

Ben Bolt Palito Blanco ISD



From the Office of the Superintendent

Fernando Castillo ED, d.

Proposed Plan for District of Innovation Ben Bolt - Palito Blanco ISD Term 2022 through 2023

During the 84th Texas Legislative Session, HB 1842 was passed in order to provide more local control in certain areas. HB 1842 allows a traditional public school to utilize the exemptions in the Texas Education Code (TEC) that charter schools currently are entitled to. We feel this is a great opportunity for our local district to create a plan based on the needs of our students and community that could remain in effect for up to five years. This plan can also be amended during its term in order to accommodate other areas of innovation if a need presents itself. Amendment of this plan must follow the same process as the original development and adoption and will not extend the term of original plan.

District of Innovation Committee Members

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Teacher Certification

Exemption from TEC 21.003, 21.051

Currently, TEC Section 21.044 mandates that districts that wish to hire an uncertified staff member must submit a request to TEA and wait for approval or denial.

Section 21.003 provides that an employee's probationary, continuing or term contract is void for failure to maintain certification in certain circumstances.

Section 21.051 provides that before a school district may employ a candidate for certification as a teacher 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 Flexibility:

The District specifically seeks flexibility to hire professionals who are not certified teachers but have experience and a related degree in the content area to supply the needed teachers. This flexibility would enrich applicant pools in specific content areas and enable more students to obtain the educational benefit of career and technical course offerings. The District would like the opportunity 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. Ben Bolt – Palito Blanco ISD will provide local qualifications and training requirements for professionals and experts to teach courses in lieu of traditional state requirements.

To best serve Ben Bolt – Palito Blanco ISD students, decisions on certification will be handled locally. The District's goal will continue to be hiring certified teachers; however, flexibility is needed in the areas that are difficult to fill.

- Ben Bolt – Palito Blanco ISD proposes to that a campus principal may submit a request for approval to fill a teaching position to the Superintendent or designee:
- A teacher with proper credential endorsement may be assigned to a grade level other than teacher certificate specifications. (i.e., Math teacher with teacher certification 7-12 may teach a 6th grade math class).
- A teacher who holds a valid Texas teaching certification to teach one subject out of his/her certificated field.

- A teacher who has a four-year degree, **fluent in Spanish**, and is able to pass a district assessment will be qualified to teach Spanish I and Spanish II.
- For a professional in certain trades and vocations to teach the crafts of those trades and vocations, such as **welding, health sciences, architecture and construction, and other career and technical** courses.
- A teacher who is fully certified in another state will be considered a certified teacher in Ben Bolt – Palito Blanco ISD for one year on a probationary status given:
- The employee creates a Texas Educator TEAL account and applies for and pays for their (1) review of out of state credential, (2) one-year temporary certification, (3) fingerprints and;
- The employee agrees to register for appropriate content and Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities exams.
- A written request from the campus principal would outline the reason for the request that includes documentation regarding the professional's credentials, experience, and training they possess which would qualify this individual to teach the subject.

First Day of Instruction

Exemption: TEC 25.0811

Currently, a school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.

Proposed Flexibility: Ben Bolt – Palito Blanco ISD seeks the opportunity to continue having the option of an early start.

This flexibility allows the district to build a calendar that optimizes instruction time and teacher professional development days based on the unique needs of the students in the district. The flexibility also allows the district to work with in-district charters and local partner institutions to align resources and course schedules. This is especially beneficial for dual credit classes with local community colleges and universities. Ben Bolt – Palito Blanco ISD will develop and implement flexible instructional schedules to meet students' needs as individuals and as student groups. This option would also allow the district to balance the semester schedules and improve the instructional program.

Flexibility with Calendars and Attendance

As outlined in the goals and specific results statements of the Strategic Plan, BBPBISD will develop curriculum with an emphasis on preparation for post-secondary endorsements and certifications. Furthermore, the Strategic Plan calls for district practices focused on meeting the needs of all students. As such, relaxing the requirements of Texas Education Codes listed below will create a system that nurtures a calendar conducive for supporting students in dual enrollment programs by allowing a flexible start and end date.

Additionally, the flexibility will address the difference between the calendar of the school district and partnering colleges and universities. As BBPBISD expands learning opportunities aligned with House Bill 5 and the Next Generation Accountability System, flexibility with attendance will be critical to ensure student internships are a viable means of accruing credit for relevant course credits. BBPBISD will look to exercise this flexibility with Early College High for the 2023-2024 school year.

Sec. 25.0811. FIRST DAY OF INSTRUCTION. (a) 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.

Sec. 25.0812. LAST DAY OF SCHOOL. (a) Except as provided by Subsection (b), a school district may not schedule the last day of school for students for a school year before May 15.

Sec. 25.092. MINIMUM ATTENDANCE FOR CLASS CREDIT OR FINAL GRADE. (a) Except as provided by this section, a student in any grade level from kindergarten through grade 12 may not be given credit or a final grade for a class unless the student is in attendance for at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered.

Student Transfers

Exemption from: TEC 25.036

Under Texas Education Code, a district may choose to accept, as transfers, students who are not entitled to enroll in the district. Under TEC 25.036, a transfer is interpreted to be for a period of one school year.

The District is seeking to eliminate the provision of a one year commitment in accepting transfer applicants. 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.

Proposed Flexibility: Ben Bolt-Plaito Blanco ISD seeks exemption from the one-year transfer commitment.

- Nonresident students who have been accepted as inter-district transfer 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.
- Students not meeting the State's 90% attendance standard may also be subject to immediate revocation of the transfer status.
- Students failing to meet academic standards set forth by the district.

Class Size Ratio

According to Section 25:112 grades K-4 may not have a class size ratio of greater than 22:1 without requesting a Class Size exemption. The District is requesting relief from the requirement of a Class Size exemption and notification to parents (TEC 25.112 and 25.113). Based on historical data the District applies annually for Class Size Exemptions expending valuable time and resources in this process. As part of the implementation of the Strategic Plan, obtaining this flexibility will expedite the planning and implementation process, as well as save resources. An established district cap of 25:1 for K-4 will be in place, always considerations for the subject to be taught, the teaching methodology to be used, and any need for individual instruction [25.112(c)]. The goal of the district is continuing to maintain the 22:1 ratio and exercise this flexibility on a case-by-case basis.

BBPBISD's Strategic Plan and its local Innovation Plan are comprehensive and touch numerous areas in the TEC seeking to maximize local control of educational decisions for students. Consequently, BBPBISD seeks exemption from the following permissible provisions of the TEC as allowed in the statute:

Subchapter A – General Provisions

- § 21.003 Certification Required

Subchapter B – Certification of Educators

- § 21.051 Rules Regarding Field-Based Experience and Options for Field Experience and Internships

Subchapter C – Operation of Schools and Attendance

- § 25.0811 First Day of Instruction
- § 25.092 Minimum Attendance for Class Credit or Final Grade
- § 25.036 Exemption of Transfer Student

Subchapter D

- § 25.111 Student/Teacher Ratios; Class Size