

# FBISD Plan to Address Uncertified Teachers



## I. Introduction and Purpose

In 2025, the Texas Legislature passed House Bill 2 (HB 2), establishing new requirements governing the employment of uncertified classroom teachers and limiting the use of District of Innovation exemptions previously used for foundation curriculum assignments. Beginning with the 2026–2027 school year, districts may no longer rely on these exemptions to staff uncertified teachers in foundation curriculum as defined in TEC §28.002, including English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and all elementary classroom assignments.

To support an orderly transition, the Texas Education Agency allows districts to request a commissioner-approved delay of HB 2 implementation through the 2029–2030 school year, supported by a Board-approved plan demonstrating a reasonable timeline and strategy for compliance. This delay is not a waiver of certification requirements, but a structured transition period that allows districts to maintain instructional continuity while reducing uncertified hiring.

Fort Bend Independent School District has long prioritized instructional quality and maintains a comparatively low percentage of uncertified teachers. However, immediate full compliance by the 2026–2027 school year is not feasible without risking unfilled vacancies, increased reliance on long-term substitutes, or reduced access to required coursework. This plan outlines a clear, structured, and measurable pathway for Fort Bend ISD to achieve full compliance by the start of the 2029–2030 school year while preserving instructional continuity and equitable staffing across campuses.

## II. TEA Baseline Data and District Context

Fort Bend ISD serves more than 80,000 students across over 80 campuses and employs approximately 4,900 teachers. According to the TEA Uncertified Teachers by School System Dataset for 2024–2025, the district’s staffing profile is as follows:

### Baseline Staffing Data (2024–2025)

Metric	Value
Total Teachers	4,884
Uncertified Teachers	187
Percent Uncertified	<b>3.83%</b>
Student Enrollment	80,206

### Current SY Staffing Data (2025–2026) \*

Metric	Value
Total Teachers	4,934
Uncertified Teachers	106
Percent Uncertified	<b>2.15%</b>
Student Enrollment	78,159

*\*TEA data for the 2025–26 school year is not yet available. Data shown is district-reported as of January 15, 2026 and may differ from future TEA reporting.*

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While the statewide uncertified teacher rate for 2024–2025 was approximately 12.0%, Fort Bend ISD’s rate is significantly lower at 3.8%, reflecting sustained efforts to prioritize certified hiring.

All uncertified teachers serving in foundation curriculum assignments are degree-complete and are enrolled in a TEA-approved Educator Preparation Program or have completed an EPP and are actively completing remaining certification requirements such as required examinations or final state processes.

The district’s uncertified teachers are not unprepared educators; they are individuals already on defined certification pathways who are filling essential foundation curriculum vacancies when certified applicants are unavailable. The focus of this plan is on reducing future reliance on uncertified hiring rather than extending certification timelines for current employees.

## III. Rationale for Requesting a Delay

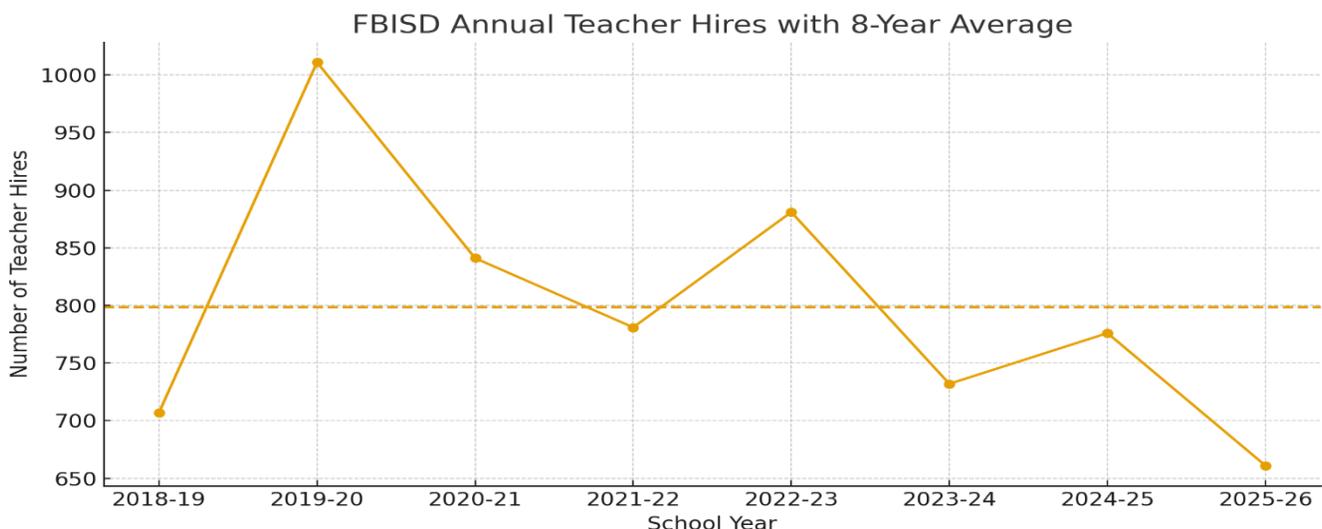
Fort Bend ISD is requesting a commissioner-approved delay because the district cannot fully staff all foundation curriculum assignments with certified teachers by the 2026–2027 school year without leaving classrooms unfilled or limiting student access to required coursework.

### Certified Teacher Supply Constraints

TEA educator data show continued statewide reliance on uncertified teachers in core academic content aligned to the foundation curriculum. These trends indicate that the supply of certified teachers will remain insufficient in the near term to meet the hiring needs of large districts.

### Annual Hiring Volume

Fort Bend ISD typically hires between 650 and 1,000 teachers each year, with an eight-year average of approximately 800 new hires annually. A substantial portion of these positions are in foundation curriculum. Requiring all newly hired teachers in these assignments to be certified by 2026–2027 is not feasible given hiring volume and current labor market conditions.



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## Impact Without a Delay

Absent a delay, the district could experience unfilled classrooms, increased reliance on long-term substitutes, larger class sizes, reduced course availability, and staffing inequities across campuses. These outcomes would undermine instructional quality and equitable student access.

## Need for a Structured Transition

The requested delay allows the district to phase out uncertified hiring strategically while expanding certified teacher pipelines and maintaining instructional continuity.

## IV. Composition of FBISD’s Uncertified Teachers

Category	# of FTEs	Assignment	Status
<b>Instructional Apprentices (IAs)</b>	41	Foundation/core content under DOI	Degree and coursework complete; certification-eligible; exams and observations in progress
<b>Aspiring Teachers (ATs)</b>	16	SPED, Bilingual/ESL, Pre-K on emergency permits	Degree and coursework complete; certification-eligible; exams and observations in progress
<b>District of Innovation (DOI)</b>	33	Non-foundation areas (e.g., CTE, World Languages)	Industry certified; educator certification not required under DOI
<b>Recent Graduates</b>	12	Teacher Residents/Student Teachers hired at Teacher of Record	Degree pending; employed under 60-day addendum
<b>Other Uncertified Teachers</b>	4	Varied instructional assignments	Certification or permit pending (ACP, J-1 Visa, ROTC, etc.)

## V. FBISD’s Strategic Approach (2025–2030)

To meet HB 2 requirements by 2029–2030, FBISD will implement a phased reduction in new uncertified hires.

2025–2026 — Foundation Year: Establish Baseline & Implement Guardrails
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm the baseline number of newly hired uncertified teachers.</li> <li>• Implement districtwide hiring guardrails, limiting uncertified hiring to truly high-need areas.</li> <li>• Begin enhanced recruitment efforts for certified candidates.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcome:</b> Baseline documented; uncertified hiring stabilized or reduced.</p>

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<b>2026–2027 — Initial Reduction (≥15% Reduction in Uncertified Hiring)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce uncertified hiring by at least 15% from the baseline year.</li> <li>• Prioritize certified applicant recruitment earlier in the hiring cycle.</li> <li>• Expand university partnerships and student-teacher conversions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Outcome:</b> Certified hiring increases as uncertified hiring begins controlled decline.</p>
<b>2027–2028 — Accelerated Reduction (Additional 25–35%)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve an additional 25–35% reduction in uncertified hiring.</li> <li>• Expand recruitment pipelines (residencies, alternate cert partnerships, out-of-state recruitment).</li> <li>• Strengthen staffing plans to ensure certified teachers are prioritized for core assignments.</li> </ul> <p><b>Outcome:</b> Reliance on uncertified hiring significantly reduced.</p>
<b>2028–2029 — Pre-Compliance Year (≤10% of Baseline Uncertified Hiring)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit uncertified hiring to no more than 10% of the original baseline.</li> <li>• Restrict uncertified hiring to only the most critical shortage areas when no certified applicants exist.</li> </ul> <p><b>Outcome:</b> FBISD approaches full compliance, with uncertified hiring now rare.</p>
<b>2029–2030 — Full Compliance</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All new hires assigned to foundation courses must hold full certification.</li> <li>• District fully aligned with HB 2; uncertified hiring discontinued for foundation courses.</li> <li>• Maintain ongoing monitoring systems to ensure continued compliance.</li> </ul> <p><b>Outcome:</b> FBISD fully compliant with HB 2 requirements.</p>

## VI. Hiring Framework During the Delay Period

During the delay window (2025–2030), FBISD will continue to hire uncertified teachers only under specific, tightly controlled conditions. The district will maintain its commitment to high-quality instruction while preserving essential staffing flexibility in areas where certified applicants are unavailable. The district will continue to comply with all state-required parental notification provisions for any uncertified instructional assignments during the transition period.

Uncertified hiring will occur only when:

- No certified applicant is available after reasonable recruitment efforts
- The assignment is within the foundation curriculum

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- The candidate is degree-complete and enrolled in or has completed a TEA-approved EPP

All uncertified hires must have documented certification progress and approval from Human Resources.

### VII. Recruitment and Staffing Strengthening

To reduce reliance on uncertified hiring, Fort Bend ISD will strengthen recruitment of certified teachers through:

- Early hiring and commitment strategies
- Expanded student-teacher and residency pipelines
- Enhanced grow-your-own pathways, including non-degreed to degreed, degreed to certified, and high school-to-teacher pathways

These strategies are aligned to foundation curriculum staffing needs.

### VIII. Certification Support Systems for Uncertified Teachers

Although FBISD's request for an HB 2 implementation delay is focused on maintaining necessary hiring flexibility, the district remains firmly committed to ensuring that all uncertified teachers hired during the transition period progress quickly and successfully toward full certification. To ensure compliance with district expectations and HB 2's long-term goals, FBISD will implement a comprehensive support framework for all uncertified teachers hired between 2025 and 2030.

Fort Bend ISD will continue to provide structured certification support for uncertified teachers, including:

- Verification of EPP enrollment or completion
- District mentoring and induction supports
- Certification progress monitoring
- Access to district-funded test preparation resources
- Centralized certification tracking and reporting

Uncertified teachers must demonstrate continuous progress toward certification throughout the transition period.

### IX. Conclusion

Fort Bend ISD remains fully committed to the intent of House Bill 2 and to ensuring that students enrolled in foundation curriculum are taught by certified educators. This plan provides a responsible, data-driven pathway to full compliance by the start of the 2029–2030 school year while preserving instructional continuity and equitable staffing across campuses.