

Cuero ISD
Delay of Certification
Requirements
as a District of Innovation (DOI)



Background

Historically, District of Innovation (DOI) plans allowed public-school districts to employ uncertified teachers, except for bilingual education, English as a Second Language (ESL), prekindergarten, and special education.

House Bill 2 (89th Legislature) amended Texas Education Code (TEC) §21.003 by establishing §21.0032, which authorizes the Commissioner of Education to: approve district requests to delay the implementation of certification requirements for existing uncertified teachers of record in foundation curriculum (Math, RLA, Science, and Social Studies) until the 2029–2030 school year.

Compliance with this statute substantially restricts the use of DOI exemptions for foundational subject areas and initiates a statewide transition toward full certification alignment.

Transition and Delay Provision

In alignment with TEC §21.003, districts must ensure that all uncertified teachers—including interns—hold appropriate SBEC-issued certification specific to the subject area and grade level.

To support districts during this transition, HB 2 introduces a provision under TEC §21.0032 that allows districts to apply for a delay in implementing certification requirements until the 2029–2030 school year.

Districts seeking approval from the Commissioner of Education to delay implementation of teacher certification requirements, as specified in TEC §21.003 and new §21.0032, must complete the Delay of Teacher Certification Application by March 2, 2026.

Purpose of the Transition to Certification

This approval would provide critical staffing stability, allowing eligible teachers to remain in their assignments throughout the transition period while completing certification requirements as outlined by the district. This stability is especially important given the district's geographic and workforce challenges.

Legal Requirements and Implications

Without Commissioner Approval:

- The district cannot continue employing uncertified foundational subject teachers beyond the limited options allowed in HB 2 statute
- Any uncertified foundational subject teacher must be removed from the assignment once HB 2 phase-out deadlines prohibit uncertified staffing (2026-2027 for K-5 and 2027-2028 for 6-12)

New Restrictions on DOI Plans Regarding Teacher Certification

Foundational teachers (Reading/English Language Arts (RLA), math, science, and social studies)

Academic Year	DOI Restrictions
2025-2026	District maintains currently approved DOI plan which may include exemptions from 21.003
2026-2027	Districts can no longer include K-5 foundational subject teachers in DOI plan exemptions from 21.003
2027-2028	Districts can no longer include K-12 foundational subject teachers in DOI plan exemptions from 21.003
2028-2029	Exemptions remain in place, if approved by the Board of Trustees and the Commissioner
2029-2030	All K-12 Foundational teachers certified with no exemptions allowed

Cuero ISD Uncertified Teacher Historical Data

School Year	JCF	Hunt	CJH	CHS	Total Foundational Uncertified Teachers	Total DOI Uncertified Teachers
2023-2024	1	6	7	4	18	31
2024-2025	2	5	8	6	21	32
2025-2026	1	4	7	4	16	25

House Bill 2 Requirements

Recruitment and teacher pipeline initiatives to increase the number of certified teachers:

- Partnership with Texas A&M University - Victoria, specifically collaborating with the College Dean of Education
- District of Innovation (DOI) has been a saving grace in finding applicants with a bachelor's degree who want to become teachers. Current and future hires will be paired with Teach Us Texas to help them pass their state required teacher certification exams utilizing in person sessions, Google Meets sessions, office hours, and asynchronous (Google classroom study resources) support
- Cuero ISD will provide DOI year 1 and 2 teachers a paid day to complete EPP (Educator Preparation Program) and a Phase-In Multi-Year Timeline for Certification Compliance

Phase-In Multi-Year Timeline for Certification Compliance: Elementary

Cuero ISD	2026-2027	2027 - 2028	2028 - 2029	2029-2030	2030-2031
Elementary	<p>Earn credit for 150 hours of Pre-Clinical coursework</p> <p>Earn credit for 50 hours Field-Based Experiences (observations)</p>	<p>Earn a passing score on the Core Subject EC-6 exam</p> <p>Earn a passing score on the STR (293) exam</p>	<p>Intern certificate in place</p> <p>Complete the remaining 100 hours of coursework</p> <p>Pass the PPR exam by the end of March 2029</p>	<p>Standard certificate in place</p> <p>Prepare for and successfully pass the ESL (154) exam if teaching a foundational subject</p>	<p>Standard certificate in place</p> <p>ESL (154) Supplemental certificate in place (if teaching a foundational subject)</p>

Phase-In Multi-Year Timeline for Certification Compliance: Secondary

Cuero ISD	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030
Secondary	Earn credit for 150 hours of Pre-Clinical coursework Earn credit for 50 hours Field-Based Experiences (observations)	Earn a passing score on the Content exam Earn a passing score on the ESL exam (all foundational courses 7-12 only)	Intern certificate in place Complete the remaining 100 hours of coursework Pass the PPR exam by the end of March 2029	Standard certificate in place

House Bill 2 Requirements

Specify at least one EPP partner who will support certification efforts and reduce the district's percentage of uncertified teachers:



House Bill 2: DOI Delayed Plan

Cuero ISD	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030 ALL must be certified
Elementary	DOI 1	DOI 2 New hire DOI 1	Intern DOI 2	Standard Intern	Standard
Secondary	DOI 1	DOI 2 New hire DOI 1	Intern DOI 2	Standard Intern	Standard

House Bill 2 Requirements

Upon Board approval, the Deputy Superintendent and/or Instructional Technologist will complete the following steps:

- Enter the date of approval by the district board of trustees to submit the application for Commissioner of Education approval
- Provide (post) the webpage links to the district board meeting agenda where the plan for the delay of certification requirements was approved
- Provide (post) the webpage link on the Cuero ISD website to the board approved plan