Section 4, passed in the 84th Texas Legislative Session, provides an opportunity for Texas public school districts be designated as Districts of Innovation, thereby allowing them the flexibility to be exempt from or modify state requirements at the local level to better meet the needs of the students and personalize learning.

Districts of Innovation provide opportunities for:

- Greater local control
- Increased flexibility governing education programming
- Empowerment to innovate and think differently

Districts are not exempt from statutes related to curriculum, graduation requirements, nor academic and financial accountability.

This innovation plan was initially developed by a diverse group of thirty-seven members, including teachers, administrators, parents, and community members, and it was shaped by additional input from principals, teachers, district staff, parents, and community members in an effort to improve the school experience. The advisory committee was focused on exploring innovations to give additional time for teachers for planning, preparation, and professional development. On January 9, 2017, the Bullard ISD Board of Trustees approved a resolution to initiate the process of becoming a District of Innovation (DOI). In addition, the Board of Trustees requested a DOI committee be formed to develop an innovation plan. On February 13, 2017, the Board of Trustees held a public hearing in which they instructed the superintendent to move forward to create an DOI Committee (DOI) to develop the plan. On March 8, 2017, the District of Innovation process was shared with all campus principals and DOI committee members. Participants brainstormed possible exemptions and innovations to better meet the needs of our students and diverse community. On March 22, 2017, the DOI Plan was initiated. From March 23 - April 4, 2017, the DOI plan was developed with input from the DOI Committee. This five-year District of Innovation Plan will be in effect from May 12, 2017- May 12, 2022.

District of Innovation Committee

District	<p>Todd Schneider, Superintendent Jan Hill, Deputy Superintendent Amanda Goode, Assistant Curriculum Director Jodie Albritton, Assistant Curriculum Director Lee Sleeper, Director of Operations and Technology Kathy Sleeper, Technology Integration Specialist Lisa Williams, Director of Special Programs Laura Jones, Director of Communications Michelle Hurst, Principal at Bullard Early Childhood Jana Wright, Teacher Kim Smith, Teacher Angie Peters, Counselor at Bullard Early Childhood Kim Murphy, Principal of Bullard Primary School Angie McClure, Teacher Beth Gardner, Teacher Cheryl Conner, Counselor at Bullard Primary School Jenny Kasson, Principal at Bullard Gina Kelley, Teacher Brandy Swinney, Teacher Ginger Stewart, Assistant Principal at Bullard Primary/Elementary School Amy Bickerstaff, Principal at Bullard Intermediate School Sharla Rounsavall, Teacher Terra Lee, Teacher Helene Cortinas, Assistant Principal at Bullard Intermediate School Cheryl Hendrix, Principal at Bullard Middle School Laurissa Ridgley, Teacher Marcia Lierman, Teacher John Dixon, Assistant Principal at Bullard Middle School Amanda Silkett, Principal at Bullard Cassie Swoape, Teacher Stephen Monahan, Teacher Lori Anderson, Counselor at Bullard High School</p>
Parent Community Business	<p>Lakara Wright, Parent Kim Wilburn, Parent Will Flores, Parent Austin Bell, Business/Community Member Dave Deffenbaugh, Business/Community Member</p>

District of Innovation Timeline

January 9, 2017:

Board of Trustees approved the resolution to form a District of Innovation Committee.

February 13, 2017:

Board of Trustees approved the District of Innovation Committee as well as the resolution to hold a public hearing to discuss the possibility of using HB 1842 to become a District of Innovation.

March 8, 2017:

Held initial District of Innovation (DOI) meeting to discuss what options were available as a District of Innovation

March 22, 2017:

Held second DOI meeting to discuss specific options to be presented at the Public Hearing and Board of Trustees meeting.

April 5, 2017:

Committee to approve DOI plan for Public Hearing

April 6, 2017:

Post the DOI plan on the district website for 30 days

April 10, 2017:

Public Hearing for DOI

Board to approve 2017-2018 Calendar

May 11, 2017:

Board of Trustees to approve DOI Plan

May 12, 2017

Bullard ISD will submit DOI Plan to Commissioner of Education

Update all policy changes with TASB

Areas of Innovation

1. First and Last Day of Instruction/Early Release

(Exemption from TEC §25.0811, TEC §25.0812, TEC §25.081)

Current: 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.

TEC §25.081 requires that a school district provide at least 75,600 minutes of instruction each school year, including intermission and recess. School districts must seek a waiver of this requirement from TEA in order to provide fewer than the required number of instructional minutes in the case of natural disaster or calamity. This requirement restricts the District in the development of the academic calendar, including the scheduling of early release days and staff development days.

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 (no earlier the third Monday in August) will enable the district to develop a calendar that best meets the needs of the students in BISD. An earlier start date allows a better balance between semesters, more instructional days prior to mandatory testing, and a school end date no later than the first Friday in June. By ending earlier, BISD 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.

The district seeks relief from TEC §25.081 in order to provide staff development before the start of instruction, as well as additional days throughout the school year. These non-instructional days have been purposefully placed throughout the calendar to allow for teachers to plan instruction based on student instructional data in addition to engaging in relevant, targeted professional development. The district seeks additional flexibility to schedule early release days in the calendar in order to provide for student and district needs.

2. Teacher Certification

(Exemption From:TEC §21.003(a) TEC §21.053,TEC §21.057)

Current: 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 for teacher 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: Bullard ISD will continue to seek traditionally certified candidates for all teaching positions. A waiver would allow a certified teacher to teach one subject outside his/her certified field. This would require the submission of credentials and superintendent approval. However, for Dual Credit and/or CTE courses for which a traditionally certified candidate is not identified, the District will recruit instructors with an appropriate Master's degree (dual credit) or industry certifications/experience in the field of need (CTE). Bullard ISD can extend the employee a one year local certificate approved by the superintendent. The District will develop minimum required qualifications for persons hired for such positions and also will identify required professional development in the areas of student management, instructional strategies, curriculum and more. After thoroughly vetting candidates for hire, Bullard ISD will consider the instructors hired for these positions to be appropriately qualified and will not provide additional special notification to parents of students in their classes that the instructor does not hold a traditional teaching certificate. This innovation will allow Bullard ISD to consider broader applicant pools and to broaden the District's course offerings or fill hard-to-staff positions while maintaining a high quality of instruction.

3. Teacher Appraisals

(Exemption from: TEC §21.351 Recommended Appraisal Process and Performance Criteria; BISSD Local Policy (DNB) Frequency of Appraisals)

Current: TEC and TAC require that state standardized test scores (student growth measure) be used as one of the evaluation measures for teachers and administrators. (TEC 21.351, 21.352, 21.354, 21.541, 19; TAC 150). Additionally, the Bullard ISD Local Policy DNB, district principals and other campus administrators shall be appraised annually.

Proposal: Bullard ISD believes it is essential to maintain flexibility in using a variety of measurements, including goal setting, observations, student growth progress toward learning objectives, and other formative assessments in determining the performance of its educators.

By claiming exemption from TEC §21.351, the district can determine locally the most appropriate appraisal criteria to evaluate its educators. Bullard ISD proposes the following:

- Evaluations every other year for teachers who are rated Proficient or higher.
- Criteria for the off year will include:
 - Goal setting
 - Minimum of two documented Walkthroughs
 - Portfolio/Artifacts in relation to set goals to be turned in at the end of the year
- T-TESS growth waiver-to allow educators to become more efficient with the appraisal system and growth process for 2017-2018.
 - District can maintain local flexibility to build a practice of using a variety of measurements, including goal setting, observations, and student growth progress toward learning objectives.

4. Strategic Plan

(Exemption from: TEC §11.251 Planning and Decision making processes; TEC §11.252 District level Planning and Decision Making; TEC §11.253 Campus Planning and Site-base Decision Making; TEC §11.255 Dropout Prevention)

Current: According the TEC §11.252, each school district shall have a district improvement plan that is developed, evaluated, and revised annually, in accordance with district policy, by the superintendent with the assistance of the district-level committee established under Section 11.251. The purpose of the district improvement plan is to guide district and campus staff in the improvement of student performance for all student groups in order to attain state standards in respect to the achievement indicators adopted under Sections 39.053(c)(1)-(4). TEC §11.253 states that each school district shall maintain current policies and procedures to ensure that effective planning and site-based decision-making occur at each campus to direct and support the improvement of student performance for all students.

Proposal: Bullard ISD has a strong history of involving teachers, administrators, parents, community members and students in the decision-making process. Under the DOI Plan, the prescriptive list of requirements in the district improvement plan will be replaced by the Strategic Planning process. Those items listed in TEC 11.251 detailing the selection of representatives for the District Improvement Committee will continue to be implemented. Those items listed in TEC §11.252 of a compliance nature will no longer be implemented and be replaced by relevant strategic plan components. The Strategic Plan will be implemented over a 3-5 year period.

5. Minimum Attendance Required

(Exemption from: TEC • §25.092 Minimum Attendance Required for Class Credit)

Current: A student in any grade level from kindergarten through grade 12 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. A student who is in attendance for at least 75 percent but less than 90 percent of the days a class is offered may be given credit or a final grade for the class if the student completes a plan approved by the school's principal that provides for the student to meet the instructional requirements of the class.

The board of trustees of each school district shall appoint one or more attendance committees to hear petitions for class credit or a final grade by students who are in attendance fewer than the number of days and have not earned class credit or a final grade. Classroom teachers shall comprise a majority of the membership of the committee.

Proposal: The Minimum Attendance for Class Credit or Final Grade requirement is also referred to as the 90% rule. This requirement is an arbitrary percentage, where school districts award credit based on seat time rather than demonstrated mastery of the learning. The district needs the flexibility to award class credit to students based on content mastery rather than seat time. The DOI plan would maintain a minimum attendance percentage for traditional classes, while allowing for flexibility in students demonstrating mastery of content through an innovative system and a more flexible pace. BISD does not wish to penalize students who miss class due to extra/co-curricular activities, academic activities, field-based experiences, distance learning activities, or other extenuating circumstances. Freedom from the minimum attendance required rule will allow the district to implement blended learning, problem-based learning, and community partnerships and internships, that will increase student engagement in innovative learning opportunities.