



Boys Ranch

Independent School District

District of Innovation Plan 2020-2021

Purpose

House Bill 1842 permits Texas public school districts to become a District of Innovation (DOI) and to obtain exemption from certain provisions of the Texas Education Code (TEC). Boys Ranch ISD has previously been ineligible for a DOI designation because it is a Special Purpose District and is already exempted from some provisions of TEC. The special purpose of Boys Ranch ISD is to provide an education for students in residential care placed at Cal Farley's Boys Ranch. Cal Farley's Boys Ranch is the attendance area of the district, and is licensed to serve students from ages 5 to 18 years of age. All residents in the facility attend Boys Ranch ISD, as do the children of Cal Farley's employees and BRISD staff.

According to information received from Cal Farley's Boys Ranch, the average length of stay for a student in care and thus in the district, is less than 2 years. The top five reasons given that students are placed at Boys Ranch are disobedience, family discord, additional supervision required, seeking stable environment and school behavioral problems. Thirty percent of the district's students have been placed by adoptive parents and 34% of students are from out of state. According to the 2018-2019 Texas Academic Performance Report, the mobility rate of BRISD is 27% and the mobility rate of the campuses range from 24% to 34%. Approximately 19% of students enrolled in Boys Ranch ISD are eligible for and receiving special education services.

Boys Ranch ISD is proposing a District of Innovation Plan in response to Texas Education Agency (TEA) guidance posted June 25, 2020 that recommends adopting a school calendar with extra instructional days built in for potential closures due to local COVID-19 outbreaks. The Special Purpose District status and ineligibility for DOI designation has limited the BRISD school start date to the fourth Monday in August in accordance with TEC 25.0811. Similarly, the district is unable to modify teacher contracts to allow for instruction beyond 10 months. As a result, inclusion of additional minutes of instruction is only possible by significant extension of the school day, which detrimentally impacts the operation of Cal Farley's Boys Ranch in meeting the home needs of residents.

A DOI status would enable Boys Ranch ISD to establish a school start date on the second Monday of August each year. For the 2020-2021 school year, the District will begin school on August 10th, and end school on May 20th, 2021. This school calendar incorporates 7,210 minutes (15.8 instructional days) in excess of the 75,600 instructional minutes required by TEC 25.081.

It should be noted that Boys Ranch ISD is currently a non-rated District for purposes of school accountability because it is a Special Purpose District. The District wishes to maintain this non-rated status.

Term

The term of the plan is for one year, beginning August 1, 2020, and ending July 31, 2021 unless terminated or amended by the BRISD Board of Trustees in accordance with law. No additional areas of operations are to be considered for flexibility as part of HB 1842.

BRISD District of Innovation Timeline

Tuesday, July 14 th , 2020	Have District Improvement and Planning Committee (DIPC) approve the plan
Wednesday, July 15 th , 2020	Post the plan on the web site
Tuesday, July 28 th , 2020	Regular Board meeting to Approve Resolution for District of Innovation in accordance with section 12A.001 (c)(1)
Tuesday, July 28 th , 2020	Special Public Hearing to have the board appoint the DIPC to recommend a final DOI plan
Tuesday, July 28 th , 2020	Send the “other waiver” through TEAL as recommended by Deputy Commissioner, Jeff Cottrill
Wednesday, July 29 th , 2020	Notify Commissioner of the Board’s intention to vote on the DOI
Tuesday August 25 th , 2020	Special Public Hearing for the DIPC to acknowledge the committee has approved the plan
Tuesday, August 25 th , 2020	Public forum held for discussion of the DOI plan and presentation of plan to the Board of Trustees for approval
Thursday, August 27 th , 2020	Post the final plan on web site and send final plan to Commissioner

BRISD District of Innovation Committee

Kenneth Brown, Superintendent
Maggie Taylor, Assistant Superintendent for Special Programs
Paul Jones, Assistant Superintendent
Michelle Maikoetter, Cal Farley’s Boys Ranch Home Life Administrator
John Hazel, Cal Farley’s Boys Ranch Home Life Administrator
John Moore, Cal Farley’s Boys Ranch Counselor
Keely Miller, Cal Farley’s Boys Ranch Director of Experiential Learning Program
Jeri Randall, Cal Farley’s Boys Ranch IT Department

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Shawn Read, Boys Ranch HS Principal
Jennifer Mott, Boys Ranch HS Assistant Principal
Brandon Sanders, Boys Ranch MS Principal
LaVaila Williams, Boys Ranch MS Assistant Principal
Joanna Martinez, Mimi Farley Elementary Principal
Lisa Brown, BRISD Registrar
Sarah Reynolds, MFE Teacher
Kerry Moss, Blakemore MS Teacher
Linda Horton, BRHS Teacher
Richard McAlister, BRHS Teacher
Sandy Harbert, Blakemore MS Teacher
Rocky Lawless, Cal Farley's Boys Ranch House Parent
Lynn Martinez, MFE Teacher
Donna Craig, MFE Teacher
Amie Reid, Blakemore MS Teacher
Stephanie Brock, BRHS Teacher
Gary Gill, BRHS Teacher
Laquitta Doak, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent

BRISD Requested Exemptions

TEC 25.0811: A school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August.

BRISD Proposed Innovations

School Start Date: Currently, instruction for students cannot begin before the fourth Monday of August per EB (LEGAL), TEC 25.0811. In order to comply with TEA guidance and to plan for the possibility of a school closure for COVID-19 related illness, additional instructional days cannot currently be included in the school calendar without extending the school year into June or removing typically scheduled student holidays. Either option would cause significant disruption to travel, family visits, and Cal Farley's Boys Ranch programming and services for resident students.

Plan: With a DOI designation, the District plans to start school on the second Monday of August (August 10, 2020) ending on May 20, 2021. This will allow for the 75,600 instructional minutes required by TEC, as well as an additional 7,210 instructional minutes. It is to be noted that even if the District does not require a school closure for COVID-19 related illness, it will adhere to the May 20, 2021 end date. This means that BRISD students will receive an extra 15.8 days of instruction, which the District believes to be of particular advantage to its students, given its unique purpose in educating the at-risk and highly mobile residents of Cal Farley's Boys Ranch.