

## **FAQ Response to BCISD Faculty Survey regarding DoI**

### **1. What is a “District of Innovation”?**

The District of Innovation concept was passed into law by the 84th Legislative Session in House Bill 1842, which created Texas Education Code chapter 12A.

The law allows traditional independent school districts to access most of the flexibilities available to Texas' open enrollment charter schools. To access these flexibilities, a school district must adopt an innovation plan, as set forth in Chapter 12A.

#### **Is it optional?**

Yes, DoI is optional. To be eligible for designation as a District of Innovation, a school district's most recent academic performance rating must be at least acceptable.

#### **Will it require more work from teachers?**

No, the process of applying for and becoming a district of innovation does not require more work from teachers. Being a professional educator and working to improve does require thought, effort, practice and determination.

Our district is required to develop an instructional calendar that includes at *minimum* 75,600 minutes of instruction. Teachers are contracted to work 187 days. Each year campus and district administrators identify the start and end time for students and employees.

### **2. What are the benefits to students and staff of becoming a DoI?**

#### **Student benefits:**

- Students in classrooms will benefit from organized and well planned delivery of designed instruction.
- Students in classrooms led by teachers who have skill and aptitude to teach a course or grade level for which they are not certified will benefit from the interest and desire of that teacher to provide quality instruction.
- Students will also have the opportunity to experience CTE courses and begin or continue in a coherent sequence of interest to them.

#### **Teacher and staff benefits:**

- Flexibility in calendar and length of school day allows for early dismissal and or full day staff development/workdays each marking period.
- Flexibility in appraisal system allows less than annual appraisals for staff who meet specified criteria. This criteria will be listed in local board policy. The district plans to form a committee of professional teachers and administrators to study the current TTESS system and develop a local system or process. Part

of this committees work would include the development of a summative document.

- Flexibility in certification allows for *certified* teachers with a skill and aptitude to teach in an area that they are not certified through SBEC.
- Flexibility in staff development allows for teachers and administrators at the campus level to determine staff development needs as they arise.

**3. What impact will the BCISD DoI plan have on funding, teacher contracts, and due process for staff members?**

In general school district funding will remain substantially the same for Districts of Innovation. **BCISD is NOT seeking to innovate any area that would impact district funding.**

BCISD is **NOT** seeking to innovate any area that will impact or change teacher contracts.

District of Innovation plans will **NOT** change a staff members legal rights to due process. TEA's proposed rules indicate that a district may have only one innovation plan at a time. A district innovation plan may be amended, rescinded, or renewed.

**4. How long does an innovation plan stay in effect?**

The DoI plan has a term of 5 years from the date of approval by the school board. If a district of innovation receives unacceptable academic and or financial performance ratings for two consecutive years, the commissioner may terminate the innovation plan or require the district to amend its plan.

**5. What if our district wishes to revise, edit, amend or no longer follow the DoI?**

A district innovation plan may be amended, rescinded, or renewed. An amendment to an approved plan does not change the date of the term of designation as a District of Innovation, and exemptions that were already formally approved need not be reviewed. The proposed rules limit renewal of a plan to the period within six months of the expiration of the plan's term. *During renewal, all sections of the plan and exemptions must be reviewed, and the original statutory adoption process must be followed.*

*TEA's rules provide that an innovation plan may be amended, rescinded, or renewed if the action is approved by a majority vote of the district advisory committee, or a comparable committee if the district is exempt from that section (BCISD will not be exempt from this!), and a two-thirds majority vote of the board of trustees.* Amendment of a plan does not change the date of the district's designation as an innovation district, and the district need not review exemptions that were already formally approved in the plan. 19 TEC 102.1313

**6. Specific to BCISD's innovations:**

**A. Calendar**

- The DoI committee was formed and discussed the possibility of an earlier than August 28 start date.

The following is the process followed to adopt the instructional calendar for SY 1718:

**Goal:** Develop an instructional calendar that provides for maximum instructional time with students.

**Parameters:**

1. Instructional year must have at least **75,600** minutes of instruction.
2. Minimum number of minutes per day is **420**.
3. DoI will allow us to have early dismissal days. Without a DoI we cannot have fewer than 420 minutes or 7 hours of instruction a day.
4. Teacher contract = 187 days

**Committee composition:**

*Approximately 30 staff members.*

1. Four (4) teacher representatives from each campus
  - a. Campus representative to the Superintendent's Advisory Council will have first opportunity to be on the Calendar Committee.
  - b. Campus nurse could also be invited.
2. At least one (1) administrator from each campus.
3. Counselor from each campus
4. Director of Instructional Technology
5. Director of Special Education

**Process:**

- The committee viewed and discussed at least 15 versions of a SY 1718 Instructional Calendar.
- The committee will review each version.
  - Strengths
  - Weaknesses or areas of concern
- The committee will recommend two (2) calendars.
- The recommended calendars will be presented to the administrative staff of BCISD for review and approval.
- The recommended calendars will be presented to campus staff by campus principal and campus calendar committee.
- Campus staff will have opportunity for input regarding areas of strength and weakness that may have been over looked by committee.
- Selected Calendar will be presented to BCISD school board for approval at the March Board meeting.

### **Time line**

- February 9, 2017 Calendar Committee met and made suggestions for revision of calendar options they were presented.
- February 15, 2017 Campus Administrators will review the 6 versions of the calendar created as a result of the Calendar Committee meeting.
- February 21, 2017 Calendar Committee reconvenes to recommend 2 calendar options to present to staff.
- Campus committee members and campus administrators will present 2 calendar options to staff. (February 22 – March 6)
- Mannino receives calendar options by campus on March 7
- Mannino presents to Mr. Lintzen (March 7-10)
- Calendar presented to Board for approval on March 20, 2017

### **B. Length of School Day**

Allows for BCISD to build an instructional calendar that includes days with less than 420 minutes of instruction.

***Important to note that an instructional calendar must have 75,600 instructional minutes if you are not using waivers.***

### **C. Teacher Appraisal**

**BCISD is seeking the following flexibility:**

- Less than annual
- Modification of current TTESS process
- Development of summative process (document)

### **D. Teacher Certification**

In order to hire uncertified teachers in specific teaching areas, a district's innovation plan should identify an exemption from TEC 21.003.

**BCISD's DoI plan will include specificity and a process for placing a teacher in an area where he/she is not certified.**

This plan will include:

- Teaching positions for which state certification is not required
- Local standard for hiring qualified individuals from nontraditional backgrounds for teaching positions (CTE)

***BCISD will not hire a teacher who is not certified for areas outside of CTE.***

### **E. Staff Development**

BCISD is seeking the flexibility for campus based professional development to be planned and implemented without SBDM approval.