

ROBSTOWN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
AGENDA ACTION SHEET

Date: February 9, 2026

Subject: Approval of the "Application for Delay of Teacher Certification Requirements" as required by HB 2

Administrator Responsible: Diana L. Silvas

Position: Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources

A. Purpose of Agenda Item:

Information Only Action Needed

B. Authority for this Action:

Local Policy Law or Rule

C. Strategic Objective, Goal, or Need Addressed: The district is requesting a delay of teacher certification requirements under House Bill 2 to ensure continuity of instruction while addressing ongoing teacher shortages in hard-to-staff content areas and campuses. This request allows qualified, non-certified educators to continue serving students while actively pursuing Texas certification.

The delay supports the district's goal of maintaining stable, high-quality instruction, reducing vacancies, and minimizing disruptions to student learning. During the delay period, the district will provide targeted support, mentoring, and professional development to ensure progress toward full certification and long-term teacher retention.

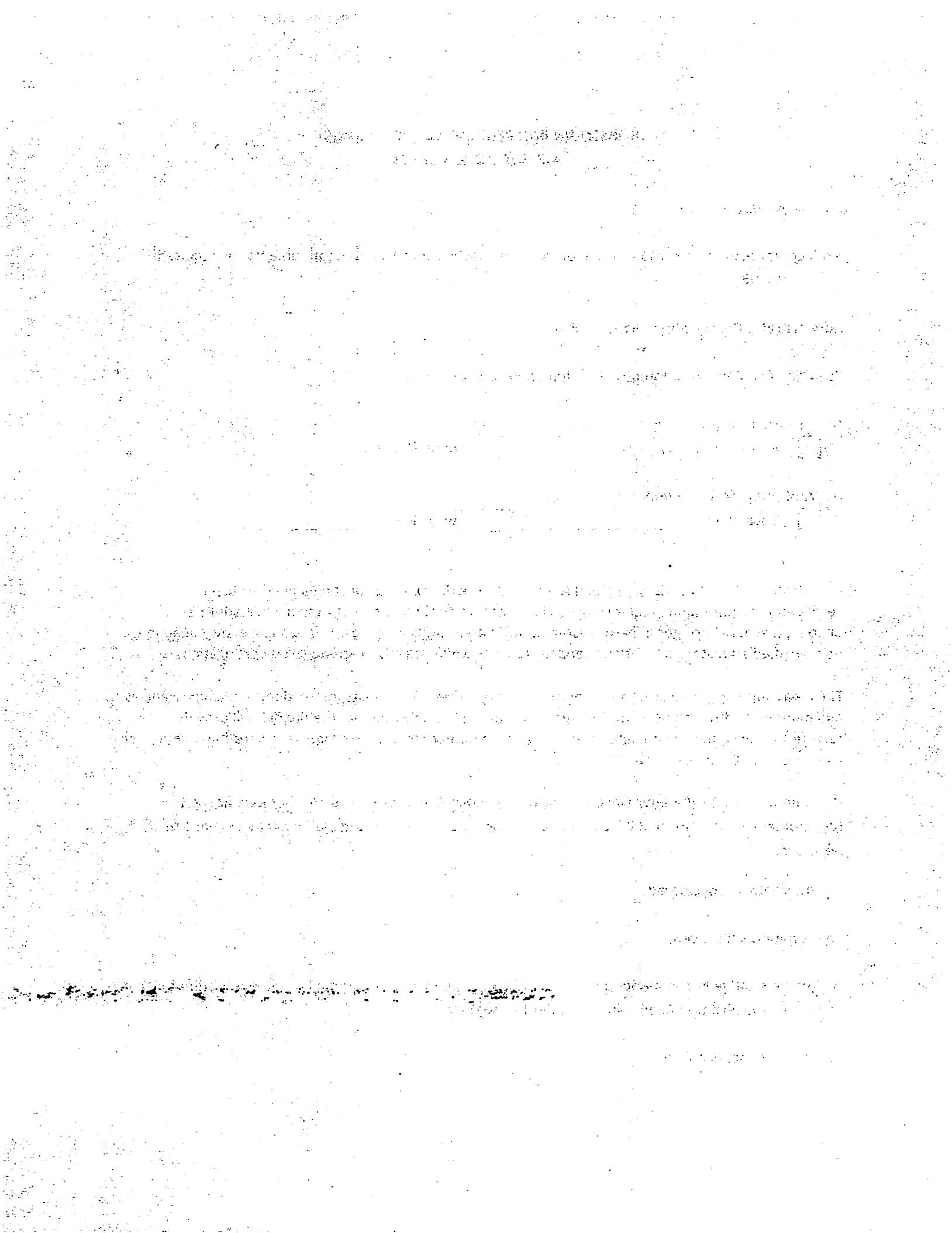
D. Summary: Consider approval of the district's Application for Delay of Teacher Certification Requirements under House Bill 2 to support instructional continuity and staffing needs in hard-to-staff positions.

E. Alternatives Considered:

F. Comments Received:

G. Administrative Recommendation: Administration recommends approval of the Application for Delay of Teacher Certification Requirements under House Bill 2.

H. Fiscal Impact and Cost:



**Robstown Independent School District
HB 2 Teacher Certification Transition Plan**



Plan to Meet Statutory Guidelines for Teacher Certification Requirements

Texas Education Code (TEC) §21.003 and §21.0032

School Year 2025-2026 through 2029-2030

Board Approval Date: _____

Board Meeting Agenda URL: _____

Posting URL (Board-Approved Plan): _____

1. Executive Summary

House Bill (HB) 2 updates to educator certification requirements limit school districts' ability to waive certification for teachers assigned to foundation curriculum courses through District of Innovation (DOI) plans. Robstown Independent School District (RISD) is requesting commissioner approval to delay full implementation of these requirements for foundation curriculum courses until the start of the 2029-2030 school year. This plan describes how RISD will transition to full certification compliance during the delay period.

This plan includes: (a) current baseline data on uncertified assignments; (b) annual targets to reduce uncertified teachers in foundation curriculum courses; (c) a structured support system for currently uncertified teachers to complete certification; (d) a recruitment and pipeline strategy to increase the supply of certified candidates; (e) an educator preparation program (EPP) partnership; and (f) monitoring, accountability, and board reporting.

2. Statutory and Regulatory Basis

This plan is aligned to the following provisions and TEA guidance:

- TEC §21.003 (certification required for employment/assignment in instructional roles).
- TEC §21.0032 (limits DOI exemptions from certification requirements; phased implementation).
- TEC §21.057 (parental notification requirements for uncertified teachers; districts may no longer exempt themselves).

3. DOI Certification Exemption Phase-Out Timeline

Academic Year	Restriction on DOI Certification Exemptions (Foundation Curriculum)
2025-2026	District maintains its currently approved DOI plan, which may include exemptions from TEC §21.003.
2026-2027	DOI plan may no longer exempt K-5 reading and mathematics teachers from TEC §21.003.
2027-2028	DOI plan may no longer exempt any foundational subject teacher (ELA/reading, math, science, social studies) at any grade level from TEC §21.003.

4. Baseline Data: Uncertified Teachers (2025-2026)

As of the date of submission, RISD will report the total number of uncertified individuals assigned to teach foundation curriculum courses in 2025-2026 in the TEA application.

Current baseline data totals indicate 28 uncertified teachers assigned to foundation curriculum courses and 42 total uncertified assignments across all areas. RISD will validate these counts in ECOS (The Educator Certification Online System) and against TEA reporting prior to submission. The table below reflects the district's current draft baseline by campus.

Campus	Uncertified Assigned to Foundation Areas	Uncertified Assigned to Non-Founda- tion Areas	Certified but Out of Field	Total Uncertified
Robstown Early College HS	6	3	3	12
Seale Junior High	8	6	0	14
Robert Driscoll STEM Academy	6	1	0	7
San Pedro Fine Arts Academy	4	0	0	4
Lotspeich Leadership Academy	5	0	0	5
TOTAL	29	10	3	42

5. Certification Transition Goals and Annual Targets

RISD's overarching goal is to ensure that all foundation curriculum courses are taught by appropriately certified teachers no later than the start of the 2029-2030 school year, while making measurable progress on the earlier phased requirements.

A. Priority Compliance Milestones

- By August 2026 (2026-2027): Reduce uncertified teachers in foundation curriculum courses to ≤ 21 and move toward 100% certification by ensuring every remaining teacher is (a) enrolled in an approved EPP, and (b) eligible under an allowable permit/credential pathway, and (c) on an Individual Certification Plan (ICP) with dated milestones (coursework, content exam, and PPR).
- By August 2027 (2027-2028): Reduce uncertified teachers in foundation curriculum courses to ≤ 14 and move toward 100% certification by ensuring progress of all teachers on (a) an approved EPP, and/or (b) an allowable permit/credential pathway, and (c) an Individual Certification Plan (ICP).
- By August 2028 (2028-2029): Reduce uncertified teachers in foundation curriculum courses to ≤ 7 and move toward 100% certification by ensuring progress of all teachers on (a) an approved EPP, and/or (b) an allowable permit/credential pathway, and (c) an Individual Certification Plan (ICP).
- By August 2029 (2029-2030): All foundational subject teachers (ELA/reading, math, science, social studies) at all grade levels will hold appropriate certification and/or permit. RISD will maintain ongoing compliance through hiring, assignment controls, and monitoring.

B. Annual Reduction Targets for Uncertified Teachers in Foundation Courses

RISD will set annual targets based on the baseline number of uncertified teachers assigned to foundation curriculum courses. Targets will be updated annually after spring staffing and certification verification.

School Year	Target Max # Uncertified in Foundation Courses	Key Focus	Progress Evidence
2025-2026 (Baseline)	29	Validate baseline; enroll/assign certification supports; prioritize certified hiring for vacancies.	ECOS verification; EPP enrollment list; test registration list.
2026-2027	≤ 21	Eliminate uncertified assignments in K-5 reading/math; reduce other foundation areas through certification completion and certified hiring.	K-5 reading/math 100% certified; semester progress reports.
2027-2028	≤ 14	Reduce remaining uncertified foundation assignments; focus on secondary shortage areas (e.g., math/science) through EPP cohorts and targeted recruiting.	Pass rates on content/PPR exams; vacancy fill rates.
2028-2029	≤ 7	Finalize certification of remaining candidates; use reassignment/placement controls to prevent new uncertified foundation assignments.	Year-end staffing audit; no new uncertified foundation hires unless TEA-approved pathway (NRP or TCAP).
2029-2030	0	Full compliance: all foundation courses staffed by appropriately certified teachers.	Annual HR assignment audit; board compliance attestation.

Note: If baseline numbers change materially due to staffing changes or TEA reporting updates, RISD will adjust targets, adhering to the 2029-2030 compliance deadline.

6. Strategic Pillars

A. Assignment Controls and Hiring Practices

- Prioritize hiring fully certified candidates for all foundation curriculum vacancies and new positions.
- Verify certification status in ECOS prior to hiring and again prior to final schedule/assignment.
- Limit use of uncertified hires to documented shortage situations; require superintendent approval.

- Ensure contracts, offer letters, and onboarding materials clearly state certification expectations and timelines.

B. Support Structures for Current Uncertified Teachers

RISD will implement an Individual Certification Plan (ICP) for each uncertified teacher assigned to a foundation course, including:

- Assigned mentor/coach and a campus administrator point-of-contact.
- Required EPP enrollment date, coursework milestones, and test plan (content exam and PPR, as applicable).
- District-provided supports: scheduled study sessions, test-prep resources, and coaching aligned to content area.
- Incentives and financial supports as locally approved (e.g., reimbursement for exam fees upon passing, tuition assistance, or stipend for completion).
- Escalation steps if milestones are not met (e.g., additional coaching, reassignment, non-renewal considerations consistent with contract and policy).

C. Recruitment, Retention, and Certified Teacher Pipelines

- Targeted recruitment for shortage areas and priority campuses (job fairs, targeted digital recruiting, regional partnerships).
- ‘Grow Your Own’ pathways: support paraprofessionals and long-term substitutes into certification through EPP cohorts and tuition/fee supports.
- Student teacher residency placements: increase placements in RISD classrooms with a goal of converting high-performing candidates to hires.
- High school teacher pipeline initiatives where feasible (TEA-based pathway programs, dual credit education courses, TAFE).
- Retention supports for new-to-profession certified teachers (mentoring, reduced overload where possible, induction supports).

D. Educator Preparation Program (EPP) Partnership

Teachers of Tomorrow and Teach Us will serve as RISD’s primary alternative-certification EPP partners for current uncertified staff, including cohort scheduling, advising, and test preparation. Texas A & M University Corpus Christi will serve as RISD’s secondary partner to expand student teaching/residency placements, degree-based certification pathways, and recruiting pipelines. RISD will execute appropriate MOUs to include the following deliverables and operating cadence:

- Annual cohort calendar and priority enrollment for RISD candidates (including evening/weekend/online options and multiple start dates).
- Individual certification pathway plan for each uncertified teacher within 30 days of assignment (content exam + PPR schedule, coursework milestones, and clinical requirements).
- Test preparation and remediation supports (content exam and PPR), including practice assessments, workshops, and targeted tutoring for at-risk candidates.
- Clinical supports aligned to certification timelines (field supervision, observations/feedback, mentor teacher pairing, and coaching aligned to RISD instructional expectations).

- Recruitment and pipeline development: expand student teaching/residency placements; participate in joint recruiting events; and create an early-contract/letter-of-intent pathway for high-performing candidates.
- Data-sharing procedures and points of contact (FERPA-compliant), including a shared roster and dashboard fields needed for TEA monitoring and board reporting.
- Quarterly partnership check-ins (RISD HR + Teaching & Learning + partner leads) to review progress toward annual uncertified-reduction targets by campus/grade/subject and to adjust supports.
- Monthly candidate progress reporting to RISD HR (enrollment status, coursework completion, exams passed/remaining, projected completion date) and an at-risk escalation protocol within 10 instructional days

EPP MOUs/agreements will be reviewed annually. RISD may add additional EPP partners for specialty shortage areas or to expand capacity; any additions will be documented in the annual plan update and reflected in the TEA application as applicable.

E. Communication and Parental Notification

RISD will maintain compliance with TEC §21.057 parental notification requirements for any assignment of an uncertified teacher, including required timelines, documentation, and posting/communication procedures. District of Innovation status will not be used to exempt RISD from these notification requirements

7. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Accountability

RISD will monitor progress and ensure transparency through the following actions:

- Maintain a certification dashboard tracking: assignment, certification status, EPP enrollment, exams passed/remaining, and projected completion dates.
- Campus principals will review and update certification status monthly during the school year and during spring staffing.
- Review TEA resources (Newly Certified and New Teacher Hires dashboard; Uncertified Teachers by District/School System Report) at least annually to validate trends and inform recruiting priorities.
- The superintendent/designee will provide updates to the Board of Trustees at least twice annually (Fall and Spring), including progress toward annual targets; corrective actions will be initiated when an educator is not making adequate progress toward certification milestones.

8. Implementation Timeline

Timeframe	Action Steps	Owner(s)
Jan–Mar 2026	Validate baseline counts; finalize EPP agreements; prepare board agenda and plan for approval; submit TEA application after board approval.	Human Resources, Teaching & Learning, Superintendent

Apr–Aug 2026	Implement K-5 reading/math compliance plan for 2026-2027; summer certification boot camps; prioritize certified hiring for vacancies; finalize fall schedules based on certification.	Human Resources, Principals, Teaching & Learning
Sept–Dec (annually)	Progress monitoring; mentor/coaching supports; confirm parental notifications where required; bd. update.	Human Resources, Principals, Teaching & Learning, Superintendent
Jan–May (annually)	Mid-year certification audit; testing windows; spring recruiting; bd. update; set next-year annual targets.	Human Resources, Principals, Superintendent
June–Aug (annually)	Final staffing and assignment audit; ensure foundation courses fully staffed by certified teachers per milestone; update posted plan as needed.	Human Resources, Teaching & Learning, Principals

9. Board Approval, Posting, and Annual Updates

RISD Board of Trustees must approve this plan prior to submission of the TEA application. If approval is granted, then the district will:

- Post the board-approved plan in an easily accessible location on the district website.
- Maintain a public link to the board meeting agenda where the plan was approved, as required for the TEA application.
- Update the plan annually (no later than August) to reflect updated baseline data, annual targets, EPP partnership details, and progress evidence.

10. TEA Application Submission Notes

- Application window opens on October 16, 2025 & closes on March 2, 2026.
- TEA notifications of approval/rejection will be issued on a rolling basis, no later than March 31, 2026.
- To ensure RISD receives application status updates, we will add automation@app.smartsheet.com to our safe sender list.
- Only one application is filed per district; the application cannot be filed until after board approval.