

Bellville Independent School District

DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PLAN

2026-2031

APPROVED: JULY 2026-JUNE 2029

LEARNERS TODAY. LEADERS TOMORROW.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	01	
BISD GOALS	02	
BISD INNOVATION PLAN	03	

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INTRODUCTION



MISSION

As the center of public education in our community, BISD partners with students, staff, parents, and community to cultivate relevant learning experiences so that each individual is empowered by their unique gifts and interests.

In Bellville, we want more than smart kids. We need and want good kids. We want positive and productive kids. We want happy kids. We want kids who are both confident and humble. We want kids who are kind, courageous, and hard working. In Bellville, there is a sense of community pride that goes beyond the classroom, beyond the school walls, and beyond the success of Bellville ISD. Bellville Pride is a unifying force that envelops everything. This pride comes from the way that we embrace our neighbors, are disciplined in our efforts, and honor our faith, value our history, and pursue big dreams.

BISD

GOALS

This innovation plan has been created in effort to accomplish the mission, vision, and goals of Bellville ISD.



LEARNING

Develop and attain local standards for high levels of integrated learning and performance.



LEADERSHIP

Foster a connected, collaborative, and strategic approach to continuous improvement for the district.



CULTURE

Create a culture that attracts, develops, and retains exceptional individuals to be part of our district and community.



COMMUNITY

Cultivate connections in our schools and community to ensure all feel safe, valued, and engaged in meaningful ways.

INNOVATION PLAN

TEACHER CERTIFICATION

TEC 21.003 requires that a person may not be employed as a teacher by a school district unless the person holds the appropriate certification or permit issued by the State Board of Educator Certification. In the event that the district cannot locate a certified teacher for a CTE position, the district must submit a request to the Texas Education Agency.

Rationale for Exemption:

Flexibility to establish local teaching credentials when hiring in CTE, Industry-Based, or otherwise hard to fill non-core teaching positions will allow BISD to select from a potentially larger and more experienced candidate pool and ultimately hire the person who is the best fit for the position based on the needs of the district and our students.

Local Guidelines:

The district will maintain high standards for teacher qualification by making every attempt to hire individuals with appropriate certification for open positions in BISD. The district will have the flexibility to hire individuals who are knowledgeable in the subject area and equipped to perform the duties of the respective courses that will be taught. This may include allowances in areas such as CTE courses, industry-based courses, or other non-core courses to serve as teachers of record if the individual is the best fit to meet the students' needs. In accordance with federal guidelines, our Special Education and Bilingual Education teachers will continue to be or become SBEC certified within their first year of employment with BISD.

Teachers hired under this provision will be provided with district–developed training, resources, and support. This exemption is not applicable for teacher certification requirements as specified under TEC 21.0032.

INNOVATION PLAN

MENTORS

TEC 21.458 requires that mentors be assigned to teachers with less than two years of experience and that a teacher assigned as a mentor, to the extent practical, should teach at the same school and in the same content area and grade level and have at least three years of teaching experience.

Rationale for Exemption:

Bellville ISD is a mid-sized rural school district in which many of our teachers serve in multiple capacities and due to limitations of size, the teachers available to serve as mentors based on campus, grade level, and subject assignment may not be the best fit or have the capacity with their existing workloads and additional duties to commit the time, care, and energy needed to effectively mentor a new teacher. Bellville ISD aims to assign the role of mentor to individuals who have a natural aptitude for serving, supporting, and pouring in an abundance of care to teachers who are new to our district and/or new to the profession regardless of their grade level and content area assignment and personal experience. Additionally, BISD has developed a mentor program, training, and ongoing supports that have supported our ability to provide effective mentorship and supports to new teachers aligned to our local approach and promote retention of effective teachers new to our district and/or the community.

Local Guidelines:

Bellville ISD will assure all teachers new to the district and/or new to the profession are assigned an effective mentor and ensure all mentors are provided with training and resources to support new team members' success as established by our District's goals and standards.

INNOVATION PLAN

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES-PROBATIONARY CONTRACTS

TEC 21.002 (A) requires a school district to issue a probationary contract when a person is employed by the District for the first time. The term of the probationary contract cannot exceed one school year. 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.

Rationale for Exemption:

Bellville ISD has worked strategically and collaboratively to establish a strong culture aligned with our mission and reflective of the families and community we serve. Our culture is based on family, trust, and high expectations. The first year for anyone, regardless of how experienced he/she may be, is a transitional year. It is sometimes difficult to discern the individual's fit and capabilities during the period of transition. BISD believes it appropriate to allow an individual up to three years probationary status upon transitioning to BISD, regardless of years of experience elsewhere to ensure the transition to a term contract and long-term commitment between the employee and the district is an appropriate fit for the success of the teacher and the District.

Local Guidelines:

The district may offer a one-year probationary contract to individuals who are new to Bellville ISD, regardless of prior years of experience for up to three years allowing both the District and the individual to be confident in the right fit and capability of success for the employee and the District prior to issuance of a Chapter 21 Term Contract.

INNOVATION PLAN

APPRAISAL PROCESS AND PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

TEC 21.352, 21.353, 21.354, 21.3541 requires the district to utilize the appraisal process and performance criteria for teachers and staff using the appraisal system Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (TTESS) and Texas Principal Evaluation and Support System (TPESS).

Rationale for Exemption:

Flexibility to continue to utilize the locally developed system for appraisal and development for teachers, certain administrations, and principals allows the district to personalize employee's professional growth, personal aspirations, and support individual's development in alignment with the district's goals and long-range plans for instructional design, leadership development, and performance.

Local Guidelines:

The district has developed and utilized a local system for Growth and Development for the past five years. The BISD Local Growth and Appraisal Process (GAP) promotes continuous growth and development of all staff members that is aligned with the specific vision and goals of the district, the Bellville ISD Portrait of a Learner, and is grounded in provision of timely and meaningful feedback, collaborative establishment of professional goals, and demonstrating evidence toward progress and growth.

INNOVATION PLAN

UNIFORM SCHOOL START DATE

TEC 25.0811 states that students may not begin school before the 4th Monday of August.

Rationale for Exemption:

Flexibility regarding the district's start date would allow the district to determine locally, on an annual basis, what best meets the needs of the students and local community. This allows BISD to balance the amount of instructional time per semester. In addition, having flexibility in the start and end date of the school year, would allow BISD to start classes on a partial week to ease the transition for students entering prekindergarten and kindergarten and provides more flexibility with establishing a calendar aligned to the district's intentions with provision of professional development.

Local Guidelines:

The district will continue to locally establish the most reasonable start date with regard to all stakeholders and programs impacted by such a decision, so that the calendar can be designed to promote what is best for student and staff learning while taking into consideration local events and community impact of district calendar decisions.

INNOVATION PLAN

90 PERCENT ATTENDANCE RULE

TEC 25.092 Currently requires students attend class 90% of the school days in order for the District to award class credit.

Rationale for Exemption:

BISD has local policies specific to standards for grades and credit to be based on mastery of the curriculum rather than “seat time”. Exemption from this requirement means the district won’t have to penalize students who miss class due to extra/co-curricular activities, academic activities, or other extenuating circumstances. This exemption will allow the District to promote student engagement, as well as social and emotional development, by encouraging more students to participate in such activities. It will also allow BISD administrators to award credit to students because they can show they understand concepts rather than because they’ve attended a certain number of school days.

Exemption would allow counselors and administrators to refocus efforts on students who are truly at risk, while simultaneously providing rigor and relevance in the curriculum. Exemption from this requirements additionally provides advantages of learning through innovative methods and eliminating the constraints of methods, locations, and times of instruction to accommodate students with legitimate scheduling conflicts, reducing dropouts, and increasing the number of qualifying graduates.

Local Guidelines:

The district will continue to honor local policies regarding the awarding of credit based on demonstrated mastery levels of applicable curriculum. The district will continue to abide by UIL requirements regarding attendance standards and will ensure absences allowed are related to extra/co-curricular and or alternative learning related activities. Absences not related to learning opportunities will continue to be monitored and addressed relative to individual students' needs and learning supports.

INNOVATION PLAN

CLASS SIZE RATIOS

TEC 25.111, 25.112, 25.113, and 25.114 Establish the requirement of Pre-Kindergarten-4th Grade classes to be kept as a 22 student to 1 teacher ratio, and 45 to 1 ratio in Physical Education Classes otherwise requiring the District to seek a waiver from the Texas Education Agency.

Rationale for Exemption:

BISD currently maintains a lower than required student: teacher ratio in most grade levels. However, the state requirement does not give room for local discretion when the PK-4 ratio may be exceeded. The District would like to maintain the local ability to take into consideration factors of impact such as: the needs of the student, the nature of the class, the ability of the teacher, the impact on all students, the time in the school year, available space and resources-when determining whether there is a need to add an additional teacher in response to student numbers.

Local Guidelines:

Any instance that places a PK-4 classroom in the position of being beyond the 22:1 ratio in PK-4 classes or exceeding the 45:1 ratio in physical education classes will require notification to the BISD Board of Trustees and will be based on staff input and administrative recommendations taking into account what is best for all students impacted by the decisions made.

INNOVATION PLAN

DISTRICT-LEVEL PLANNING & MAKING + CAMPUS LEVEL PLANNING & SITE-BASED DECISION MAKING

TEC 11.251, 11.252 & 11.253 requires set ratios for various site-based decision-making boards including the School Health Advisory Council and the District Advisory Council and Campus Advisory Councils. Ratios often require a majority parent-based representation.

Rationale for Exemption:

Because BISD values the broad-base of community support and involvement that we have with district initiatives, programs, and decisions, the district would prefer to have site-based committees inclusive of equitable stakeholder representatives including staff, students, parents, and community members. The majority requirement for any one stakeholder group can force other group representatives to be minimized on committees in order to meet the majority requirements outlined in the Texas Education Code.

Local Guidelines:

In alignment with the district's strategic plan and goal to engage the community in meaningful ways, BISD will continue to maintain local guidelines for committees to be made-up of equitable representation of various stakeholder groups on site-based decision-making committees. Additionally, BISD will develop long-range strategic planning documents reflective of annual, ongoing, and long-term actions and efforts aimed at continuous improvement toward accomplishments of the district's mission, vision, and goals.

INNOVATION PLAN

ENROLLMENT OF TRANSFER STUDENTS

TEC 25.036 States that any child, other than a high school graduate, who is younger than 21 years of age and is eligible for enrollment on September 1 of any school year may transfer annually from the child's school district of residence to another district in the state if both the receiving district and the applicant's parents approve and timely agree in writing to the transfer.

Rationale for Exemption:

While BISD will continue to review transfer applications annually, BISD will revoke acceptance of transfer students at the conclusion of each semester who fail to meet enrollment standards including local standards for behavior, attendance, and academic performance. Students who are initially accepted at the beginning of the school year, will lose enrollment eligibility at the conclusion of the semester and will no longer be eligible for enrollment in BISD and will be required to return to their district of residence if they fall below the district's standards for attendance, academic performance, or commit a disciplinary offense/offenses that results in 2 or more assignments to In-Building Suspension, an Out-of-School Suspension, DAEP or expulsion.

Local Guidelines:

In alignment with the district's goals to: 1) Develop and attain local standards for high levels of integrated learning and performance; and 3) Create a culture that attracts, develops, and retains exceptional individuals to be part of our district and community- BISD will carefully review student transfer applications to be certain to the degree possible that prior to acceptance, the student is likely to be successful within our school system based on our standards.; however, when an enrolled transfer student fails to meet standards for attendance, academic performance and discipline, his/her parents will be notified that the acceptance in BISD will conclude at the end of the semester requiring the student to re-enroll in his/her district of residence.

“Our job as teachers, leaders, and parents is not to prepare students for something; our job is to help students prepare themselves for anything.”

-A.J. Juliani