

# Bellville ISD

## INNOVATION PLAN

August 2020-June 2023



Working together to ensure one becomes what one has the potential to be.

# THE BELLVILLE WAY

In Bellville, we want more than smart kids. We need and want good kids. We want positive and productive kids. We want successful 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 our school walls, and beyond the successes of Bellville ISD. Brahma Pride is a uniting force that envelops everything. This pride comes from that way that we embrace our neighbors, are disciplined in our efforts, 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.

**1**

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

**2**

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

**3**

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

**4**

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

# BISD 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 teacher certification requirements when hiring in CTE, Industry-Based, or otherwise hard to fill positions or late-hires 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, and allowance of teachers with content area certifications above or below assigned grade levels to serve as teachers of record in core classes if the individual is the best fit to meet the students' needs.

Teachers hired under this provision will be provided with district-identified or district-developed training, resources, and support.

# BISD INNOVATION PLAN

---

## PARENT NOTIFICATION

TEC 21.057 requires a school district that assigns an inappropriately certified or uncertified teacher to the same classroom for more than 30 consecutive instructional days during the same school year shall provide written notice of the assignment to the parent or guardian of each student in that classroom. (b) the superintendent of the school district shall provide the notice required by Subsection (a) not later than the 30<sup>th</sup> instructional day after the date of the assignment of the inappropriately certified or uncertified teacher.

### Rationale for Exemption:

Local control of the nature of notices to parents would allow for notification in line with the district's guidelines when an individual is hired that meets the Board's determined criteria under the District of Innovation Plan.

### Local Guidelines:

The district will establish procedures and administrative guidelines to notify parents of students being taught by individuals hired using the District of Innovation Teacher Education Certification criteria to promote awareness of the individuals' applicable qualifications. .

# BISD INNOVATION PLAN

---

## APPRAISAL PROCESS AND PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

TEC 21.351, 21.352 requires the district to utilize 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 establish a local system for appraisal and development will allow 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 will develop a local system for promoting continuous growth and development of all staff members that is aligned with the specific vision and goals of the district and grounded in provision of timely and meaningful feedback, collaborative establishment of professional goals, and demonstrating evidence toward progress and growth.

# BISD INNOVATION PLAN

---

## DISTRICT INSURANCE PROVISIONS

TEC 22.004 States that a school district may not make group health coverage available to its employees pursuant to TEX 22.004 (b) after the date a District implements the program of coverages provided under Chapter 1579 of the Texas Insurance Code.

### Rationale for Exemption:

The current process allows no flexibility in the design of group health insurance benefits to fit the needs of all BISD employees. This provision also prohibits Districts from procuring group health insurance benefits that may provide better coverages for its employees at a lower cost.

### Local Guidelines:

The District will utilize increased local control to procure group health benefits in order to be most responsive to the needs of our employees.

# BISD INNOVATION PLAN

---

## UNIFORM SCHOOL START DATE

TEC 25.0811 states that students may not begin school before the 4<sup>th</sup> 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 locally establish the earliest possible start date, such as a commitment to begin no earlier than August 15<sup>th</sup> or the third Monday in August, but not before, 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.

# BISD 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 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.

# BISD INNOVATION PLAN

---

## CLASS SIZE-RATIOS

TEC 25.111, 25.112, & 25.113 Establish the requirement of Kindergarten-4<sup>th</sup> Grade classes to be kept as a 22 student to 1 teacher ratio, 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 K-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 K-4 classroom in the position of being beyond the 22:1 ratio 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.

# BISD INNOVATION PLAN

---

## DISTRICT-LEVEL PLANNING & DECISION MAKING; & CAMPUS PLANNING & SITE-BASED DECISION MAKING

TEC 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 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 establish local guidelines for committee make-up inclusive 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.

# BISD 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 resident 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 academic performance and discipline record. Students who are initially accepted at the beginning of the school year during the period of annual review, 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 academic standards or commit an offense that results in placement in 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 academic performance and disciplinary history, 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

