

BRIDGEPORT

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



Local Innovation Plan 2022-2027

Adopted January 16, 2017

Updated February 12, 2018

Reviewed March 28, 2022

Updated October 19, 2026

Bridgeport ISD will empower all learners to achieve success by creating an environment that inspires, equips, and challenges students to reach their full potential.

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INTRODUCTION

House Bill 1842, passed in the 84th Texas Legislative Session, provides Texas public school districts the opportunity to amend certain state requirements at the local level to better meet the needs of their unique student populations. Bridgeport ISD (BISD) intends to follow the Texas Education Code in all other areas. BISD's local Innovation Plan is comprehensive and touches numerous areas in the TEC, and because BISD seeks to maximize local control of educational decisions for students, BISD seeks exemption from the permissible provisions of the TEC included and explained in this Local Innovation Plan. BISD's Local Innovation Plan will begin with the 2017-2018 school year and conclude at the end of the 2021-2022 school year unless the plan is terminated or amended by the BISD Board of Trustees in accordance with HB1842 Any future amendments will adhere to the same term of the original plan.

On January 16, 2018, the Bridgeport ISD District Advisory Council (DAC) met to review the District of Innovation Plan. Amendments to the plan were recommended by the DAC to be presented to the BISD Board at its regular meeting on February 12, 2018.

On March 25, 2022, the Bridgeport ISD District Educational Improvement Council (DEIC) met to review the District of Innovation plan. No amendments to the plan were recommended by the DEIC. The plan will be recommended to be renewed by the BISD Board at its regular meeting on May 9th, 2022.

On August 31, 2026, the Bridgeport ISD District of Innovation Committee met to review the District of Innovation plan. Three new amendments were recommended, in addition to removing non-compliant portions of the plan. The plan will be recommended for amendments by the BISD Board at its regular meeting on October 19, 2026.

BISD DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLANNING COMMITTEE 2016-17

Eddie Bland, Superintendent

Gina Florence, Assistant Superintendent

Kurt Kronenberger, Assistant Superintendent Patricia Hernandez, Director of Special Programs

Danny Henson, Athletic Director

Jennifer Ragland, HS Volleyball Coach

Hughien White, Band Director

Becky DeShazo, HS Career and Technology Teacher

Matt Joiner, Associate Dean Weatherford College

Chris Heasley, City of Bridgeport Department of Parks and Recreation

Bunny Perry, Community Member

Robert Sivley, Community Member

Christina Garza, Community Member

Martha Bock, BES Principal Alyssa Meekins, BES Teacher

Lee Snodgrass, BES Parent

Rita Lemoine, BIS Principal

Shelly Moody, BIS Teacher

Melanie McGehee, BIS Parent

Travis Whisenant, BMS Principal

Erica Weber, BMS Instructional Coach

John Richey, BMS Parent

Jaime Sturdivant, BHS Principal

Katy Mussulman, BHS Teacher

Pam Lanfear, BHS Parent

Karl Little, ALC Principal

Jamie Paradise, ALC Teacher

Melissa Ureste, ALC Support Staff

BISD DISTRICT OF INNOVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2017-18

Adam Hile, Assistant Superintendent
Patricia Hernandez, Director of Special Programs
David Correll, Business Representative
Nathan Byers, Business Representative
Susan Boyd, Community Representative Steven Phillips, Community Representative
Melissa Phillips, Parent
Kailynn Hudson, Parent
Amy Davis, Parent
Mallory Marr, Campus Administrator
Jessica Diffie, Teacher
Jamie Paradise, Teacher
Joey Reyes, Teacher
Shellie Read, Teacher
Rebecca Koch, Teacher
Aaron Stewart, Teacher
Charlotte Townsend, Teacher Cynthia Alvarez, Paraprofessional
Julie Green, Counselor

BISD DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE 2021-2022

Dr. Arthur Skip Casey, Interim Superintendent

Dr. Amy Ellis, Superintendent

Mallory Marr, Director of Special Programs

Colby Shawn, Business Representative Jonathan Cortez, Business Representative

Linda Vassar, Community Representative Nathan Byers, Community Representative

Maria Duran, Parent

Jessica Mowery, Parent

Kristy Chapman, Teacher

Judy Norred, Teacher

Tara Darst, Teacher

Amy Cade, Teacher Rebecca Koch, Teacher

Amanda Pratt, Teacher

Sharon Delgado, Teacher

Lanie Davis, Paraprofessional

Liz Cornett, Counselor

BISD DISTRICT OF INNOVATION COMMITTEE 2026-2027

Dr. Amy Ellis, Superintendent
Bonita Jeter, Director of Curriculum & Instruction
Dr. Abby Crawford, Director of Human Resources
Lea Holt, Community Member, Retired Teacher
Leslie Woodson, Business Member
Jill Rivera, Parent
Candice Oliver, Principal
Patina Berardi, Counselor
Amanda Serafin, Teacher
Aaron Stewart, Teacher
Candice Bentley, Teacher
Joey Reyes, Teacher
Angelica Garcia, Teacher

TIMELINE

October 17, 2016

Bridgeport ISD Board of Trustees discussed rules and procedures for being an Innovation District.

Board takes action to approve resolution to initiate consideration for being designated as an Innovation District.

Board held public hearing to discuss becoming District of Innovation and appoints District of Innovation Planning Committee to develop a Local Innovation Plan.

November 7, 2016

District of Innovation Planning Committee met to discuss the Local Innovation Plan procedures and possible areas of need to be addressed in a Local Innovation Plan for BISD.

December 5, 2016

District of Innovation Planning Committee met to discuss district needs and draft a preliminary BISD Local Innovation Plan proposal.

December 12, 2016

Board to take action to approve notifying the Texas Commissioner of Education of their intent to vote on adopting BISD's final Local Innovation Plan.

December 13, 2016

Proposed BISD District of Innovation Plan posted on the BISD website.

January 12, 2017

District Advisory Committee conducts a public meeting to consider final version of the BISD Local Innovation Plan.

January 16, 2017

Proposed BISD Local Innovation Plan presented to the BISD Board of Trustees for consideration and approval.

January 17, 2017

BISD submits approved Local Intervention Plan to the Commissioner of Education.

January 16, 2018

BISD District Advisory Committee meets to consider amendments to the Local Innovation Plan.

February 12, 2018

Proposed BISD Local Innovation Plan amendments presented to the BISD Board of Trustees for consideration and approval.

March 28, 2022

BISD District Education Improvement Council meets to review the Local Innovation Plan.

March 28, 2022

BISD District Education Improvement Council meets to review the Local Innovation Plan.

April 12, 2022

Proposed BISD Local Innovation Plan posted on website and notification to commissioner.

April 19, 2022

Added notes to Teacher Certification per TEA's recommendation.

June 13, 2022

Proposed renewal of BISD Local Innovation Plan with no amendments to be presented to the BISD Board of Trustees for consideration and approval.

August 31, 2026

BISD District of Innovation Committee meets to review the Local Innovation Plan.

September 14, 2026

Proposed BISD Local Innovation plan amendments presented to the BISD Board of Trustees for consideration.

October 5, 2026

BISD District of Innovation Committee meets to approve the Local Innovation Plan amendments.

October 19, 2026

Proposed BISD Local Innovation plan amendments presented to the BISD Board of Trustees for approval.

October 21, 2026

Proposed BISD Local Innovation Plan amendments posted on website and notification to commissioner.

BISD LOCAL INNOVATION PLAN

I. Teacher Certification

DK(LEGAL), DK(LOCAL), DK(EXHIBIT), TEC 21.003, TEC 21.0032, TEC 21.053

Currently

TEC 21.003 states in the event a district cannot locate a certified teacher for a position or a teacher is teaching a subject outside of their certification, the district must submit a request to the Texas Education Agency and/or State Board for Educator Certification for an emergency certification. TEA then approves or denies this request.

TEC 21.0032 states that a school district may not employ as a teacher of record for a course in the foundation curriculum under Section 28.002 a person who does not hold an appropriate certificate or permit required by the State Board for Educator Certification under Subchapter B.

TEC 21.053 states a teacher must present his/her certificate to the District before an employment contract will be binding. This prohibits the District from paying an educator for teaching if the educator does not hold a valid certificate at the time.

Proposed

This exemption from the current state teacher certification requirements that inhibit the BISD's ability to hire teachers for hard-to-fill teaching positions will allow the district to establish local qualification and training requirements. This will enrich applicant pools in specific content areas if certified teachers are not available to teach those courses. In addition, this exemption will afford the District the flexibility to hire professionals in certain trades or vocations to teach the crafts of those trades or vocations (such as welding, fine arts, health sciences, law, etc.) if certified teachers are not available to teach those courses.

Local Guidelines

1. BISD will maintain its current expectations for employee certification and is committed to hiring individuals with appropriate certification for the position in question. Where that is not reasonably possible in Career and Technical Education courses, enrichment courses or foundational curriculum courses, the District will have the flexibility to hire individuals who are knowledgeable in the area and equipped to effectively perform the duties of the position in question.
2. In core classes, the campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request to allow a certified teacher to teach a subject and/or grade level out of their field. The certified teacher must have a minimum of 12 college hours in the subject they will teach.
3. BISD has a Delay of Teacher Certification waiver with TEA to have all foundational curriculum teachers certified by the 2029-2030 school year, however, the District is committed to meet this requirement sooner.
4. In elective classes, including CTE classes, the campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request to allow an individual to teach a subject or specific course. The

principal must specific credentials, work experience, or life experience the individual possesses that would help them to teach the proposed subject.

5. Teachers teaching outside of their certification area will be provided teacher mentoring, increased observations and feedback, professional development, or other supports.

6. The superintendent will report this action to the Board at the first board meeting following the assignment.

*TEC 521.003 (Certification Required) — your special education and bilingual/ESL teachers must continue to be SBEC certified.

II. Probationary Contracts

DCA (LEGAL), TEC 21.1020

Currently

TEC 21.102(b) states a 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

This exemption from probationary contracts being limited to one year for a person who has been employed as a teacher or administrator in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment by the district will allow BISD extended time for the evaluation and training of new personnel. BISD is committed to effectively managing teacher contracts and this exemption will provide the district with the flexibility to keep all professional employees new to the district on probationary contracts for a maximum permissible period of three school years.

Local Guidelines

1. For experienced teachers, counselors, or nurses new to the district that have been employed in public education for at least five of the eight previous years, a probationary contract may be issued for up to three years.
2. All other teachers hired in the District may remain on probationary states for three years, and may be issued a fourth year of probation in accordance with TEC 21.102(c).

III. Minimum Minutes of Instruction

EB(LEGAL), EB(LOCAL), EC(LEGAL), EC(LOCAL), TEC 25.081, TEC 25.0812

Currently

TEC 25.081 strikes language requiring 180 days of instruction and requires districts and charter schools to provide at least 75,600 minutes of instruction (including intermissions and recess). The bill also allows school districts and charter schools to add minutes as necessary to compensate for minutes of instruction lost due to school closures caused by disaster, flood, extreme weather conditions, fuel curtailment, or another calamity.

Proposed

This exemption will provide BISD the flexibility to schedule early release, professional development, parent conference, and instructional planning days while maintaining the instructional minutes for full state funding.

Local Guidelines

1. BISD will gather input from the DAC and campus principals/staff to develop a calendar that addresses student instruction and focused professional development in conjunction with required instructional minutes requirement.
2. The majority of school days will be scheduled to meet the 420 minutes of instruction requirement and the number of days will be scheduled to be as close as possible to the 75,600 minutes of instruction.
3. Individual days with a length less than 420 minutes may be scheduled throughout the calendar to incorporate time for professional development or parent conferences as needed.
4. The proposed calendar will be posted for public comment prior to Board approval.

IV. Uniform School Start Date

EB(LEGAL), TEC 25.0811

Currently

TEC 25.0811 states a school district may not begin school before the 4th Monday of August. However, for many years districts had the option of applying for a waiver to adopt an earlier start date.

Proposed

This exemption will allow BISD the flexibility to make a local decision on each school year start date to best meet the needs of the students and local community. This empowers BISD to personalize learning, increase college and career readiness, and balance the amount of instructional time per semester. In addition, by having flexibility in the start and end of the school year, students will be able to enroll in college courses that start in early June, thereby increasing college and career readiness.

Local Guidelines

1. BISD will gather input from the DAC and campus principals/staff to develop a calendar that addresses student instruction and focused professional development in conjunction with required instructional minutes requirements.
2. The start date of each school year will be determined with input from the staff and community. The start date may occur on or after the second Monday of August based on input.
3. Alignment of the district calendar with neighboring districts, dual credit college partners, and STAAR timelines will be considered.
4. The proposed calendar will be posted to public comment prior to Board approval.

V. Class Size Ratio

EEB(LEGAL), TEC 25.112, TEC 25.113

Currently

TEC 25.112 requires Kindergarten — 4th Grade classes to be kept at a 22 student to 1 teacher ratio. When a class exceeds this limit, the district must complete a waiver with the Texas Education Agency.

TEC 25.113 requires a letter be sent home to parents in the section that exceeds the 22:1 ratio, informing them the waiver has been submitted. Many times soon after the waiver is submitted, students move out of the district and we are below the 22:1 ratio.

Proposed

This exemption allows BISD the time to staff campuses with effective teachers by granting local control over class size ratios. Small class sizes enable effective teachers to provide more individualized attention to each student.

Local Guidelines

1. BISD will make every attempt to begin each school year with enough teachers to establish a student to teacher ratio of at least 22:1 or less in each K-4 homeroom class.
2. In the event that any class size in grades K-4 reaches a ratio greater than 22:1 during the school year, the superintendent will report this information to the Board. Decisions regarding appropriate student to teacher ratios will be made at the local level, taking into consideration the age and grade level of the students, the subject matter of the class, the needs of the individual teachers and student groups, and the availability of additional instructional staff members.
2. In the event that any class size in grades K-4 reaches a ratio of 24: 1 or greater during the school year, the superintendent will report this information to the Board. The Board will take action to reduce the student to teach ratio for that grade level.
3. A TEA waiver request will not be filed when a K-4 classroom exceeds the 22: 1 ratio.
4. Parents of students in K-4 classrooms that exceed a ratio of 22: 1 will continue to be notified as per TEC 25.113.

VI. Interdistrict Transfers

FDA(LOCAL), TEC 25.036

Currently

TEC 25.036 states that students attending a district through an interdistrict transfer may apply for transfer annually. This is interpreted that the interdistrict transfer must be for a term of one school year.

Proposed

On rare occasions, student behavior warrants suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion. In addition, student attendance may fall below the TEA truancy standard. In these rare cases, Bridgeport ISD seeks exemption from the one-year transfer commitment.

Local Guidelines

1. BISD will continue to accept transfers as space and local policy allows.
2. An interdistrict transfer student may have such transfer status revoked by the Superintendent at any time during the year if the student is assigned discipline consequences of suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion. The parents of the student will receive written notification of the revocation.
3. In addition, students not meeting the State's 90% attendance standard may also be subject to immediate revocation of the transfer status.

XI. Administrator Certification

DPA(LEGAL), 19 TAC 231.753(a)(3), TEC 21.003, TEC 21.046

Currently

TAC 231.753(a)(3) states that an assignment for Assistant Principal is allowed with one of the following certificates: Administrator, Assistant Principal, Mid-Management Administrator, Principal, Principal as Instructional Leader or Superintendent.

TEC 21.003 states in the event a district cannot locate a certified administrator, the district must submit a request to the Texas Education Agency and/or State Board for Educator Certification for an emergency certification. TEA then approves or denies this request.

TEC 21.046 establishes statutory qualifications and competency areas for principal certification.

Proposed

This exemption from the current state administrator certification requirements which inhibit the BISD's ability to hire administrators will allow the district to establish local qualification and training requirements. This will enrich applicant pools if certified administrators are not available for assistant principal positions.

Local Guidelines

1. BISD will maintain its current expectations for employee certification and is committed to hiring individuals with appropriate certification for the position in question. Where that is not reasonably possible, the District will have the flexibility to hire individuals who are knowledgeable in the area and equipped to effectively perform the duties of the position in question.
2. BISD will provide local qualifications and training requirements for professionals in lieu of traditional state requirements.
3. BISD will maintain that to be considered for an administrative position, the applicant must have completed their masters degree or be one semester from completion.
4. BISD will maintain that the candidate will be working toward their administrative certification, including gaining Principal certification and completing the PASL.
5. Administrators working outside of their certification area will be provided mentoring, increased observations and feedback, professional development, or other supports.
6. The superintendent will report this action to the Board at the first board meeting following the assignment.
7. BISD will update board policy DPA(LOCAL) to be consistent with the innovation plan.

XII. Counselor Certification

DK(LEGAL), DK(LOCAL), DK(EXHIBIT), TEC 21.003, TEC 21.0031, TEC 21.053, TEC 21.051

Currently

TEC 21.003 states in the event a district cannot locate a certified counselor, the district must submit a request to the Texas Education Agency and/or State Board for Educator Certification for an emergency certification. TEA then approves or denies this request.

TEC 21.0031 states that an employee's probationary, continuing or term contract is void for failure to gain certification in certain circumstances.

TEC 21.053 states an educator must present his/her certificate to the District before an employment contract will be binding. This prohibits the District from paying an educator for teaching if the educator does not hold a valid certificate at the time.

TEC 21.051 states that before a school district may employ a candidate for certification as a counselor of record, the candidate must complete at least 15 hours of field-based experience in which the candidate is actively engaged in instructional or educational activities.

Proposed

This exemption would provide flexibility to hire counselors who are not certified but are currently enrolled in a school counseling program. The District would be able to expand the number of candidates that will be recruited and trained for positions of need. The District will determine the areas and programs for this opportunity based on staffing needs. BISD will provide local qualifications and training requirements for professionals and experts to counsel in lieu of traditional state requirements.

Local Guidelines

1. BISD will maintain its current expectations for employee certification and is committed to hiring individuals with appropriate certification for the position in question. Where that is not reasonably possible, the District will have the flexibility to hire individuals who are knowledgeable in the area and equipped to effectively perform the duties of the position in question.
2. BISD will provide local qualifications and training requirements for professionals and experts to counsel in lieu of traditional state requirements.
3. Counselors receiving this exemption will be required to have been accepted into a master's degree program from an institution of higher education that is accredited by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. When hired, they will work with a mentor counselor to complete their certification within two years of their hire date.
4. The superintendent will report this action to the Board at the first board meeting following the assignment.

XIII. Grievance Timeline, Processes and Procedures

DGBA(LOCAL), GF(LOCAL), FNG(LOCAL), TEC 26.011, TEC 26A.001, TEC 26A.002, TEC 26A.003

Currently

TEC 26.011 (a) & (c), 26A.001, 26A.002, 26A.003 state that the Board of Trustees of each school district must adopt a grievance procedure that complies with Chapter 26A under which the Board shall address each grievance that the Board receives concerning a violation of a right guaranteed by this chapter, of a board of trustees policy, or of a provision of this title. This legislation resulting from the 89th Regular Legislative Session specifically expands the timelines for parent grievances to be filed from 15 days to 60-90 days.

Proposed

This exemption will provide stakeholders prompt attention and resolution of concerns. BISD has and will continue to adhere to an established grievance policy with procedures and timelines as outlined in its local Board's policies DGBA, FNG and GF. Such policies ensure thorough documentation of each step in the grievance process and provide adequate time for complaints to be filed, and for complaints to be heard. All records related to grievances, including submitted forms, communications, investigations, findings, resolutions, and any corrective actions are systematically maintained at the district level to ensure transparency, accountability, and compliance with legal and policy standards. The District is committed to monitoring the legality and appropriateness of every decision and action taken. The District is further committed to hearing, reviewing, and attempting to resolve all complaints, as well as to taking corrective action, where appropriate. BISD's long-standing grievance policies will ensure that all such complaints are carefully reviewed and that district responses are in alignment with state and federal regulations, as well as all other local board policies. BISD follows established grievance procedures as outlined in district policy, specifically in relation to the timelines for filing an appeal prior to Texas Education Code 26A.002 and for hearing such complaints. The district believes that a requirement for complaints to be submitted within 15 district business days from the date the grievant either knows, or with reasonable diligence should have known, of the decision or action that is the subject of the grievance ensures prompt attention and resolution of concerns. In cases where the grievant does not receive the requested relief at the prior grievance level, or if the response deadline has passed without a reply, the parent may proceed by requesting a conference with the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee to appeal the previous decision. This appeal must be submitted in writing, using the district-provided form, within ten (10) district business days of receiving the written response from Level One or Level Two. If no written response is provided, the appeal must be submitted within ten (10) days following the deadline for the response at the applicable level. The district's current grievance policies also provide for a Level Three grievance to the board of trustees, except for grievances related to extracurricular activities. Accuracy of information and access to individuals that are needed to provide necessary information surrounding an issue could be compromised after 60 to

90 days. It is imperative that grievances and complaints are filed in a timely manner to ensure the best prompt response.

Local Guidelines

1. BISD will maintain its current grievance forms, processes and procedures for all grievants.
2. BISD is committed to providing timely communication along with high-quality customer service to parents who are seeking relief through the grievance process.
3. BISD will update board policy pertaining to DGBA(LOCAL), GF(LOCAL), FNG(LOCAL).