During of 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 Education Law 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.

**Wednesday June 1, 2016**

SBDM discussed and introduced the District of Innovation concept for Boles ISD.

**Tuesday June 7, 2016**

Boles Board of Trustees meeting discussed and approved resolution and conducted a public hearing to discuss possibility of using HB 1842 to become a District of Innovation.

**July/August 2016**

* Public hearing to explain and discuss the possibility of becoming a District of Innovation (June 1)
* Regular Board Meeting to approve pursuing state approval of District of Innovation Plan (June 7)
* District Advisory Committee identified
* Initial meeting of the District of Innovation Committee

**November 2016-February 2017 (Revised timeline as of January 3, 2017)**

* Presentation to SBDM of Innovation items to be explored by Boles ISD (November 9, 2016)
* District Innovation Committee meeting to discuss Boles ISD Innovation items (December 7, 2016)
* District Innovation Committee meeting to finalize Boles ISD innovation items (December 7, 2016)
* Plan Posted for 30 days on Boles ISD website
* Boles ISD finalized plan sent to Commissioner of Education prior to January 17, 2017
* Revised D.O.I. timeline with same D.O.I. plan sent to Commissioner by February 7, 2017
* D.O.I. Committee holds SBDM public meeting on February 7, 2017 to pass plan by majority vote
* Boles ISD Board of Trustees vote to finalize the DOI plan by ⅔ majority vote on February 7, 2017

**March 2017** District of Innovation Plan goes into effect for up to 5 school years beginning with the 2017-18 school year.
Boles ISD  
District of Innovation  
2017/2018 through 2021/2022  

District Innovation Committee  
Dr. Graham Sweeney:  
Dan Flynn:  
Shirley Duran:  
Jill Thomason:  
Gordon Jordan:  
Robert Cruthird:  
Karen Jones:  
Tracy Cotten:  
Roxanne Turner:  
Lori Green:  

Superintendent  
State Representative, District 2  
Elementary Principal  
High School Principal  
Middle School Principal  
Board Member  
Teacher  
Parent/Business Owner  
Parent  
Parent
Innovation items to be explored by Boles ISD:

1. Teacher Certification
2. Probationary Contracts and Contract Days
3. Length of Instructional Day
4. School Start Date
5. Class Size: Kindergarten through 4th Grade
Boles ISD
District of Innovation
2017/2018 through 2021/2022

Innovation Item # 1

Teacher Certification
(TEC 21.003)

TEC Code Requiring Exemption

TEC 21.003 requires 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

Innovative Strategy

Non-CTE Subjects
In order to best serve Boles ISD students by allowing more flexibility in scheduling and more course offerings, decisions on certification will be handled locally. For grades 6-12, in all subjects except Special Education and ESL/Bilingual, the campus principal may submit to the superintendent a request for a local certification that will allow a certified teacher to teach one subject in a related field of their current certification but for which he/she is not certified.

Related Fields

**English**: English, Reading, Speech, Journalism, any other English course accepted by SBOE for graduation credit in English.

**Social Studies**: History, Government, Economics, Political Science, any other Social Studies course accepted by SBOE for graduation credit.

**Science**: Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Biology, Earth Science, Physics, Chemistry, any other Science course accepted by SBOE for graduation credit in Science.

**Fine Arts**: Art, Music, Theater Arts, Dance, any other Fine Art course accepted by SBOE for graduation credit in Fine Arts.

**Mathematics**: Mathematics, Engineering, Statistics, Accounting, any Mathematics course accepted by SBOE for graduation credit in Mathematics.

The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials the certified teacher possesses that would qualify the individual to teach the proposed subject in the related area. The Superintendent will approve all requests.

To assist the teacher that a local certificate is enacted, lesson plans for the uncertified teacher will be created in partnership with certified teachers in the same field, whenever possible.
Teacher Certification (continued)

CTE Subjects

The current certification requirements inhibit the District’s ability to hire professionals with industry experience to teach Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, & Mathematics (STEM) courses. In order to provide more students the opportunity to take such courses and promote students ability to obtain professional certifications, the District seeks to establish its own local qualification requirements for such courses in lieu of the requirements set forth in law. Flexibility to establish its own CTE teacher certification requirements affords the District the following advantages:

- Industry certified and/or trade professionals to teach specialized certification courses.
- Greater number of CTE course offerings resulting in more opportunities for students.
- Realistic requirements for professionals transitioning from industry to teaching.
- Ability to employ part-time professionals to teach CTE courses.

The principal must specify in writing the reason for the request and document what credentials the individual possesses that would qualify the individual to teach the proposed CTE subject. The Superintendent will approve all requests.
Innovation Item #2

Probationary Contracts

(TEC 21.102)

Current Law

For experienced teachers, new to the district, the probationary period may not exceed one year if the person has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the previous eight years.

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan

This time period is not sufficient to evaluate the teacher’s effectiveness in the classroom since the teacher contract timelines demand that employment decisions must be made prior to state assessment dates.

Plan

For experienced teachers, counselors, or nurses new to the district that have been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the 8 previous years, a probationary contract may be issued for up to two years from the last date of district employment.

Contract Days

(TEC 21.401)

Current Law

Current education law located in Chapter 21 defines a teacher contract as a ten month contract equivalent to 187 days.

Plan

This plan reduces teacher contracts by one to five days per school year with no effect on teacher salaries. Due to low property values, it is difficult for Boles ISD to compete with area schools in the area of teacher salary. This possible reduction in contract days at the current salary schedule would make our salaries more competitive.

a. This plan could possibly increase the daily rate the district pays teachers.
b. This plan should enhance teacher recruitment, therefore putting the district on a more level playing field with neighboring districts.

c. This plan could significantly improve teacher morale.

d. This plan will provide teachers more opportunities during the summer months to seek out beneficial staff development that relates to their field.

e. This plan will provide that teacher contract days could be reduced from one to five days below the standard of 187 contract days based upon the needs of Boles ISD in each of the calendar years under this plan.
Innovation Item #3

Length of Instructional Day

(TEC 25.082)

Current Law

Current education law located in Chapter 25 outlines that the district operate for a least 75,600 minutes of instruction, including intermissions and recesses for students each school year. Education Code 25.081(e) defines a day of instruction to mean 420 minutes of instruction while 25.082(a) requires a school day to be at least seven hours each day, including intermissions and recesses.

Plan

This plan would meet the required minimum length of 420 minutes per instructional day, and 75,600 total minutes of instructional time per school year as prescribed by statute, while also meeting the needs of Boles ISD as reflected in its yearly calendar.

a. This plan would allow Boles ISD, in each school calendar year under this plan, to produce a school calendar that satisfies the mandated instructional minute requirements statute while also meeting the needs of the district.

b. This plan would allow Boles ISD to have a better balance of instructional time in each semester.
Innovation Item #4

School Start Date/Last Day of School

(TEC 25.0811) (TEC 25.0812)

Current Law

Students are prohibited from starting school before the 4th Monday of August. For years, school start date was a local decision. Once legislation moved to set a uniform start date, district could file a waiver through TEA for a few years to start earlier.

In Section 25.0812, the last day of school may not occur before May 15.

Plan

To meet local and community needs, this plan would allow for a more balanced number of instructional days per semester and use more instructional prior to the state assessments.

a. Students will start school no earlier than the 2nd Monday of August.

b. Teachers will report for duty no earlier than the 1st Monday of August.

c. This plan would allow Boles ISD to have a better balance of instructional days in each semester.
Innovation Item #5

Class Size: Kindergarten – Grade 4

(TEC 25.112, 25.113)

Current Law

Kindergarten – 4th Grade classes are to be kept at a 22 student to 1 teacher ratio according to state law. When a class exceeds this limit, the district must complete a waiver with the Texas Education Agency.

Along with the waiver, it is required that a letter is sent home to each parent in the section that exceeds the 22:1 ratio, informing them the waiver has been submitted. Many times soon after the waiver is submitted, students move out of the district and we are below the 22:1 ratio.

Plan

While we certainly believe that small class size plays a positive role in the classroom, we do not believe it has a negative effect when you only add one or two more students. Many times it is not the number of the students but the makeup and culture of the classroom which influence the learning environment.

a. BISD will attempt to keep all K-4th core classrooms to a 22:1 ratio. However, in the event the class size exceeds, up to 24:1 ratio, the superintendent will report to the Board of Trustees.

b. In the event a K-4th core classroom reaches 24:1, the campus will notify the parents of the students in the classroom and inform them of the situation.

c. A TEA waiver will not be necessary when a K-4th classroom exceeds the 22:1 ratio.

d. This gives BISD the flexibility without having the bureaucracy of waivers within the Texas Education Agency.