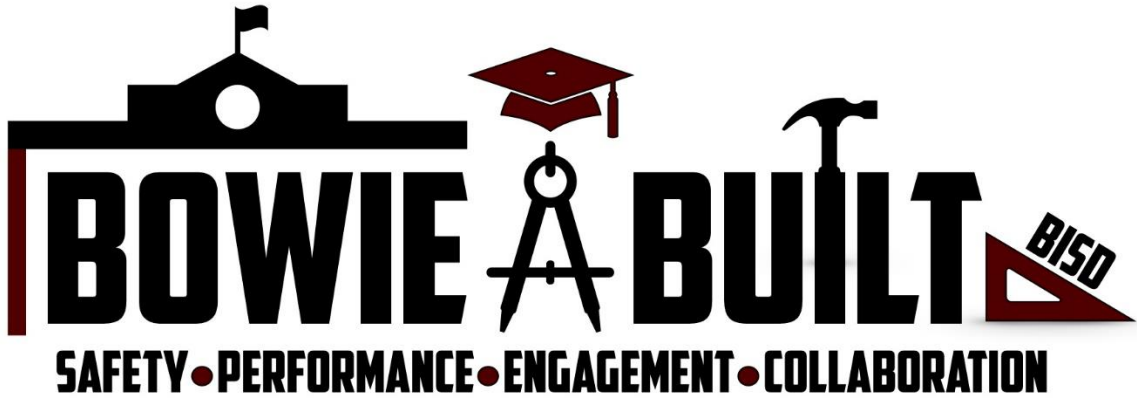


Bowie Independent School District



District of Innovation Plan

2022-2027

Date of Board Approval: September 19, 2022

Bowie Independent School District

District of Innovation Plan

Introduction

H.B. 1842 (84th Session of the Texas Legislature) in part amended Chapter 12 of the Texas Education Code (TEC) to create Districts of Innovations. Districts are eligible for designation if certain performance requirements are met and the district follows certain procedures for adoption as outlined in Statute. The designation provides the district will be exempt from certain sections of the TEC that inhibit the goals of the district as outlined in the locally adopted Innovation Plan.

The Bowie Independent School District's District of Innovation Committee reviewed the Texas Education Code to determine which provisions currently inhibit the District from maximizing educational opportunities for students enrolled in Bowie Independent School District. As a result of the committee's work, Bowie Independent School District has chosen to take the opportunity to exercise more local control over the education of our students. By adopting this plan, Bowie Independent School District will be able to make decisions based on the needs of our students and maximize their learning opportunities.

This local innovation plan will remain in effect for a period of five years once adopted by the Bowie Independent School District Board of Trustees. The plan will commence with the 2022-2023 school year and will conclude at the end of the 2026-2027 school year, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law.

Bowie Independent School District Local Innovation Plan Committee Members:

J. Blake Enlow, Superintendent
Christie Walker, Assistant Superintendent
Lee Ann Farris, Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Joanne Keeler, High School Principal
Jeneanne Fleming, Junior High Principal
Sara Cravens, Intermediate School Principal
Kathy Green, Elementary School Principal
Becky Sanders, Instructional Coach/Technology Coordinator
Kara Burton, High School Counselor
Adam Bell, High School Assistant Principal
Summer Eudy, High School Teacher
Brett Hill, High School Teacher
Kristi Hunt, High School Teacher
Christy Baker, High School Student Services Coordinator
Bre Jones, High School Teacher
Heather Duncan, Junior High Counselor
Jason Childress, Junior High Assistant Principal
Darla Hakanson, Junior High Student Services Coordinator
Katie Lisle, Junior High Teacher
Enza Zimmerman, Junior High Teacher
Ethan Adams, Junior High Teacher
Landon Wesley, Intermediate School Assistant Principal
April Tipton, Intermediate School Teacher
Meagan Patterson, Intermediate School Teacher
Meggan Ferguson, Intermediate School Teacher
Jennifer Kennedy, Intermediate School Teacher
Debi Merkey, Intermediate School Teacher
Kelly Roth, Intermediate School Teacher
Addie Enlow, Intermediate School Teacher

Callie Byler, Elementary School Teacher
Holly Bullock, Elementary School Teacher
Kim Duke, Elementary School Teacher
Michelle Bigbie, Elementary School Teacher
Tericka Westbrook, Elementary School Teacher
Shawna Torres, Elementary School Teacher
Aaron Degler, Business Member
Suzie Treadwell, Business Member
Brent Shaw, Business/Community Member
Aimee Hodges, Parent/Community Member
Nichole Maddox, Parent/Community Member
David Hinson, Community Member

Bowie Independent School District

District of Innovation Plan

I. District Calendar

TEC 25.0811 states that 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.

Proposed Exemption: To best serve the students of Bowie Independent School District, the committee proposes that the District be given the flexibility to create a school calendar which meets the needs of our local community. The committee proposes moving the mandatory start date earlier than the fourth Monday of August.

The proposal benefits our students by allowing the District to create a calendar with semesters which are more balanced in length. Therefore the students would receive more similar instruction time each semester than beginning the fourth Monday in August would allow. Also, the proposal would allow more instructional time in the classrooms prior to the state assessments. This would give our students the opportunity to be better prepared for high stakes testing required by the state.

II. Length of School Day

TEC 25.082 States that a school day shall be at least seven hours each day, including intermissions and recesses. The state early release waiver is limited to a maximum of six days.

Proposed Exemption: To best serve the students of Bowie Independent School District, exempting from the 420 minute requirement would give the District local control and much greater flexibility with scheduling.

The proposal benefits our students by allowing the District flexibility to offer increased opportunities during the school year for accelerated instruction. It would also allow teachers the opportunity to participate in professional learning communities and other collaborative processes which will lead to increased student outcomes.

III. Probationary Contracts

TEC 21.102 (b) states that a probationary contract may not be for a term exceeding one school year. The 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 Exemption: To best serve the students of Bowie Independent School District, exempting from this provision will allow the District the option to offer a probationary contract for a period of one additional year for a newly hired teacher who has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment to allow for continued professional growth. The term “teacher” includes principals, assistant principals, supervisors, classroom teachers, school counselors, and other full-time professional employees who are required to hold a certificate issued under TEC Section 21, Subchapter B, or a school nurse.

The proposal benefits our students by affording the District Flexibility with regard to probationary contracts. It also allows the District sufficient time, when needed, to determine a teacher’s effectiveness. Allowing the District an additional year to adequately determine a teacher’s effectiveness will offer that teacher the opportunity to improve in the art and science of teaching which will ultimately benefit our students.

IV. Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator

TEC 37.0012 States that a person at each campus must be designated to serve as the campus behavior coordinator. The person designated may be the principal of the campus or any other campus administrator selected by the principal.

Proposed Exemption: To best serve the students of Bowie Independent School District, the committee proposes that the District exempts from the designation of only one person as the Campus Behavior Coordinator. All Bowie I.S.D. campuses have a minimum of two administrators, who by job description, serve in this capacity. Our administrators work together to ensure compliance with Chapter 37, Subchapter A.

The proposal benefits our students by allowing us the opportunity to pursue a collaborative approach to addressing discipline issues. This approach to dealing with discipline issues makes it possible for multiple staff members to provide emotional and social support to our students in their time of need. Exemption from this requirement will allow the option for increased collaboration in regard to student discipline.

V. Minimum Attendance for Class Credit or Final Grade

TEC 25.092 states that 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.

Proposed Exemption: To best serve the students of Bowie ISD, the committee believes that exempting from the minimum attendance requirement would allow our students the opportunity to participate in a broader range of extracurricular and co-curricular activities which would enhance their educational experiences without penalty and would allow flexibility in case of extenuating circumstances. Bowie ISD believes 90% is an arbitrary percentage emphasizing “seat time” over content mastery. By claiming exemption from Sec. 25.092, the district can abstain from penalizing students who miss class time due to participation in extracurricular and co-curricular activities including but not limited to 4H, academic activities, other activities, or for extenuating circumstances.

The proposal benefits our students by enabling the District to accommodate students with legitimate scheduling conflicts while reducing dropouts and increasing the number of qualifying graduates. All absences, including extenuating circumstances, will be reviewed and approved on an individual basis by the attendance committee and campus administrator. Approval must be given before the absence once the student reaches the 90% threshold. Note that relief from Sec. 25.092 does not in any way impact or alter existing compulsory attendance requirements or University Interscholastic League (UIL) rules. Furthermore, in no way does this exemption limit a teacher's right to determine the finality of a grade in accordance with Texas Education Code Sec. 28.214 nor does it restrict or alter a teacher's right to assign grades in accordance with Texas Education Code Sec. 28.216. Regardless of whether any adjustments or changes are made to the minimum attendance for class credit or final grade laws, Bowie ISD believes this issue to be a local decision as opposed to a state mandate.

VI. Teacher Certification

TEC 21.003 States that 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.”

TEC 21.053 States that a person who desires to teach in a public school shall present the person's certificate for filing with the employing district before the person's contract with the board of trustees of the district is binding.

TEC 21.057 States that a school district that assigns an inappropriately certified or uncertified teacher to the same classroom for more than 30 consecutive instructional days during the same school year shall provide written notice of the assignment to a parent or guardian of each student in that classroom.

Proposed Exemption: To best serve the students of Bowie ISD, the committee believes that school district leadership should be able to determine what is most beneficial for our students when selecting the candidates who are best suited to provide high quality instruction in career and technical education (CTE) courses; science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) courses; dual-credit coursework; and other courses. **The local certification exemption may only be applied for non-core classes, unless the educator has a current Texas teaching certification.**

The proposal benefits our students in a variety of ways. By claiming the exemption, the District shall have the right to recruit individuals from certain trades, industries, and vocations with industry knowledge and real world experience and consider qualifications based on experience, industry certification, etc. District leadership including principals, CTE administrators, human resource department members, and campus committees shall determine whether it is in the best interest of its students to certify individuals based on these factors. Further, the District shall establish local criteria for training and locally certifying individuals rather than adhere strictly to mandates outlined in Sec. 21.053. In doing so, parental notification of “inappropriately certified or uncertified teachers” under Sec. 21.057 would no longer be necessary. Regardless of whether any adjustments or changes are made to the certification laws, Bowie ISD believes this issue to be a local decision as opposed to a state mandate.