

Bowie Independent School District



District of Innovation Plan

2017 - 2022

Date of Board Approval: May 30, 2017

**Bowie Independent School District
District of Innovation Plan
Timeline of Events**

January 16, 2017:	Initial discussions with Bowie I.S.D. Board of Trustees concerning Districts of Innovation begin
February 23, 2017:	Districts of Innovation discussions with Bowie I.S.D. Board of Trustees continue
February 23, 2017:	Bowie I.S.D. Board of Trustees approves District of Innovation Resolution
March 20, 2017:	Public hearing concerning Districts of Innovation
March 20, 2017:	Bowie I.S.D. Board of Trustees votes in favor of pursuing District of Innovation designation
March 20, 2017:	Bowie I.S.D. Board of Trustees approves local innovation committee
March 30, 2017:	Local innovation committee meets for the first time to discuss D.O.I. process, B.I.S.D. local needs, view sample plans, and discuss formulating the B.I.S.D. innovation plan
April 7, 2017	Local innovation committee meets the second time to discuss possible D.O.I. exemptions and begin writing plan
April 24, 2017	Local innovation committee meets the third time to finalize D.O.I. exemptions
April 24, 2017	Local innovation committee finalizes and unanimously approves the Bowie Independent School District Innovation Plan
April 25, 2017	Bowie I.S.D. District Innovation Plan posted on school website
April 26, 2017	Bowie I.S.D. informs Commissioner of the proposed local innovation plan
May 2, 2017	Bowie I.S.D. holds District Improvement Team meeting and initial public hearing to present the D.O.I. plan for approval by the D.I.T.
May 30, 2017	Bowie I.S.D. Board of Trustees holds final public hearing and votes on local District of Innovation plan (minimum of 30 days following the website posting)

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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 2017-2018 school year and will conclude at the end of the 2021-2022 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:

Steven Monkres, Superintendent
Christie Walker, Director of Curriculum and Federal Programs
Blake Enlow, High School Principal
Hector Madrigal, Junior High Principal
Russell Black, Intermediate School Principal
Steven Valkenaar, Elementary School Principal
Jeannette Shaw, High School Counselor
Dylan Stark, Athletic Director
Brant Farris, High School Teacher
Candace Raines-Mercer, High School Teacher
Dana Polk, High School Teacher
Ronnie Mund, High School Teacher
Meagan Wilson, Junior High Teacher
Bree Jones, Junior High Teacher
Jeneanne Fleming, Junior High Teacher
Tamara Blythe, Intermediate School Teacher
Nicole Childs, Intermediate School Teacher
Scott Weber, Paraprofessional
Cindy Hedeman, Intermediate School Teacher
Wendy McCarty, Elementary School Teacher
Randi Hall, Elementary School Teacher
Kami Bowman, Elementary School Teacher
Jessica Gaston, Elementary School Teacher
Kenny Miller, Parent/Community Member
Justin Harris, Parent/Community Member
John McShan, Community Member
Robin Swint, Parent/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.