

Belton Independent School District

Board Meeting Minutes

Regular Board Meeting, March 30, 2026 - 6:15 p.m.

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

Board Members Present:

Manuel Alcozer
Chris Flor
Rucker Preston
Jeff Norwood

Brandon Bozon
Riley Beck
Erin Bass

Board Members Absent:

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

Manuel Alcozer, Board President, called the regular meeting of the Belton Independent School District Board of Trustees to order at 6:27pm. 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 – Charter Oak Elementary School

This evening, the pledges were led by fourth graders Riley Hand and Carrington Padron from Charter Oak Elementary School.

Riley says her favorite subjects are math and reading. Outside of school, she enjoys playing outside and even playing school for fun. Riley is a wonderful representation of Charter Oak because she consistently does what is expected and treats others with kindness. Her classmates describe her as a leader who is positive, supportive and responsible, and they say she is always willing to help others with a smile.

Carrington shared that her favorite subjects are math and reading. Outside of school, she enjoys sewing. Carrington represents Charter Oak well because she is kind, helpful and brings a positive attitude wherever she goes.

Student Showcase – Belton New Tech @Waskow Aerospace Engineering

Tonight's student showcase featured students from the Aerospace Engineering program at Belton New Tech @Waskow, highlighting the hands-on learning and real-world learning experiences that prepare students for careers in aviation and engineering.

Through the program, students explore the design, development, maintenance and testing of aircraft structures, engines and systems. They apply scientific and mathematical concepts to solve complex challenges in aerodynamics, structural design, mechanics, propulsion and robotics. In the first-year course, students are introduced to the history of aviation, the physics of flight, engineering practices and aviation career pathways. These students are supported by their teacher, Ewan Thomson.

Texas Art Educators Association Youth Art Month Spring Exhibition Participant

Belton ISD is proud to recognize James L. Burrell Elementary fifth grader Aryaman Adhikari for being selected to participate in the Texas Art Educators Association Youth Art Month Spring Exhibition. Aryaman's artwork was selected to be part of the exhibition and will also be featured online through the Bullock Museum's website.

Lions Club Peace Poster State Qualifier

Belton ISD recognized NBMS sixth grader Kimberly Lezama for advancing in the Lions Club

International Peace Poster Contest after earning first place in the Belton Lions Club competition. Her artwork, created in response to this year's theme Together as One, will now advance to the next round of judging alongside other top entries from across Texas.

Texas Theatre Scholar Award

Belton ISD is proud to recognize 10 students from Belton High School and Lake Belton High School who earned the Texas Theatre Scholar Award. This honor recognizes theatre students who maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 while demonstrating strong character and a commitment to their theatre program, school and community. Their theatre directors are Melissa Stuhff and Ty Carter.

YMCA Youth and Government Judicial State Qualifiers

Belton ISD is proud to recognize eight students from Belton New Tech @Waskow who qualified for the YMCA Texas Youth and Government Judicial State Competition.

The YMCA Texas Youth and Government program is a hands-on civic engagement experience that empowers high school students to learn by doing. Through participation in mock courts and legal proceedings, students explore the judicial system while developing skills in public speaking, critical thinking and civic leadership. These students are supported by their teacher, Dr. Mark Durfee.

CyberPatriot State Qualifiers

Belton ISD is proud to recognize 14 students from Belton New Tech @Waskow who qualified for the CyberPatriot State Competition.

CyberPatriot is the National Youth Cyber Education Program created by the Air & Space Forces Association to inspire students to pursue careers in cybersecurity and other science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields. At the center of the program is the National Youth Cyber Defense Competition, the nation's largest cyber defense competition, where students work to secure virtual networks and defend computer systems from simulated cyber threats. These students are supported by their teacher, Megan Shick.

Temple Rotary Educator of the Month

Belton ISD is proud to recognize Janet Sossamon as the Temple Rotary Club's Educator of the Month for February for her outstanding service to students at Lake Belton Middle School.

Mrs. Sossamon is a seventh-grade science teacher who brings enthusiasm and a deep commitment to student learning into her classroom each day. She creates engaging lessons that spark curiosity and encourage students to think critically. Her passion for teaching and dedication to her students make her highly deserving of this honor.

Belton Rotary Educator of the Quarter

Belton ISD is proud to recognize Julie Coggin as the Belton Rotary Club's Educator of the Quarter for her outstanding service to students at Southwest Elementary.

Ms. Coggin is a fourth-grade teacher who sets high expectations and believes deeply in the potential of every student. Principal Felicia Gibson shared that a hallmark of Ms. Coggin's classroom is her unwavering belief in student potential and her commitment to ensuring every student strives for excellence.

Department Showcase – Transportation

The evening's Department showcase featured the Belton ISD Transportation Department.

Whether they are behind the wheel, under the hood, or supporting operations in the office, this team plays a vital role in ensuring students and staff arrive safely to and from school each day.

Each year, the department travels more than 1.5 million miles using a fleet of 107 buses and 26 SUVs to serve the district.

These dedicated professionals are often the first friendly faces our students see each morning, helping set the tone for a successful day of learning. Belton ISD is proud to recognize the 160 members of the Transportation Department, led by Vickie Tubbs.

Community Partner – Temple Executive Air Center

Temple Executive Air Center as a valued community partner supporting Belton ISD aerospace and aviation programs.

Through mentorship, facility access, and real-world learning experiences, the team at Temple Executive Air Center helps connect classroom learning to real-world aviation and aerospace careers. Their partnership has been instrumental in supporting the development of aviation pathways at Belton New Tech @Waskow. Belton ISD is grateful for Temple Executive Air Center's continued partnership and commitment to investing in the future of our students.

Texas Public Schools Week

Belton ISD joined districts across the state in celebrating Texas Public Schools Week, a statewide recognition of the impact public education has on students, families and communities.

To mark the occasion, students from Belton New Tech @Waskow produced a video sharing what public education means through their lens and highlighting the opportunities available to each and every student in Belton ISD. The project was led by their instructor, Mel Peterman. Their leadership and voice serve as a powerful reminder that student involvement is at the heart of what makes our schools meaningful.

3. Public Comments Regarding Items on the Agenda

Amy Longfield - Item 5.B. Resolution Regarding Period of Prayer

Barbara Huffman & Anna Huffman - LBHS Wrestling

4. Action Item:

A. Consider, Discuss, and Take Appropriate Action Regarding Budget Assumptions for Fiscal Year 2026-2027

Melissa Lafferty, Chief Financial Officer, presented the preliminary budget assumptions. The conservative assumptions include an enrollment projection of 13,530 students, a 93% attendance rate, a 4% increase in local taxable property values, \$1 million earmarked for capital projects, and a district health benefit contribution of \$410 per month per enrolled employee.

Rucker Preston made a motion, seconded by Brandon Bozon to approve the 2026-2027 budget assumptions as presented. The motion passed unanimously, (7-0).

B. Consider, Discuss, and Take Appropriate Action on Resolution Regarding Seat Belt Requirements

Dr. Cassandra Spearman, Assistant Superintendent of Operations, presented the requirements of Senate Bill 546, which mandates three-point harnesses on all school buses by September 1, 2029. Retrofitting or replacing the 61 non-compliant buses in the current fleet of 107 buses would cost the district an estimated \$1.6 million. The district requires additional time and potentially state grant funding to reach compliance

Jeff Norwood made a motion, seconded by Erin Bass, to adopt a resolution determining that the district's current budget does not permit full compliance with Senate Bill 546 by September 1, 2029, due to significant financial hardship as presented. The motion passed unanimously, (7-0).

5. Reports:

A. Academic Progress Report

Gabi Nino, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning, presented the spring benchmark data. Highlights included a 9% reduction in students scoring a zero in ELA across all grade levels, 70% of third-graders demonstrating early numeracy, and a 22% gain in Algebra 1 mastery for 8th-grade and high school students. Identified areas for growth included reading paired passages, complex math equations, and the retention of social studies content

B. Bond and Capital Projects Report

Dr. Morgan presented an update on capital projects funded by the M&O budget, 2022 bond funds, and approximately \$4.5 million in bond savings. Upcoming projects include playground fencing, camera upgrades at four middle schools, roof replacements at the DAEP and transportation facilities, Belton High School switchgear replacement, and various HVAC and LED lighting projects.

C. City of Temple Oak Hills Neighborhood Plan

Erin Smith from the City of Temple presented the comprehensive Oak Hills Neighborhood Plan. The plan focuses on enhancing pedestrian routes near Chisholm Trail Elementary, improving park access, and addressing roadway and drainage concerns along major corridors like Hogan Road and State Highway 317.

D. Board Committee Reports

1. Policy Committee

Discussed compliance and updates regarding employee religious protections (DGA Local), classroom flag displays (CLE(LOCAL)), designated private spaces for staff/students (CSA(LOCAL)), instructional material review processes (EFA(LOCAL)), and released time courses for religious instruction (FEF(LOCAL)).

2. Budget Committee

Reviewed budget runs for 2026-2027, the financial impact of SB 546 bus seat belts, and the financial processes of CTE program reviews.

3. Facilities Committee

Received updates on capital projects, the revenue bonds for a new stadium scoreboard, advertising opportunities, and updated athletic turf designs.

E. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Malinda Golden highlighted the Delta program's successful navigation of public transit with the HOP bus, student successes in the Unified Track meet and Reverse Job Fair, high school soccer area championships, and the groundbreaking of the new Rowan facility.

F. Board Highlights

Trustees shared recent district events they attended, including Read Across America, UIL concerts, PTA meetings, sporting events, the BEF golf tournament, and the Special Education prom.

6. Consent Agenda: Consider and Take Appropriate Action

A. Minutes of Previous Meetings:

1. February 18, 2026 - Special Meeting
2. February 23, 2026 - Regular Meeting

B. Unaudited Financial Report for the Month Ending February 28, 2026

C. Budget Amendment #6 for 2025-2026

D. Expenditures over \$50,000

1. Cadence Bank Center for Graduation

2. American Constructors for Replacement of Exterior Switchboard at Belton High School 2022 Bond Project
- E. Supply, Equipment, and Service Bids
 1. RFP# 2511-470-398 Grounds Supplies, Equipment and Services
 2. RFP# 2511-475-397 Maintenance, Repair and Operations (MRO) Services, Equipment and Supplies
 3. RFP# 2512-150-400 Athletics Supplies, Equipment & Services
 4. RFP #2601-750-408 Internet Access (E-Rate Category 1)
 5. RFP #2601-750-409 Network Equipment (Category 2)
 6. RFP #2601-750-410 Network Equipment (Category 1)
 7. RFP# 2512-450-399 Instructional Materials, Supplies, Equipment and Services
- F. School Library Advisory Council Recommendation for Library Materials Purchase
- G. Additional Certified T-TESS Appraisers for 2025-2026
- H. Change Order #1 with P&E Mechanical Contractors, LLC for the Roy & Jean Potts Belton Swim Center HVAC Replacement 2022 Bond Project
- I. Acceptance and Close-out of the Roy and Jean Potts Swim Center HVAC Equipment Project and Approval of Final Payment
- J. Change Order #1 with Tradesman Services Ltd. for the HVAC Unit Replacements (Various Campuses) 2022 Bond Project
- K. Acceptance and Close-out of the HVAC Unit Replacements (Various Campuses) 2022 Bond Project and Approval of Final Payment
- L. Selection of Construction Delivery Method for the Transportation Center and DAEP Facility Roof Replacement Projects
- M. Selection of Construction Delivery Method for HVAC Pneumatic Controls Replacement Project at Belton High School 2022 Bond Project
- N. Additional Design Services provided by VLK Architects for the Delta Program Facility 2022 Bond Project
- O. Local District Update - 2nd Reading
 1. DGA(LOCAL) Employee Rights and Privileges, Freedom of Association
- P. Policy Update 126 - 2nd Reading
 1. CLE(LOCAL) Buildings, Grounds, and Equipment Management: Required Displays
 2. CSA(LOCAL) Facility Standards: Safety and Security
 3. EFA(LOCAL) Instructional Resources: Instructional Materials
 4. FEF(LOCAL) Attendance Released Time

The Board elected to pull Item 6.D.2 (American Constructors for Replacement of Exterior Switchboard at Belton High School 2022 Bond Project) for a separate vote, and pulled Item 6.F. (School Library Advisory Council Recommendation for Library Materials Purchase) to be addressed at a future meeting.

Riley Beck made a motion, seconded by Erin Bass, to approve the consent agenda, excluding items 6.D.2 and 6.F., as presented. The motion passed unanimously, (7-0).

Rucker Preston made a motion, seconded by Chris Flor, to approve item 6.D.2. American Constructors for Replacement of Exterior Switchboard at Belton High School 2022 Bond Project, as presented. The motion passed (6-0-1), Jeff Norwood abstaining.

7. Public Comments Regarding Non-Agenda Items

None.

8. Closed Session (Texas Government Code, Subchapters D and E)

The Board convened in closed session at 8:27 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

9. Reconvene in Open Session

The Board reconvened in open session at 9:11 p.m.

10. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:11 p.m.

Manuel Alcozer, President

Erin Bass, Secretary