

Buffalo Independent School District

708 Cedar Creek RD

Buffalo, TX 75831

903-322-2473

Superintendent: Mr. Lacy Freeman

Assistant Superintendent: Dr. Georgeanna Adams-Molina

District of Innovation Plan 2017-2018 to 2021-2022

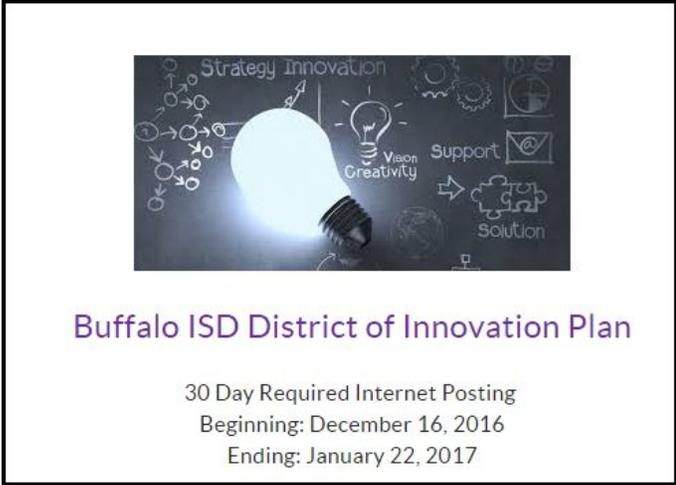


Buffalo ISD is utilizing HB 1842, of the 84th Legislative Session, in order to have more local control in certain areas. HB 1842 allows a traditional public school to have some of the same local flexibility that public charter schools have always been allowed. We feel this is a great opportunity for our local district to tailor plans based on the needs of our students and community.

District of Innovation Committee Members

Board Member	Jennifer Humphries
Superintendent of Schools	Lacy Freeman
Assistant Superintendent of School	Dr. Georgeanna Adams-Molina
Business Manager	Courtney Rodell
Athletic Director	Gary Grubbs
Technology Director	Terri Frazee
High School Principal	Tracy Gleghorn
High School Assistant Principal	Jozette Jenkins
High School Counselor	Debbie Read
Junior High School Principal	Greg Kennedy
Junior High Assistant Principal	Susan Shelton
Junior High Academic Coordinator	Dana Morris
Elementary School Principal	Lisa Boudiette
Elementary School Academic Coordinator	Karey Reeder
Elementary Teacher	Carla Henson
Junior High Teacher	Daniel Roberts
Junior High Teacher	Ruth Rodell
Junior High Teacher	Gloria Roberts
Junior High Teacher	Trena Bing
Junior High Teacher	Teresa MacNabb
Junior High Teacher	Nan Grisham
Junior High Teacher	Leslie Morman
High School Teacher	Melonee Menefee
High School Teacher	Jill Henson
Community Member	Ken Jones
Community Member	Gary Danford
Business Representative	Dianne Ryder

District of Innovation Timeline

October 19, 2016	Initial presentation of DOI concept to DEIC Members; Determine and seek interest to participate on DOI Committee	DEIC Meeting
November 11, 2016	Discussion of DOI concept with DEIC Member	DEIC Meeting
November 14, 2016	Introduction of DOI concept to Board of Trustees; Presentation of Interest from DEIC Committee Members; Solicitation of at least one Board Member to participate on DOI Committee; Board of Trustees approve resolution to hold a Public Hearing regarding DOI	Board Meeting
December 12, 2016	Public Hearing to explain and discuss the possibility of BISD becoming a DOI district; Board of Trustees approves resolution to for DOI Committee	Public Hearing; Regular Called Board Meeting
December 13, 2016	DOI Committee Meeting (1)	DOI Committee Meeting
December 16, 2016- January 22, 2017	DOI Plan posted on district website for 30 days;  <p>The graphic features a glowing lightbulb in the center, surrounded by various icons and text related to innovation and strategy. The text includes 'Strategy Innovation', 'Vision Creativity', 'Support', and 'Solution'. Below the graphic, it states 'Buffalo ISD District of Innovation Plan' and '30 Day Required Internet Posting Beginning: December 16, 2016 Ending: January 22, 2017'.</p>	TEA
February 8, 2017 February 15, 2017	DEIC Meetings to Discuss 2017-2018 School Calendar with DOI Exemptions & Provisions	DEIC Meeting
February 20, 2017	Board of Trustees motion to approve Buffalo ISD's DOI plan; Approve the 2017-2018 School Calendar	Board Meeting
February 21, 2017	Plan sent to Commissioner of Education; Update all policy changes with TASB	TASB

The 84th Legislative Session passed House Bill 1842, allowing Texas public school districts to become Districts of Innovation and thus permitting exemption from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code. In an effort

to transform systemic improvement to better serve and accommodate the diverse needs of all 21st century stakeholders, including students, staff, parents and community members, Buffalo ISD seeks to become a District of Innovation. This distinction allows the District increased local control over District operations to improve the quality of services benefiting all stakeholders. A resolution to hold a Public Hearing to initiate the process of Buffalo ISD becoming a District of Innovation was adopted by the Board of Trustees on November 14, 2016. The Public Hearing was held on December 12, 2016 followed by the Board of Trustees approving a resolution to establish a District of Innovation Team (DIT). The District of Innovation Team is charged with crafting a cohesive local innovative plan to improve the outcomes of all stakeholders. The DIT met on December 13, 2016 to discuss and craft the plan.

The District of Innovation Plan is for five years yet may be terminated or amended by the Board of Trustees at any time in accordance with the law. The DIT will monitor the effectiveness of the DOI plan and provide updates and/or necessary modifications to the Board of Trustees on a regular basis.

Goal 1: The Buffalo ISD Board of Trustees and Buffalo ISD Administration will make governance decisions based on the unique needs of the district's students and community.

1.1 School Start Date (TEC §25.0811a) (EB LEGAL)

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan

TEC §25.0811 states that a school district may not begin student instruction before the 4th Monday of August. For many years this was the rule however, districts had the option of applying for a waiver to start earlier, even as early as the 2nd Monday in August. The Texas tourism groups lobbied to have this stopped because they believed it was hurting their tourism business. Therefore, several years ago the legislature took away all waivers and dictated that districts may not begin until the 4th Monday, with no exceptions. The current process allows no flexibility in the design of annual calendars to fit the needs of the community or the wishes of the local Board of Trustees who represent community interests in this matter.

Innovation Strategies

Flexibility to begin instruction earlier in the calendar year, the 3rd Monday in August, will:

- A. Enable the District to balance the amount of instructional time in each grading period, which will allow students more time to accumulate test and assignment grades
- B. Enable the District to balance the amount of instructional time in the semesters, which will allow teachers to better pace and deliver instruction before and after the winter break
- C. Enable teachers to invest more instructional time with students prior to high-stakes STAAR & EOC State assessments
- D. Enable the District to begin Summer School intervention earlier for students who need to retake in SSI grades or retake in EOC assessments for graduation purposes

Goal 2: The Buffalo ISD Board of Trustees and Buffalo ISD Administration will make teacher certification decisions based on district qualifications that meet the unique needs of the district's students and community.

Teacher certification - General (TEC §21.003a) (DK LEGAL)

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan

TEC §21.003(a) states that a person may not be employed as a teacher by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued by the appropriate state agency. 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 request emergency certification from the Texas Education Agency and/or State Board of Educator Certification. This system is burdensome and does not take into account the unique financial and/or instructional needs of the district.

By claiming exemption from TEC §21.003(a), the district shall have the right to recruit individuals from certain trades, industries, and vocations with industry knowledge and real world experience and consider qualifications based on experience, industry certification, etc. District leadership including the superintendent, principals, CTE administrators, human resource department, etc. shall determine whether it is in the best interest of its students to certify individuals based on these factors rather than appeal to the Commissioner of Education as stated in Sec. 21.055.

By claiming exemption from TEC §21.003(a), the district will be able to increase the amount of course offerings and utilize creative instructional methods, the district will need flexibility in the area of teacher certification requirements, which are governed by §21.003, §21.044, and §21.053. In lieu of these requirements, the district will establish its own local qualification procedures. Freedom from the latter requirements will make it possible to hire industry experts and post-secondary instructors to teach CTE courses, thereby increasing the number of students able to receive such instruction.

Innovation Strategies

- A. The campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request to allow a *certified teacher to teach one subject out of their certified field*. The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses which qualify this individual to teach this subject.
- B. An individual with *experience in a CTE field* could be eligible to teach a vocational skill or course through a *local certification*. The principal will submit the request to the superintendent with all the individual's credentials. The superintendent will then approve the request if they feel the individual could be an asset to students. Local teaching certificates will be for one year. This person will be considered an "at-will" employee of the district.