

Belton Independent School District
Board of Trustee Meeting Agenda Item
April 21, 2025

Item: Recognitions

Contact Person: Christine Parks

Presented for: ☐ Action ☒ Report Only

Supporting Documents: ☒ None ☐ Attached ☐ Provided Later

District Goal or Objective Addressed:

Goal 2: Ensure exceptional learning experiences for each and every student.

Goal 4: Develop a district-wide culture of value, support, and growth amongst all students and staff.

Background Information:

Student Pledges – Sparta Elementary School

This evening, the pledges were led by Sparta Elementary second graders Hadley Parsons and Landry Smith.

Hadley's favorite subject is science. She's a talented artist who also enjoys learning math and takes ballet lessons. Her friends describe her as a great friend—kind, respectful, responsible and especially gifted in arts and crafts.

Landry's favorite subject is recess, though he also loves to read. He plays flag football for the Red Falcons and enjoys playing outside and taking care of his baby brother. His friends say he's very nice, super fast, brave, a great friend and looks especially handsome in his new glasses.

Student Showcase – Tiger Media

Tonight's Student Showcase highlights the newly upgraded Tiger Media spaces—made possible by the 2022 Bond. These enhancements include a modern classroom, dedicated

photo and video studios and a BenQ interactive display to elevate instruction and creativity.

Tiger Media equips students with real-world skills in graphic design, photography, video production and digital storytelling. From creating logos and promotional materials to producing campus news segments and multimedia projects, these student creators help tell the story of Belton High School and the district. The program is led by Mark Fitzwater and Alyssa Vargas-Leon.

Texas High School Coaches Association Academic All-State Basketball Qualifiers

We're proud to celebrate eight student-athletes who have been named to the Texas High School Coaches Association Academic All-State basketball teams.

From Belton High School boys basketball, Hudson Belobrajdic, Jason Green and David Shelburne were named to the Second Team. They are coached by Phil McCaslin.

Representing the Lake Belton High School boys basketball team, Hunter Hutchins was named to the First Team and Nelson Hayes received Honorable Mention. They are coached by Zane Johnston.

From Belton High School girls basketball, Tyler Waldrep was named to the First Team and Gabriella Heltness received Honorable Mention. They are coached by Anne Marie Zuilhof.

From Lake Belton High School girls basketball, Natalie Maldonado was named to the Second Team. She is coached by Tiffney Barnes.

Texas High School Coaches Association Academic All-State Wrestling Qualifiers

Four student-athletes have been recognized with Academic All-State honors in wrestling by the Texas High School Coaches Association.

From Belton High School, Ty Wilt received an Honorable Mention. He is coached by Scott Clark.

Representing Lake Belton High School, Scarlett Williams was named to the Second Team, while Travellis Harrison and Caleb Ighomon received Honorable Mentions. They are coached by Kevin Grimm.

Swimming State Qualifiers

Belton ISD is proud to have ten swimmers qualify for state competition, with students earning placements in a range of events including the 200, 400, and 500 meter relays and freestyle races.

Belton High School's state qualifiers are Olivia Brillhart, Mackenzie Gingerich, Liliana Nelson, Addison Richardson, and Ema Whitzel, coached by Chris Knipp.

Lake Belton High School's qualifiers include Gwen Clark, Christine Kim, Brooke Phillips, Elizabeth Simeroff, and David Stewart. They are coached by Natalia Hazlewood.

Powerlifting State Qualifiers

We are proud to celebrate nine student-athletes being named powerlifting state qualifiers. From Belton High School they are Byonka Donaldson, Melissa Farmer, Lauren Seidel and Kennedy Weston. They are coached by Barry Campbell.

Lake Belton High School qualifiers are Aleyna Castor, Scarlytt Cotham, Brett Harmon, Jaya Lisenbe and Christian Morales. Their coaches are Ryan Grave and Greg Rudolph.

Daughters of the American Revolution, Betty Martin Chapter Essay State Winner

We're proud to share that Ojun Ogwudu, a 7th grader at Belton Middle School, won first place in the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) American History Essay Contest—marking the first state-level win in the history of the Betty Martin Chapter!

Ojun's essay on the Edenton Tea Party stood out among entries from across Texas. She was recently honored at the DAR State Conference, where it was also announced that her essay won first place at the divisional level and is now advancing to the national competition.

Ojun was supported in this achievement by her history teacher, Nick Graham, and BMS instructional coach Kat Knox, who helped facilitate this opportunity.

Congratulations, Ojun—we're so proud of you and wish you the best as you compete at the national level!

National History Day State Qualifiers

Belton ISD is proud to recognize 41 students who represented the district at this year's State History Fair at the Bob Bullock Museum and the University of Texas at Austin—our second-largest group to date.

Students conducted in-depth primary source research and presented their findings through documentaries, exhibits, performances, websites, or papers.

We're especially excited to share that three projects from Lake Belton Middle School are advancing to the National History Day competition in June in Washington, D.C. and the University of Maryland. These outstanding projects explored topics such as HIPAA and patient rights, ethical dilemmas during the Manhattan Project, and how Betty Crocker cookbooks reflected evolving women's rights.

Congratulations to these students, their families, and their dedicated sponsors, Paige Hooten and Deb Hosch, for this incredible achievement!

Texas Association of Student Councils Top Video Winners

Congratulations to the Belton High School Student Council for being named a Top Video Winner at the Texas Association of Student Councils Annual Conference! Only ten high schools and five middle-level councils across the state received this prestigious recognition.

TASC is the largest student council association in the world, and the honored videos represent the very best submissions from across Texas. Belton High School's winning entry, "Big Red Traditions: Burning of the B," showcased the spirit and pride of their campus community.

Special thanks to sponsor Danielle Conner for her leadership and support!

Business Professionals of America State Qualifiers

The Workplace Skill Assessment Program (WSAP) prepares students to succeed and assesses real-world business skills and problem-solving abilities in finance, management, IT, and computer applications. It is the Business Professionals of America's showcase program, allowing students to demonstrate their career-readiness at regional, state, and national conferences across more than 90 competitive events.

Belton ISD proudly recognizes the students and staff who have advanced to the state level in 24 categories. The program is led by Amanda Simpson and Megan Shick.

- Administrative Support Team
- Advanced Spreadsheet Applications
- Banking & Finance
- Financial Analyst Team
- Health Research Presentation
- Payroll Accounting
- Personal Financial Management
- Fundamental Spreadsheet Applications
- Database Applications
- Business Law & Ethics
- Computer Security
- C++ Computer Programming
- Java Computer Programming
- SQL Database
- Linux OS Fundamentals
- Python Programming
- Fundamentals of Web Design
- Computer Modeling
- Small Business Management
- Prepared Speech
- Individual Presentation
- Medical Coding
- Health Administration Procedures
- Health Research Presentation

Technology Student Association State Qualifiers

The Technology Student Association (TSA) is a national non-profit career and technical student organization (CTSO) for middle and high school students engaged in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). TSA competitions provide students with opportunities to extend learning beyond the classroom and explore topics aligned with their career interests.

Belton ISD proudly recognizes our students and staff who have advanced to the state level in 10 categories. The program is led by Pietro Giustino and Jessica Persilver.

- Audio Podcasting
- Architecture
- Children's Stories

- Coding
- Future Technology & Engineering Teacher
- Robotics
- Systems Control Technology
- Technology Bowl
- Music Production
- Architectural Design

VEX Robotics State Qualifiers

Belton ISD is proud to celebrate the exceptional students and staff who advanced to the state level in the VEX Robotics competition in both UAVs (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles – Drones) and Robotics.

These competitions help prepare students to become future innovators by fostering interest in STEM-related careers. By combining the excitement of robotics with the spirit of competition, VEX empowers students to build skills and confidence as STEM learners. 7 students qualified for the World Championships that will be held May 6-14, at the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center in Dallas. They are led by Jessica Persilver and Steve Tysor.

Temple Rotary Educator of the Month

Christina Botha is being recognized by the Temple Rotary Club as the Rotary Educator of the Month for March for her outstanding service to Belton ISD. Christina serves as a 3rd grade English Language Arts teacher at Tarver Elementary School. She is in her 11th year in education, 4th year at Tarver Elementary.

Aubrey Itz, Principal at Tarver Elementary, stated the following about Ms. Botha:
I am nominating Christina Botha for the Temple Rotary. She exemplifies the highest standards of excellence in education. Her dedication to student growth is unwavering, consistently demonstrated through her insightful understanding of each student's unique learning needs.

Christina masterfully designs engaging and challenging lessons that ignite curiosity and inspire critical thinking. Her classroom is a dynamic environment where students are actively involved in their learning, encouraged to explore, and develop a deep understanding of reading concepts. She has seamlessly integrated a Thinking Classroom Structure into ELAR allowing her students to collaborate and express their ideas.

Beyond academic achievement, Mrs. Botha empowers students to celebrate their own accomplishments and believe in themselves. She creates a supportive and inclusive classroom where every student feels valued and respected.

Mrs. Botha is also a true mentor to her colleagues. She willingly shares her expertise, guiding and supporting other teachers in their professional development. Her classroom often serves as a model for observation, allowing fellow educators to witness her innovative teaching methods and classroom structures firsthand.

Her passion for education, and her profound impact on the lives of her students make her a truly deserving recipient of this recognition. We are blessed to have her serve our community and be a part of our Pack!

2024-2025 Bilingual Leader Cohort - Bilingual Champions

This year, Belton ISD launched the Bilingual Champions Leadership Cohort, a district-wide initiative representing Pre-K through 5th grade teachers. Participation in this intense learning cohort was through a voluntary application process. Participants volunteered their time in the evenings and on weekends to invest in learning! The program empowered these bilingual educators to grow as leaders in pursuit of excellence in bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism. Through targeted leadership learning, cohort members strengthened their skills using practical tools and research-based knowledge in highly effective strategies to support the linguistic, academic, social, and cultural needs of dual language students. The goals of this cohort include an investment in both student and staff success as well as program sustainability. The inaugural Bilingual Champions are Sonia Aleman, Rosangelica Reyes, Angie Cruz, Rocio Reyes, Marcia Pinto-Reis, Maribel Velez, Sylvia Morales, and Gloria Rafael-Tovar.

Department Showcase - Student Services

This month's department showcase highlights the incredible work of BISD Student Services, under the leadership of Assistant Superintendent of Operations, Dr. Cassandra Spearman.

This dedicated team plays a vital role in district operations—managing student transfers, records requests, attendance intervention and training, and supporting campus administrators. They also oversee the Student Code of Conduct Handbook, coordinate School Health Advisory Committee (SHAC) meetings, and lead essential training for administrative staff.

We're thankful for the behind-the-scenes work they do each day to help create a safe and supportive learning environment for all students. They are truly World-Class Employees!

Community Partner Recognition - Texas Tour Gear

Belton ISD is proud to recognize our strong partnership with local business Texas Tour Gear. More than just a vendor, Texas Tour Gear consistently goes above and beyond to support the district's audio-visual needs with professionalism and care.

From equipment rentals and sales to expert repair services, their support ensures our schools and departments have access to reliable technology for events, presentations and learning environments.

They play a key role in providing audio support for major district events—including board meetings and convocations—and we're especially grateful for their help facilitating today's offsite board meeting.

We are grateful for their ongoing partnership and commitment to the district's mission.

Fiscal Implications:

None.

Administrative Recommendation(s):

None.