

JUNE 2024 – MAY 2029

DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLAN

House Bill 1842, passed during the 84th Texas Legislative Session provides public school districts the opportunity to seek designation as a District of Innovation to obtain exemption from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code.



Board Approved:

June 25, 2024



Office of Academics
956-361-6100

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<https://www.sbcisd.net/>



Superintendent's Advisory Council

Member	Campus/Representative
Araiza, Marleen	Dr. Cash Elementary, Principal
Atkinson, Diana	Sullivan Environmental Sc. Academy, Principal
Barrera, Edwin	Community Representative
Casas, Nancy	Director, ASP
Cervantes, Manuel	Gateway/PRC, Teacher
Cortez, Christopher	Director, Finance
Cruz, Maria	Judge Oscar de la Fuente Elementary, Teacher
Flores, Rene	Director, Safety
Gallegos, Abraham	Executive Director, Administrative Services
Galvan, Evelyn	Veterans Memorial Academy, Teacher
Garcia, Sylvia	La Encantada Elementary, Principal
Gonzales, Luis	Director, Family and Community Engagement
Gonzalez, Rodolfo	La Paloma Elementary, Teacher
Grammar, Carmen	Riverside Middle School, Teacher
House, Maki	Dr. Cash Elementary, Teacher
Jacquez, Crystal	Miller Jordan MS, Assistant Principal
Maldonado, Iris	Rangerville Elementary, Teacher
Maney, Mary	San Benito HS, Teacher
Mata, Monica	Chief Financial Officer
Mosqueda, Alberto	Fred Booth Elementary, Teacher
Naranjo, Laura	Dr. Garza, STEAM Academy, Teacher
Nezzer, Lilia	Frank Roberts Elementary, Teacher
Ortega, Maricela	La Encantada, Teacher
Perez, Alfredo	Acting Superintendent
Resendez, Laura	Angela G. Leal Elem, Teacher
Rodriguez, Yvonne	Miller Jordan MS, Teacher
Saldana, Ray	Executive Director, Operations
Salinas, Alex	Higher Education Coordinator
Silva, Ermelinda	Ed Downs Fine Arts, Teacher
Spence, James	Berta Cabaza MS, Teacher
Zapata, Rosalinda	Community Representative

Timeline of Events

- | | |
|------------|--|
| 03/21/2024 | Superintendent Advisory Committee convenes to review the District of Innovation plan and consider revisions. |
| 04/11/2024 | District of Innovation survey sent to all district staff for consideration of revisions and feedback. |
| 05/07/2024 | Intent of Renewal of the District of Innovation designation and draft plan submitted for review at the Curriculum Committee Meeting. |
| 05/09/2024 | Superintendent Advisory Committee convenes to vote on the District of Innovation plan. The proposed DOI plan is approved by the majority of the committee members. |
| 05/13/2024 | Draft District of Innovation Plan posted on district website.
https://www.sbcisd.net/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=884590&type=d&pREC_ID=2134223 |
| 06/10/2024 | Public Hearing held for consideration of the proposed DOI plan. |
| 06/25/2024 | DOI Plan approved by SBCISD Board |

Renewal of District of Innovation

The District of Innovation plan must be renewed at the end of every five years in order to continue applying the flexibilities available by the designation. With the support of the Board of Trustees, SBCISD has undertaken the feedback process to determine interest in the renewal of the District of Innovation plan that was approved in 2019.

The plan was reviewed in its entirety with the Superintendent's Advisory Committee on May 09, 2024. The membership voted to determine whether to renew the plan with revisions. The proposed plan was approved by the majority of the committee members.

The plan was presented at a Public Hearing held on June 10, 2024 for consideration and feedback.

The San Benito CISD District of Innovation Plan for 2024 – 2029 was presented and approved by the Board of Trustees on June 25, 2024.

I. Introduction

House Bill 1842, passed during the 84th Texas Legislative Session provides public school districts the opportunity to seek designation as a District of Innovation to obtain exemption from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code. On Tuesday, December 18th, 2018 the Board of Trustees adopted a resolution to initiate the process of designation as a District of Innovation. On May 09, 2024, the Superintendent's Advisory Council (SAC) comprised of District stakeholders, including educators, administrators, parents and community members convened to review a draft of the District of Innovation Plan. Opportunities to review and revise the plan occurred prior to and during the meeting. At this meeting the SAC voted on which individual components would make the final plan. The SAC proposes the following plan for designation as a District of Innovation

II. Term

The term of the District of Innovation Plan, as outlined by the Texas Education Agency, is five years; therefore, the plan shall commence with the 2024-2025 academic year and conclude at the end of the 2028-2029 school year, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law.

A. Established Vision Guiding the Strategic Plan

1. Our Beliefs

San Benito CISD believes that:

- All students can and will learn
- All teachers can teach
- High expectations for all encourage excellence
- Resources to support students' needs must be provided
- Excellence in teaching and learning is vital
- All students will be supported to pursue their passion upon graduation
- Respect for all individuals is essential
- A community with shared ownership, purpose, and commitment work well together

2. Our Vision

The vision of San Benito CISD is to be the gold standard in all areas of public education.

3. Our Mission

The mission of the San Benito CISD is to provide a premier education for students, through a positive and safe learning environment, so that its graduates are college, career, and workforce ready.

B. Board Goals

Goal 1: SBCISD will increase student academic achievement for all student populations thereby closing digital, academic and social-emotional gaps created by multiple factors to include COVID-19 by the conclusion of the 2024 School years.

Goal 2: SBCISD will increase teacher retention and reduce turnover rate by 5% through improved recruitment strategies, enhanced Professional Development and competitive compensation structures for the 2023-2025 school years.

Goal 3: SBCISD will provide access to engaging courses to expose all students to a college, career, and military readiness beginning in the elementary schools, to equip students with the skills and experiences necessary to develop and pursue personal post-secondary goals upon graduation, raising the graduation rate by 2% by the end of the 2024 school year.

Goal 4: SBCISD will implement a comprehensive safety and anti-drug programs for both students and staff in turn lowering the number of drug related incidents by 20% from previous year by the end of the 2024 school year.

Goal 5: SBCISD will foster collaboration and engagement with parents, families and the community, utilizing available community resources to ensure that all students have the support system to receive a gold standard education through increased campus based parental participation; intentional communication efforts; and community partnerships. Through campus and home surveys, sign-in sheets and phone logs, we will document parental Involvement increases from previous year.

Goal 6: SBCISD will work to increase staff and student attendance by 3% by the end of the 2024 school year by providing a safe and clean environment in support of higher educational achievement.

Innovations

To achieve the District's Mission and Board Goals, to align the District's practices and operations and to meet the expectations of the Strategic Plan, flexibility is required to exert local control, at both the District and campus levels to create the following benefits:

- a. An academic calendar to address the needs of students
- b. Probationary contracts for two years for experienced teachers, new to the District
- c. An innovative practice for addressing teacher certification so as to enhance student access to curriculum

The District requires local flexibility in the areas listed above to support each student in attaining the skills needed to succeed in the college/career pathway of their choice through personalized learning and to ensure a system aligned to the needs of our graduates as they enter the post-secondary world.

Inhibiting Statutes for Implementation of the Strategic plan

A. 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 San Benito Consolidated 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 in 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.

B. 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 years.

A. Certification

TEC 21.003 (a) states 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.

TEC 21.0031 (a) states an employee's probationary, continuing, or term contract is void if the employee (1) does not hold a valid certificate or permit issued by the State Board for Educator Certification.

TEC 21.053 (a) states 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. (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.

Proposed Exemption: To best serve the students of San Benito Consolidated Independent School District, the committee proposes that the District be given the flexibility to allow middle school teachers who teach math, science, and English Language Arts, for high school credit, to teach outside of their content area certification band.

An exemption from TEC Code 21.003 would allow our district to issue a school district teaching permit to individuals who do not hold a teaching certificate but whom the district deems qualified to teach based on a determined set of criteria.

Effective June 25, 2024

Proposed Exemption: To best serve the students of San Benito Consolidated Independent School District, to allow the District to issue a school district teaching permit to individuals who do not hold a teaching certificate but who the district deems qualified to teach based on a determined set of criteria. The district would focus on academic and non-academic CTE courses. The board of trustee would be able to issue the district teaching permit for an individual that demonstrates subject matter experience in the subject matter, such as:

- Professional work experience
- Formal training and education
- Relevant industry license, certification, or registration

Proposed Exemption: To best serve the students of San Benito Consolidated Independent School District allow the District to recognize educators, providing Early Childhood services at identified Community Based Prekindergarten centers in District partnerships, meeting one of the following criteria:

1. At least two years' experience of teaching in a nationally accredited child care program or a Texas Rising Star Program and:
 - a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or another early childhood education credential approved by the agency; or
 - a certification offered through a training center accredited by Association Montessori International or through the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education;
2. An associate or baccalaureate degree in early childhood education, early childhood special education, or a related field with a documented minimum of 15 hours of coursework in early childhood education;
3. At least eight years' experience of teaching in a nationally accredited child care program or a Texas Rising Star Program; or
4. Been employed as a prekindergarten teacher in a school district that has ensured specific prekindergarten professional development requirements have been met:
 - Has completed 150 hours of professional development in ECE-specific topics over a consecutive five-year period; 75 of the 150 hours being in a mentoring/coaching relationship ; or
 - Completes 30 hours of ECE-specific professional development annually with 15 of the 30 hours being in a mentoring/coaching relationship until 150 hours are documented.