Belton Independent School District

Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Regular Board Meeting, October 19, 2026 - 6:15 p.m.

Pittenger Fine Arts Center, 400 N. Wall Street, Belton, TX 76513

Board Members Present:

Chris Flor
Erin Bass
Rucker Preston
Brandon Bozon
Manuel Alcozer
Jeff Norwood
Riley Beck

Board Members Absent:

1. Call to Order, Moment of Silence, and Pledge of Allegiance

Chris Flor, Board President, called the regular meeting of the Belton Independent School District Board of Trustees to order at 6:22 p.m. He stated that a quorum of Board Members was present, that the meeting had been duly called, and notice of the meeting had been posted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code Chapter 551.

2. Recognitions

Student Pledges – Southwest Elementary School

The evening's pledges were led by fifth graders Crislyn King and August Thomison from Southwest Elementary School.

Student Showcase - Belton High School Construction/Architecture

The evening's Student Showcase featured Belton High School students Logan Chavez, a pre-apprentice electrician, and Landen Burrier, a certified pre-apprentice plumber, representing the school's nationally recognized Construction and Architecture program.

Through hands-on training in residential electrical and plumbing systems, students are developing real-world skills, earning industry credentials and preparing for high-demand careers.

Advanced Placement (AP) Scholars

Belton ISD proudly recognized 296 high school students who earned 315 College Board AP Scholar honors, a 27% increase from last year.

Students earned 140 AP Scholar awards, 47 AP Scholar with Honor awards, 109 AP Scholar with Distinction awards, 14 AP Capstone Diplomas and five AP Seminar and Research Certificates. AP Scholar with Distinction honors alone increased 42% from last year.

Lake Belton High School students earned 181 honors, Belton High School students earned 116 and Belton New Tech High School at Waskow students earned 18.

BigFuture Merit Award Recipients

Belton ISD recognized 153 students from Belton High School, Lake Belton High School and Belton New Tech High School at Waskow who earned College Board BigFuture Merit Awards.

This national recognition celebrates students whose academic achievement has set them apart and opens doors to greater visibility with colleges and scholarship programs across the country.

National Merit Semifinalists

Belton ISD recognized three outstanding seniors who have been named semifinalists in the 2027 National Merit Scholarship Program.

Belton High School's Anya Jinadatha and Lake Belton High School's Shreya Muni and Guru Rajkumar earned this prestigious recognition, placing them among the top 1% of high school seniors nationwide.

National Merit Commended Scholars

Belton ISD celebrated six outstanding seniors who have been named Commended Scholars in the 2027 National Merit Scholarship Program.

Belton High School's Kirra Martin, Andrew Rabroker and Charles Wagner and Lake Belton High School's Alexandra Bui, Aiden Walker and Vishnuprasad Kakarla earned this recognition for their exceptional academic achievement, placing them among the top-performing students nationwide.

Temple Rotary Educator of the Month

Belton ISD is proud to recognize Delta teacher Vanessa Chisolm as the Temple Rotary Club's Educator of the Month. She was nominated by Delta Principal Tammie Baggerly for her leadership, adaptability and commitment to students.

Belton Rotary Educator of the Quarter

Belton ISD is proud to recognize North Belton Middle School science teacher Elizabeth Cancel as the Belton Rotary Educator of the Quarter. A former Teacher of the Year who also serves as a teacher leader and instructional coach, Ms. Cancel works alongside her colleagues to strengthen instruction and help each and every student succeed.

Department Showcase: Principal Appreciation Month

October is National Principals Month, and tonight Belton ISD recognizes the 21 principals who lead our campuses and serve our students, staff and families each day.

Tonight, we recognize Sheila Surovik, Cheyenne Babb, Courtney Brewer, Felicia Gibson, Holly Griffith, Brooke Itz, Lexie Newberry, Amber Ross, Sydnie Sewell, Ashlie Thomas, Rebecca Vaughn, Debi Younger, Akeiah Cipolla, Megan Crook, Rachel Ramirez, Dominic White, Tammie Baggerly, William Yuengel, Claudia Knox, David Manley and Neill Plemons.

Community Partner Recognition – Temple Area Builders Association

Belton ISD recognized the Temple Area Builders Association for its partnership and investment in Belton ISD students pursuing careers in the skilled trades.

Through its support of the Belton Construction Careers program, TABA connects students with industry professionals and opportunities to gain hands-on experience and earn industry-based certifications in carpentry, electrical, plumbing and masonry. Its support has also helped provide more than $150,000 in scholarships for students continuing their education and training beyond high school.

3. Public Comments Regarding Items on the Agenda

None.

4. Public Hearing

Public Hearing Regarding the 2024-2025 School Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST) Report

Melissa Lafferty, Chief Financial Officer, gave an overview of the Schools FIRST rating system, a report based on district staff, student, and financial data for the prior school year as reported to the Texas Education Agency (TEA), with the primary goal of reporting the overall financial health of a school district's financial resources.

Ms. Lafferty reviewed the 20 indicators in the worksheet for the report and noted that Belton ISD earned an "A" rating (Superior Achievement) with a score of 98 out of 100, maintaining superior financial achievement continuously since 2012. She also explained that a public hearing is required for this report.

Board President Chris Flor opened the public hearing at 6:51 p.m. There were no comments during the hearing therefore the hearing was closed at 6:52 p.m.

Dr. Golden expressed his sincere thanks to the Business Services team for their work on this annual report.

5. Action Items

A. Consider, Discuss and Take Appropriate Action Regarding School Improvement Plans

Gabi Nino, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, presented turnaround and targeted improvement plans aligned with the state Effective Schools Framework for Southwest Elementary, High Point Elementary, Hubbard Branch Elementary, and Chisholm Trail Elementary Schools.

Brandon Bozon made a motion, seconded by Rucker Preston, to approve the Southwest Elementary turnaround plan and the targeted improvement plans for High Point Elementary, Hubbard Branch Elementary, and Chisholm Trail Elementary Schools as presented. The motion passed unanimously, (7-0-0).

6. Reports:

A. Priority 1 — Academic Progress Report

Gabi Nino, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning, delivered the annual emergent bilingual students and services report, sharing that district families report 37 home languages, with Spanish, Vietnamese, Filipino, Korean, and Urdu being the most frequent. The presentation detailed dual-language (one-way and two-way) and English as a Second Language (ESL) program models, Telpas English proficiency metrics, and STAR growth data showing emergent bilingual student academic progress, alongside ongoing teacher professional development and family engagement efforts. See report.

B. Board Committee Reports

1. **Policy Committee**
   The Policy Committee summarized proposed updates to FNA (LOCAL) regarding graduation ceremony speakers and discussed state guidance on EIC (LOCAL) class rank and GPA calculation rules
2. **Budget Committee**
   The Budget Committee reported current district enrollment at 13,663 students (an increase of 190 students over the prior year) and reviewed 2026–2027 budget assumptions.

3. **Facilities Committee**
   The Facilities Committee reviewed the long-term master facilities plan data and received an update on the Citizens Bond Advisory Committee.

C. Superintendent's Report
Dr. Malinda Golden, Superintendent, focused on district mission alignment and student learning experiences across campuses. She highlighted classroom visits at Chisholm Trail Elementary centered on student social contracts and math numeracy, the launch of the Superintendent Student Advisory Council, the Night of Champions athletic event, the Belton New Tech art hat parade, culinary arts class participation, the Leon Heights STEM night, Manufacturing Day student tours, and the Citizens Bond Advisory Committee facilities bus tour

D. Board Highlights
During Board Highlights, trustees discussed participating in campus visits, the new-to-profession educator luncheon, TexEdCon professional development, the Magic Bell Princess Tea, Night of Champions, athletic and fine arts accomplishments—including state-bound marching bands and high school theater productions—and recognized community engagement at elementary fall festivals, Manufacturing Day, and the work of Project Heartbeat staff.

7. Consent Agenda: Consider and Take Appropriate Action

A. Minutes of Previous Meetings:
   1. September 10, 2026 - Special Meeting
   2. September 21, 2026 - Regular Meeting

B. Unaudited Financial Report for the Month Ending September 30, 2026
C. Gifts, Grants, and Bequests
D. Budget Amendment #2 for 2026-2027
E. Expenditures over $100,000
   1. Targeted Campus Support for Southwest, High Point, Hubbard Branch and South Belton - Bailey Education Group

F. Supply, Equipment, and Service Bids
   1. RFP #2608-675-428 Kitchen Repairs and Services
   2. RFP # 2608-775-430 Trailers and Related Equipment and Services

G. School Health Advisory Council Report
H. Appointment of 2026-2027 School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)
I. Selection of Construction Delivery Method for the BHS Field House HVAC Replacement Project
J. Selection of Construction Delivery Method for Freezer/Cooler Replacements at Lakewood, Leon Heights, and Sparta Elementary Schools
K. Telephone Consultation Agreement Between Belton ISD and Eichelbaum Wardell Hansen Powell & Munoz, P.C.
L. Superintendent's Contract
M. Local District Update – 2nd Reading
   1. FNA(LOCAL) Student Rights and Responsibilities: Student Expression

Riley Beck made a motion, seconded by Brandon Bozon, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion passed unanimously, (7-0-0).

8. Public Comments Regarding Non-Agenda Items
None.

9. Closed Session (Texas Government Code, Subchapters D and E)
The Board convened in closed session at 7:46 p.m.

A. Student Disciplinary Matter - Texas Government Code, Section 551.082

B. Personnel - Texas Government Code, Section 551.074
C. Consultation with Attorney - Texas Government Code, Section 551.071
D. Superintendent's Contract - Texas Government Code Section 551.071

10. Reconvene in Open Session
The Board reconvened in open session at 8:41 p.m.

11. Adjourn
There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

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Chris Flor, Board President

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Rucker Preston, Board Secretary