Benavides Independent School District
District of Innovation Adopted Plan
2023-2024

TEACHER CERTIFICATION

TEC Code Requiring Exemption:

TEC 21.003(a): “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.”

TEC 21.053(a): “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 21.053(b): “An educator who does not hold a valid certificate may not be paid for teaching or work done before the effective date of issuance of a valid certificate.”

TEC 21.057(a): “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.”

TEC 21.057(b): “The superintendent of the school district shall provide the notice required by Subsection (a) not later than the 30th instructional day after the date of the assignment of the inappropriately certified or uncertified teacher.”

Rationale of Exemption for Benavides ISD:

Currently, the district struggles to recruit certified teachers for teacher vacancies. By exempting the district from Chapter 21 noted above, the district will have the flexibility to:

- Hire experts in their field even if they don’t have a teaching certification
- Hire “ hard to fill” positions
- Those with industry expertise.

Upon renewal of the innovation plan, Benavides ISD (BISD) will maintain its current expectation and commitment to hire certified professionals and will continue to seek highly effective, certified educators for all teaching positions. However, where that is not reasonably possible, the district will have the flexibility to issue a local teaching permit (District of Innovation Permit) and hire individuals who are knowledgeable in the area and are fully equipped to effectively perform the duties of the position in question based on local certification criteria. A TEA Permit or Waiver will be required.

Implementation Procedures:

1. In an effort to best serve the students of BISD, all decisions pertaining to teacher certification and assignments will be handled locally. Teacher certification waivers, state permit applications, fees, or notifications will be submitted to the TEA.

2. BISD will continue its quest for effective, certified teachers, but in the event that a certified teacher cannot be secured, the district may issue a District of Innovation Permit based on skills and experiences outside the traditional teacher certification pathway based on the following criteria.

- An individual with certain qualifications who is not state certified as a teacher can be eligible to teach in hard to fill positions including, but not limited to:
    - Career and Technology Education
    - Dual Credit
    - Languages other than English
    - Math
    - Science
- Individuals hired under the BISD DOI Plan exemption, will:
    - Be issued a District of Innovation Permit;
    - Receive a one-year, Non-Certified contract that will be reviewed annually;
    - and be appraised using the same teacher appraisal system as required of all certified teachers.
- A person seeking a District of Innovation Permit must have the abilities and related knowledge/experience to fulfill the requirements of the position
- The principal/director must submit to the Superintendent and/or the Superintendent's Designee, a request for a District of Innovation Permit outlining all of the individual's credentials/qualifications.
- The principal/director must submit a summary outlining efforts made to secure a qualified and appropriately certified teacher.

Qualifications that may be considered include but are not limited to:

● Professional work experience.
● Formal training and education, including an Associate's Degree (CTE) and Bachelors/Masters/Doctoral Degrees.
● Active/Relevant industry certification or registration.
● Combination of work experience,training, and education.
● Demonstration of successful experience working with students.
    ● Enrolled in a TEA approved Alternative Certification Program

The Superintendent and/or the Superintendent's Designee will then approve the request if he/she believes that the individual possesses the knowledge, skills and experience required for the position and believes that the individual could be an asset to students. If approved by the Superintendent, the candidate will be presented to the Board of Trustees for consideration.

An employee working under a District of Innovation Permit will not receive a term contract, but will be issued a Non-Certified contract that may be renewed annually. Determinations shall be made on a case-by-case basis.

3. In order to ensure high quality instruction, BISD will provide the following support to candidates hired under a District of Innovation Permit:

● The campus principal and/or director will create a personal professional development plan for each teacher.
● When possible, lesson plans will be created in partnership with certified teachers in the same field.
● Additional professional development and support for classroom management will be provided.
● A designated mentor will be assigned.
● Classroom observation opportunities will be available.
    ● T TESS will be conducted

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Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator:

TEC Code Requiring Exemption: TEC 37.0012: Requires that a person be designated to serve as the Campus Behavior Coordinator (CBC) who is primarily responsible for maintaining student discipline and implementation of Chapter 37.

Rationale of Exemption for BISD:

Currently, one campus administrator serves as the Campus Behavior Coordinator.

Exemption from this requirement would allow all campus administrators to collaboratively monitor the compliance of Chapter 37 to ensure that the district provides a collaborative approach to discipline.

Implementation Procedures:

The district will:

● Allow all campus administrators to serve in the capacity of Campus Behavior Coordinator as a part of their job description.

TEC Code Requirement:

Sec. 25.0811. FIRST DAY OF INSTRUCTION. (a) 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.

Rationale of Exemption for Benavides ISD:

In order to develop a more functional school calendar that meets the academic needs of students before state testing and meets the required TEA 75,600 minutes of instructions.

Implementation Procedures:

The district will:

Develop a functional district calendar that meets the academic needs of all students with the input of parents and community. The superintendent will present the calendar to the board for approval.