

James Butler Bonham Academy



In-District Charter

Table of Contents

Part I

Purpose and Need

Geographical Area

Mission and Goals

Curriculum

Methods of Instruction

Student Achievement

Governance and Decision-Making Plan

Enrollment and Withdrawal Procedures

PEIMS Reporting Plan

Discipline Program and Procedures

Safety and Security

Facilities and Transportation Plan

Employment Plan

Operational/Financial Plan

Part II

Indication of Support

Part III

Appendices

BONHAM ACADEMY

Internal Charter School Application

Part I

Purpose and Need

- A. Purpose of Proposed Charter:** The proposed charter will allow Bonham to:
- o Serve students in grades PK – 8 by adding 6th in 2007, 7th in 2008, and 8th in 2009
 - o Specify and declare Bonham’s special program emphases on Languages, Fine Arts, and Science
 - o Obtain state Charter School funds to develop and enhance programs
 - o Continue to serve students in Bonham’s current attendance area as a first priority
 - o Offer open enrollment to in- and out-of-district transfer students as space allows
 - o Seek waivers from specific District policies and procedures to allow greater local control and flexibility in programming
- B. Proposed Program:** The Bonham we envision will be an internal charter school serving PK-8 with special focus on Languages (including the Two-Way Dual Language Program and conversational languages for both dual language and regular education students), Fine Arts and Science. The first two areas of focus are points of excellence that Bonham is already noted for: the Dual Language Program and the PTA-sponsored ArtsSmart Program. Our science instruction has benefited in recent years by the addition of another PTA-sponsored program: the Outdoor Classroom/Outdoor Education program. Science is an area our teachers, staff and parents wish to further strengthen by making it a special focus of this Internal Charter. We plan to continue working with many collaborators, including scientists at Trinity University, UTSA, the Bamberger Ranch Preserve, Texas Parks & Wildlife (Project Wild), Cibolo Nature Center, Mitchell Lake Audubon Center, and area naturalists/teachers.

The proposed program differs from the current program in that Bonham is one of only three SAISD elementary schools to offer the Two-Way Dual Language program. There are many benefits associated with this additive method of instruction. These include high levels of oral language proficiency and literacy in both English and Spanish, academic achievement in all subject areas, cultivation of an understanding and appreciation of other cultures and development of positive attitudes toward fellow students, their families and the community. Research from across the United States shows that students participating in dual language immersion-type programs perform well above the norm on standardized tests after several years in the program.

For eight years, Bonham, in collaboration with its PTA, has offered an Arts-In-Education program called ArtSmart. Over the years it has included offerings in visual, performing and literary arts. Currently ArtSmart supports a full-time art teacher through a cooperative agreement with the Mobile Arts Program of the Southwest School of Arts and Crafts. Additionally the JumpStart program has offered workshops and special projects to Bonham students for more than ten years, and ArtsTeach, a program of the City of San Antonio, has donated many hours of arts workshops to Bonham teachers through San Antonio Independent School District Initiatives. The proposed charter would institutionalize and enhance our existing fine arts program which already

distinguishes Bonham from other SAISD elementary schools at which music is the only art offering.

Our proposed in district charter would continue and expand upon Bonham's existing outdoor education program as part of our ongoing multifaceted efforts to enhance science learning at Bonham Academy. Currently, we have received grant funding and awards for outdoor education through the City of San Antonio.

Another major part of this proposal is to extend the fine education and community environment that Bonham offers into grades 6-8, thereby becoming an "academy" (or "elemiddle") school. Our proposal is to add one grade during each of the next three years, beginning in 2007. This is a key element of our proposed Charter Application. Among the key benefits is that Bonham would be able to offer, for the first time in SAISD since it pioneered the Dual Language program in San Antonio back in 1995, a middle school option for Dual Language students coming out of area elementary school programs. A middle school extension of the Dual Language program is essential to the solidification of the second language learning that all Dual Language students have accomplished in their first six years of the program (K-5).

Apart from the obvious benefits for Dual Language students, the PK-8 configuration has substantial social and academic benefits for students in general. The relatively limited research on school configuration, and particularly PK-8 versus traditional elementary and middle schools, indicates compelling advantages to the PK-8 campus, both in student performance and social development. Among these are continuity of parent involvement through the middle school years, safer school environment, minimal school transitions that tend to set students back both academically and developmentally, eased family lives by extending the number of years that siblings can attend school together, extension of the more nurturing, supportive, familial environment of the elementary school to students during their developmentally challenging middle school years, and leadership opportunities for older students as they tutor, mentor and set a good example for younger students. Research indicates that students from PK-8 "elemiddle" schools are generally well adjusted and well prepared to take on the challenges of their transition to high school.

The initial hurdles to achieving this model at Bonham may be great, but the advantages (including continued high performance in math and science among girls in PK-8 schools) cannot be ignored. We believe this educational trend will continue to gain national momentum as its benefits become more evident. SAISD, through its PK-8 initiative of 2003, showed an early awareness of the positive impact of this campus configuration. We believe Bonham is an excellent candidate to further this forward-thinking strategy.

The PK-8 campus configuration for Bonham is not only sought after by current (and past) Bonham families, and supported by our teachers and staff, it is also strongly supported by Bonham's surrounding community. Unanimous resolutions have been adopted in support of Bonham's Internal Charter Application (both its academic and campus reconfiguration plans) by the King William Association, Lavaca Neighborhood Association, Southtown MainStreet Alliance, and Downtown Alliance.

C. Geographic Area of Service: The geographic area of intended service will remain the same as it is for Bonham Elementary. Additional students will be obtained through the District's process for open enrollment at charter school campuses.

Bonham Elementary is a historic inner-city public school providing education to students residing in the King William and Lavaca neighborhoods south of downtown San Antonio. Built in 1889, Bonham is part of the King William Historic District. Located at 925 S. St. Mary's, Bonham currently provides academic instruction for students in PK through fifth grades. Student enrollment is consistently around 350 students. Demographic composition of Bonham's student population is 88% Hispanic, 7% White, 4% African American, and 1% Asian/Pacific Islander. Of those students, 83% are Economically Disadvantaged, 25% Limited English Proficient (LEP), 7% Special Education, and 8% Gifted and Talented. 63% are considered At-Risk. These statistics reflect the ethnic, socioeconomic and academic diversity of our student population which we consider to be an asset to our campus community.

Mission and Goals

Bonham supports SAISD's mission to graduate all of our students prepared to succeed in higher education. We share SAISD's core values of commitment, high expectations, respect, integrity, teamwork, passion, and a student-centered program. In keeping with the fundamental beliefs that,

- Every child can learn and achieve at high levels
- We are responsible for the education and safety of every child
- Everyone should be treated with respect
- People will support what they help create,

the Bonham community has come together to develop this in-district charter plan in order to become the school we want to be and provide the education we want for our children.

A. Bonham Mission Statement:

The mission of Bonham Academy is to prepare students for future success by empowering them with a well-rounded, solid academic foundation emphasizing multiple languages, the fine arts and science.

We are dedicated to the individual development of attitudes, skills, knowledge, and responsibility essential to successful achievement in school and society. We actively involve parents and community in supporting student learning and development.

B. Specific Bonham Goals: Bonham strives specifically to meet the following goals:

- To provide quality instruction to all students in PK- 8th grade
- To promote bilingualism, bi-literacy and appreciation of cultural diversity
- To promote participation, appreciation and enjoyment of the fine arts
- To foster high levels of science inquiry and exploration, and engage in nature study

- To create an atmosphere of innovation and excitement about teaching and learning
- To encourage interdisciplinary approaches to teaching
- To increase student achievement in all subject areas

C. Target Enrollment: At 90% enrollment of a fully reconfigured PK-8 campus, Bonham expects to serve approximately 515 students: 26 regular classrooms x 22 students = 572, less 10% is 515.

Curriculum and Instructional Program

The curriculum at Bonham will continue to be based on the TEKS and be implemented through the SAISD Scope and Sequence. Bonham will continue to offer instructional programs for special education, gifted and talented, dyslexia/504, and bilingual education (Two-Way Dual Language). We will continue to offer both English and Dual Language strands within the school and to extend both strands through the eighth grade. In addition to these current programs we propose to add conversational Spanish for all non-Dual Language students and a third conversational language for Dual Language students. This proposal also includes continuing support of our full-time art teacher. The long term vision for our charter proposal includes employment of a full-time music teacher with choir and band certification in order to offer these electives to our 6th-8th grade students and a full-time science teacher to provide services to all students in an indoor science laboratory as well as our outdoor classroom. Our target goal is to greatly improve student performance on the existing assessments (TAKS, etc.), in all subject areas, especially science.

We will continue offering the following extracurricular opportunities through our charter proposal:

- o JumpStart will continue to provide its After School Program and extend to 6th grade
- o After School Challenge “Yes” Program will continue

We envision offering other after school activities such as: (1) intramural sports, band, choir and/or theatre, dependent in part on teacher sponsorship, PTA support and parent participation, and (2) U.I.L sports teams for 7th-8th grade athletes in conjunction with area middle school (Page).

Student Achievement

A. Student Performance Objectives: Student achievement is paramount at Bonham. To that end, Bonham faculty continuously plan lessons and activities that provide a productive learning environment. Equally important is gathering and analyzing data through appropriate assessment to measure growth and inform the ongoing process of planning.

B. Plan for Implementation: Bonham will continue to employ the Campus Improvement Plan (CIP) to plan for student success. The plan addresses each subject area, including reading/language arts, writing, math, science and social studies. Examples of strategies include maintaining fidelity to the core reading program to ensure all students receive a solid foundation in reading to include phonemic awareness, reading comprehension, fluency, vocabulary

development and higher order thinking skills. Another example is the use of outdoor classrooms, field investigations, and experts to make real world connections to scientific learning. Bonham will continue to use these strategies and add or modify to them as needed. Furthermore, the CIP will continue to address other areas of concern in regard to student support such as special program offerings, technology integration, school-community relations, parent involvement, school safety and attendance.

Achievement is measured continuously using a variety of sources. Teachers assign grades to students which are reported to parents every three weeks through progress reports and quarterly through report cards. Additionally, parents have access to iDataPortal giving them up-to-the-minute access to their child's performance. Mandatory state assessments will continue to serve as summative evaluations for a student's achievement in a specific subject at a particular grade level. These include:

- Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)
- State Developed Alternative Assessment (SDAA II)
- Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS)
- Reading Proficiency Tests in English (RPTE) and
- all appropriate field testing for these exams.

C. Evaluation of Student Performance and Corrective Action: Bonham students will also continue to participate in benchmark testing through the District's use of interim assessments. This formative evaluation will serve to focus efforts addressing corrective action and enrichment. As Bonham receives funds from the Reading First grant, students in grades K-3 will also be assessed using:

- o Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI)
- o Tejas Lee (TJL)
- o Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)
- o Spanish Progress Monitoring Emergent Readers Kit (MPLE)
- o Spanish Progress Monitoring Beginning Readers Kit (MPLP)
- o Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)
- o Logramos.

Early intervention will be provided to students in grades K-2 who do not meet minimum expectation in reading. These interventions include:

- o Successmaker lab
- o Pasaportes interventions
- o TPRI/TJL intervention strategies
- o Small group instruction

Intervention will be provided to students in grades 3-5 who do not meet minimum expectations in core subject areas. These interventions include:

- o Tutoring before/after school and on Saturdays
- o Parent conferences and collaboration
- o Participation in OEY program

Governance and Decision-Making Plan

A. Governing Body: The governing body of the proposed Bonham Academy will be the Campus Leadership Team (CLT) which shall be established and administered according to SAISD District Administrative Procedures B4 with the following proposed amendments:

DEFINITIONS AND METHODS OF SELECTION

2. Non-elected Members (Non-Employees)

a. Parents – At least four (4) parents should be members of the parent organization affiliated with the campus. The parent teacher organization shall submit the names of their four (4) CLT representatives to the principal.

b. Students – student representatives, fourth grade and higher, one student representative per grade level, shall be selected through student-directed, teacher-supervised electoral processes at each grade level. Student candidates can be nominated by peers or self-nominated, but all candidates must have parental approval prior to the elections. Student nominations may take the form of written (or oral) statements indicating a nominee’s name, evidence of the nominee’s desire to serve, why the nominee is a good candidate to serve on the CLT and what skills, strengths or perspectives the student has to offer.

COMPOSITION OF THE CLT

1. Non-Employees

a. Parents: At least four (4) parents.

b. Students: At least one (1) student currently enrolled at the campus from each grade level from fourth grade and higher.

TERMS OF OFFICE

1. Terms: Representatives shall serve one (1) year terms extending from May to April.

B. Duties of Governing Body: The duties of the governing body, the CLT, include but are not limited to those identified in the 2007 SAISD Administrative Procedures B4. Any additional duties and authorities of the CLT shall be adopted by majority vote of the membership of the CLT.

C. Relationship to District: The proposed Bonham Academy will remain accountable to the District and SAISD Board of Trustees.

D. Board Policies: All Board policies in effect on approval of charter application will apply to the proposed Bonham Internal Charter School, except those identified in subsection E.

E. Policy Waivers: The proposed Bonham Academy will request waivers dealing with academic scheduling and planning and collaboration among teachers for team teaching and delivery of instruction for students.

F. Charter Accountability: The Bonham school community will continue to maintain and participate in an active Parent-Teacher organization to foster collaboration, to sponsor special activities, and to raise funds in support of school programs.

1. The Parent-Teacher organization will continue to function as a de facto school accountability committee primarily through its Internal Charter Committee.

2. The Bonham Internal Charter School will continue the Campus Improvement Plan (CIP) process as a function of the CLT in order to ensure charter school improvement.

3. The Bonham Internal Charter School will continue to participate in the SAISD Area Leadership Team (ALT) and District Leadership Team (DLT).

G. Communications: Bonham Academy activities and progress will be communicated to the SAISD Board of Trustees in an end-of-year report to be drafted by a subcommittee of the CLT and approved for submittal by the full membership of the CLT. Further communication to the community will include, at a minimum, development of a charter program brochure, a school web page, a school marquee, and periodic school newsletters and articles in neighborhood association newsletters, as well as regular monthly reports at meetings of the Parent-Teacher organization.

Enrollment and Withdrawal Procedures

A. Enrollment Procedures: Students from Bonham attendance area (neighborhood) will retain first priority for enrollment. However, being designated an In-District Charter will give the school flexibility by allowing for open enrollment. Bonham will allow in-and out-of-district transfers according to District procedures. Middle school grades will be added by a process known as “grow your own” which would allow Bonham students to remain at the school, adding one grade level per year. In order to maintain and extend Bonham’s familial social environment in a PK-8 academy, Bonham, in collaboration with the District, will be empowered to:

- o Disallow transfers from middle schools
- o Refuse transfers from students with a criminal record or history of delinquent behavior (as per current District procedure)
- o Maintain educationally appropriate teacher/student ratios
- o Maintain balance of English and Spanish speaking students in Dual Language Program

All students will be subject to attendance policies, transportation requirements, and school-wide discipline guidelines. All transfers from outside our attendance area are subject to space availability.

B. Withdrawal Procedures: Withdrawal procedures for students enrolled at Bonham Academy who choose not to participate in the proposed district charter school will follow District guidelines. Parent/guardian will be informed of all options provided by the District.

PEIMS Reporting Plan

Bonham Academy will follow district policies and procedures for the PEIMS (Public Education Information Management System) as outlined by District Administrative Procedures & Support Services section CPC, and by PEIMS guidelines.

Discipline Program and Procedures

Bonham will continue to use the SAISD “Student Code of Conduct” as a foundation for our discipline program and procedures. Additionally, Bonham will promote good citizenship for all students and encourage older students to act as role models for the younger children.

Safety and Security

Bonham Academy will adhere to the San Antonio Fire Department’s safety, security, and emergency procedures, as well as the Emergency Response Guide.

Facilities and Transportation Plan:

A. Facilities: The Bonham school community understands the fiscal constraints the District is currently operating under and does not intend through this Internal Charter application to make unreasonable demands on the District. The school community is also, however, aware that the District has had plans to add facilities to the Bonham campus (2001 bond program) which have not yet materialized. It is, in part, the purpose of this proposed charter school proposal to lay out the desired long term plan for Bonham’s future so that any additional facility construction may be planned accordingly, and accomplished in a holistic, not piecemeal, manner.

Our proposed program of expansion through 8th grade will require adding classroom space and improving existing facilities. Our long-term facilities plan includes adding:

- o Classrooms (6-8 rooms)
- o Early Childhood Facility
- o Music/Band/Choir Room
- o Art Room
- o Indoor Science Lab
- o Expansions to Library, Clinic and Computer Lab

In the short term, we plan to have our facilities needs met by using portable buildings to be provided by the District: one each year for the next three years as Bonham adds 6th, 7th, then 8th grades. Bonham has used portable buildings in the past to provide needed classroom space and is prepared to do so again while bond financing and construction takes place. Ultimately the length of our use of portable buildings will be determined by a successful SAISD bond election.

One portable (2 classrooms) may be placed in the northeast corner of the Bonham campus for use in 2007-2008 by the 6th grade. Additional portables in subsequent years may possibly be placed immediately alongside the main staff parking lot on private (commercial) property to the north of the Bonham campus property line. Space may be available on the back side of the rear

parking areas of several commercial buildings along S. Alamo St. The Bonham community is willing to consider other possibilities.

Our neighborhood is in support of our In-District Charter Proposal and resolutions supporting this effort will be attached in the Appendices.

B. Maintenance: Any new facilities at the Bonham campus would be maintained by the District as now. The expanded square footage of the building spaces, however, may require modifications to the custodial staff.

C. Transportation: Transportation to the proposed charter campus will continue to be provided by the District for qualifying students in Bonham's attendance area. Transportation for students from the downtown homeless shelter and Dwyer transitional housing will continue to be provided by the District with funding from federal programs. Additional transportation being requested of the District would possibly involve transporting select 7th and 8th grade students from Bonham to Page for participation in U.I.L sports teams.

Employment Plan

A. Qualifications and classifications of employees: Each employee at Bonham Elementary will meet the SAISD qualifications and classification of employees. Certification requirements for teaching positions will remain the same following State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) guidelines.

B. Compensation Schedule: Each employee will follow the compensation and benefits schedule for the SAISD.

C. Hiring and Dismissal Procedures: Bonham will follow the SAISD policy for hiring and dismissal

D. Process for Handling Employee Complaints: The process for handling employee's grievances will follow District policy and procedures after review by Principal and CLT, if appropriate.

Operational and Financial Plan

Operational: The Principal will remain responsible for personnel, budget, purchasing, program funds, etc.

Financial: Enrollment of transfer students will increase ADA funds. Internal Charter designation will enable Bonham to apply for State Charter grants for the 3-year start-up period. Bonham will also seek additional outside grants to support its programs in consultation with the District Grants Office. Bonham's Parent-Teacher organization will continue to support and seek grants for school programs, including ArtSmart and Outdoor Education, which are both Standing Committees of the current PTA

PART II

Indication of Support

Bonham officially began its charter development process with a motion unanimously passed by the PTA at its November meeting establishing a “Charter Investigation Committee” and requesting volunteers to serve on this committee. Subsequently, the CLT at its next meeting passed a motion to establish a subcommittee of the CLT to work with the PTA Charter Committee on this project. The committees were effectively blended into the Bonham Internal Charter Committee.

Coupled with a considerable amount of background research, the investigation process began by surveying all parents and staff in a written survey questionnaire asking for early input and ideas, concerns, questions. All comments were compiled and reported back to the Internal Charter Committee, and the CLT. This early indication of support for the PK-8 charter concept led to the drafting of a Conceptual Framework incorporating all the ideas and suggestions obtained so far from surveys, meeting discussions, individual input, etc. The Conceptual Framework was drafted following the outline of the actual Charter Application provided by the District.

A series of wide open Community Meetings were then held to review and consider modifications to the Conceptual Framework and to obtain additional ideas as well as refinement of ideas. The surrounding neighborhood associations were briefed and encouraged to join us in these Community Meetings. The meetings themselves were designed to offer maximum opportunity for all participants to engage the process and provide thoughtful and meaningful input. This goal was accomplished through small group break-out sessions. The regular PTA, CLT and Faculty meetings throughout this phase of the process provided additional opportunities to brief, inform and engage the school community in the development of a charter plan.

A condensed, revised draft of the Conceptual Framework was then created and translated into Spanish for sending home with each student. A copy was provided to each faculty and staff member on campus. Parents and staff were informed they would soon be asked to vote on Bonham’s Internal Charter Proposal as drafted.

A secret balloting process was set up in the school office during a 3 day period for all faculty and staff to vote. Ballots were sent home with each student with the same 3 day balloting period. At the end of the balloting period, all ballots (which had been collected in the office of the CIC) were tallied by a subcommittee of the CLT. Efforts were made to eliminate all duplicate ballots from families with multiple students at Bonham.

The final results were:

- 94% support of parents (with 129 families voting) and
- 80% support of faculty/staff (with all but 3 staff voting; non-voting staff were absent all 3 days of balloting due to illness.)

All ballots are on file and securely stored in the office of the CIC.

Subsequent to the successful campus vote, the neighborhood associations and surrounding south downtown associations were updated on Bonham’s Internal Charter Plan and unanimous resolutions were adopted by all associations in support of the charter/academy plan.

We believe our efforts have established clear and overwhelming support for this Internal Charter Application.

PART III

Additional Information

- A. Bonham Demographics
- B. Projected Future Enrollment
- C. Current Student Achievement & Goals
- D. Bonham PTA Membership Brochure
- E. Articles/Research in Support of Dual Language
- F. Book Chapter from Bertha Perez’s *Becoming Biliterate: A Study of Two-Way Bilingual Immersion Education*
- G. Bonham Dual Language Program Brochure
- H. ArtSmart Program Outline
- I. The Kennedy Center ArtsEdge Article and Express-News Article in Support of Fine Arts
- J. Southwest School of Arts and Crafts – Mobile Arts Program Information
- K. JumpStart Program Information
- L. ArtsTeach Program Information
- M. Outdoor Education Program Outline
- N. Article in Support of Outdoor Education: Express News article “Nature Wise”
- O. Project WILD Program Information
- P. Cibolo Nature Center “Kids on the Creek” Program Information
- Q. Mitchell Lake Audubon Center Program Information
- R. Bamberger Ranch Preserve Field Science Camp Information
- S. Articles/Research and in Support of PK-8 Configuration:
 - SAISD Presentation to the Board in March and April 2003
 - The Case of the “Elemiddle” School
 - Seven Topics in Education
- T. Bonham Charter/Academy Process Overview and supporting documentation
 - 1. Bonham Internal Charter Committee
 - 2. Committee Agendas
 - 3. Teacher/Staff Early Survey Questionnaires
 - 4. Parent Early Survey Questionnaire
 - 5. Compilation of Teacher/Staff Survey Responses
 - 6. Compilation of Parent Survey Responses
 - 7. Conceptual Framework for Internal Charter/Academy (original and revised drafts)
 - 8. Community Meeting Agendas/Overview/ and Announcements
 - 9. Roundtable Discussion Group Report Form and Summaries of Comments
 - 10. Letter to Parents & Staff with Conceptual Framework (short version)
 - 11. Teacher/Staff Ballot Sample

- 12. Parent Ballot Sample
- 13. Ballot Results – Teacher/Staff
- 14. Ballot Results – Parents
- U. Resolutions in Support of Bonham Internal Charter/Academy:
 - 1. King William Association
 - 2. Lavaca Neighborhood Association
 - 3. Southtown MainStreet Alliance
 - 4. Bonham PTA
- V. Dual Language and Foreign Language Bibliographies
- W. List of Web Links to Educational Programming: Fine Arts and Outdoor Education