Technology Department Report 2026

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on recent projects completed by the Technology Department, as well as insight into initiatives currently underway or planned for the near future.

District Computing Devices

The Technology Department currently supports more than 6,000 computing devices and approximately 1,000 other technology assets, including Promethean boards, printers, document cameras, networking equipment, keyless entry access systems, IP intercom, and surveillance systems.

We continue to see a reduction in classroom PC usage as campuses adopt mobile platforms: iPads in Pre-K–1st grade and Chromebooks in 2nd–8th grade. As of this year, all 2nd grade core-tested subjects have transitioned to Chromebooks. Over the next two school years, Pre-K and 1st grade will also move to touch-enabled Chromebooks as iPads reach end-of-life and funding becomes available.

Device Inventory Overview:

- HS Student Chromebooks – 1,200
- Chromebooks (all other campuses) – 3,600
- Student Laptop Cart Computers – 400
- Computer Lab Desktops – 60
- Food Service Desktops – 16
- Student & Teacher iPads – 1,100
- Teacher MacBook Airs – 450
- Promethean ActivPanels – 60

- Student Classroom Desktops – 15
- Library Desktops – 24
- Office/Nurse Desktops – 35

2026–2027 School Year Technology Update

E-Rate Funding – Network Switch Replacement

Brownwood ISD's network switching infrastructure is approaching 10 years of service life. Many core switches are nearing end-of-life, raising concerns about reliability, manufacturer support, and compatibility with modern technologies.

These switches power critical systems, including:

- Wi-Fi access points
- Classroom instructional technology
- IP phones
- Security cameras
- Network-based door access controls

Our E-Rate submission has been approved! BISD can now modernize our network infrastructure with high-capacity switches that provide faster speeds, enhanced PoE++ support, and greater resiliency. This investment will improve connectivity, support instructional and safety systems, and prepare the district for future growth—while significantly reducing local budget impact through federal funding support.

Estimated Cost: $250,000–$280,000 (before E-Rate discount; BISD's historical discount rate is 80%). The matching funds will be provided through the Safety & Security Bond.

Note: The E-Rate discount rate is calculated using the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) percentage combined with the district's urban/rural classification.

District Safety & Security

As part of the district's updated exterior key control plan, several additional locations were identified for keyless entry access. 20 new card readers with associated lock hardware have since been installed throughout the district. During this period, we also completed migration from an on-premises server to a cloud-based access control system, improving reliability, accessibility, and system management while reducing the risk of hardware failure.

8 cameras and access control have been installed at Gordon Wood Stadium.

Cybersecurity

In 2024, BISD joined the Region Security Operations Center (RSOC) program in partnership with San Angelo State University. This initiative provides 24/7 real-time monitoring and Endpoint Detection & Response (EDR) through CrowdStrike to protect all BISD servers, staff Windows devices, and Mac computers, The Texas Cyber Security Initiative recently announce funding and continuation of the RSOC program through 2027, at no cost to the district.

Through UT RSOC and Texas Cyber Command, we have implemented additional protections to the BISD email systems through:

• Anomaly Detection: The software analyzes thousands of baseline signals across human communication patterns (like typical login locations, writing styles, and vendor relationships).

• Targeted Threat Blocking: It blocks sophisticated business email compromise (BEC), vendor fraud, and executive impersonation attempts that would otherwise pass standard authentication checks. They also provide live monitoring and mitigation.

Infosec IQ: Through another program offered by the Service Center, we have implemented an email phishing simulator. This allows us to condition and train staff on how to build awareness and spot/report phishing and impersonation emails. If "phished", the user is notified and directed to a brief online training or reminders of what to look for.

Current & Upcoming Projects

- We will be switching our VOIP service provider from Spectrum to Global Data Telecom. Installation of new phone hardware will begin over Thanksgiving break, to avoid disruption.
- Continued expansion of 1:1 Chromebook/iPad classroom sets and Promethean ActivPanel implementation in Pre-K–3rd grades.
- Replacement of traditional classroom projectors with large-format LCD displays.
- E-Rate Year 27 (202–2027) network switch upgrades.
- Expansion of keyless access following completion of the district-wide re-core project.
- In an effort to reduce staff computing costs, we will be test driving the new Apple Neo Macbook Air laptop released in the spring. Current pricing is about one third to half of a traditional Air or equivalent Windows laptop.

Closing

The Brownwood ISD Technology Department remains committed to supporting instruction, safety, and innovation across all campuses. By maintaining modern infrastructure, expanding access to classroom technology, and prioritizing security, we ensure staff and students have the resources necessary to thrive.

We welcome any questions, feedback, or suggestions as we continue moving forward.

Jimmy Fisher Sr

Director of Technology