

Belton Independent School District

Board Meeting Minutes

Regular Board Meeting, May 12, 2025 - 6:15 p.m.

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

Board Members Present:

Manuel Alcozer

Erin Bass

Suzanne McDonald

Rucker Preston

Chris Flor

Jeff Norwood

Janet Leigh

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 6:17 p.m. He stated that a quorum of Board Members was present, that the meeting had been duly called, and that notice of the meeting had been posted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code Chapter 551.

2. Oath of Office for Board Trustees Elected on May 3, 2025

During the May 7 Special Board Meeting, the Board of Trustees canvassed the results from the May 3 election. Jeff Norwood was sworn in for Area 1. He ran unopposed. Riley Beck was sworn in for Area 3. Manuel Alcozer was sworn in for Area 5. He ran unopposed.

3.

Recognitions

Student Pledges – Belton Early Childhood School

The evening pledges were led by Belton Early Childhood preschoolers Susannah Johnson and Carter Jones.

Student Showcase – Penguin Project

The showcase featured the Penguin Project, a beloved Belton ISD tradition created with Board support. In its third year, the project allowed students with disabilities to perform in a musical with peer mentors. It grew from 35 students in Annie Jr. to over 90 in Shrek the Musical Jr.

UIL Choir Solo & Ensemble State Qualifiers

The Board recognized 59 choir students from Belton and Lake Belton High Schools who qualified for the UIL Choir Solo and Ensemble State Contest. These students earned first division ratings at regionals, advancing them to the state contest in Austin. This achievement reflected their dedication, artistry, and the guidance of their directors, Tonya Lovorn and Terrance Livingston.

VASE State Qualifiers

Nine student artists from Belton and Lake Belton High Schools qualified for the 2024 VASE state competition. Their work advanced through regionals to over 32,000 pieces at state. Lake Belton's Liam McCullagh earned a Gold Seal for the second year, placing him among the top 7% of Texas high school artists. Art teachers Jannet Alarin, Macon Tolleson, Alicia Richardson, and Emily Simeroth were recognized.

UIL Theatrical Design State Qualifiers

Lake Belton High School students Liam McCullagh and Paloma Carmona-Ortiz advanced to the State UIL Theatrical Design Competition. Liam made his third state trip, previously earning 1st and 2nd place in Marketing Design. Paloma made her state debut. Their teacher, Ty Carter, was thanked for his support.

Dance All-State Qualifiers

Reagan Vergara and Emersyn Tucker were recognized as All-State Dancers and performed at the Texas Dance Educators Association convention. Reagan, a Magic Belles captain coached by Rachel Hill and McKenzie Urteaga, was a four-year member. Emersyn, a Silver Spurs officer coached by Emma Marsland, was a three-year member and placed sixth in solo competition at Nationals.

Career Readiness

SkillsUSA Hospitality State Qualifiers

Four Belton High School CTE students advanced to state through SkillsUSA and FCCLA competitions, showcasing their skills and passion in the Hospitality pathway, guided by teachers Kenzie Pennacchio and Kathy Firkins.

FCCLA Regional Competition State Qualifiers

Six Lake Belton High School students advanced to the FCCLA State Competition after performing well at Regionals. This success highlighted the strength of the CTE programs and the instructors, Nicolas Warren and Melinda Hodge.

HOSA State Qualifiers

Thirteen CTE students from Belton and Lake Belton High Schools qualified for the HOSA State Leadership Conference. They demonstrated excellence in healthcare-related events. Belton High School students were supported by Stephanie Yaryan and Brandi Frieden, and Lake Belton High School students were led by Mary Keeton.

SkillsUSA Auto Tech State Qualifiers

Five Lake Belton High School CTE students advanced to the SkillsUSA State Competition in Automotive Technology. Miles Kunce qualified for the National Competition. These successes reflected the Auto Tech program's strength and instructor Brent Sharp's guidance.

SkillsUSA Law State Qualifiers

Seven CTE students from Belton and Lake Belton High Schools advanced to the SkillsUSA State Competition in Law and Public Service. They showcased skills in critical thinking, emergency response, and investigative techniques. Their achievement reflected hard work and instructors Corylynn Upton and Willie Ward's support.

YMCA Law State Qualifiers

Ten Belton New Tech @Waskow CTE students competed in the YMCA Youth and Government State Qualifiers, serving as appellate attorneys, justices, and mock trial participants. They demonstrated legal reasoning and public speaking skills, reflecting their hard work and the Law and Public Safety program's strength. Teacher Mark Durfee was thanked for his support.

SkillsUSA Arts & AV State Qualifiers

Seven CTE students in the Arts, A/V Technology, and Communications pathway qualified for the SkillsUSA State Competition. Lake Belton's Ryan McGinnis advanced to the National Competition in T-Shirt Design. Instructors Alyssa Vargas-Leon (BHS), Dustin Shepherd, and Brittany Truitt (LBHS) were recognized.

SkillsUSA Construction State & National Qualifiers

Eleven Belton High School CTE students in the Construction pathway qualified for the SkillsUSA State Competition. The Teamworks group—Jack Clark, Joseph Fuentez, Bryson Necessary, and Eric Schiller—advanced to the National Competition. Their instructor, Michael Carrillo, was thanked for his support.

Area 12 Wool State Qualifiers

Four Belton and Lake Belton High CTE students placed 1st locally and qualified for the FFA State Competition through the Area 12 Wool Career Development Event. They showcased expertise in wool judging, grading, and the textile industry. Instructor Jeffry Heffernan was congratulated.

Region II Wildlife State Qualifiers

Four CTE students from Belton and Lake Belton High Schools qualified for the FFA State Competition through the Region II Wildlife Career Development Event, placing fourth regionally. They showcased knowledge of wildlife management, and their instructor, Brad Hobbs, was thanked for his support.

Tarleton State Area State Qualifiers

Eight CTE students from Belton and Lake Belton High Schools advanced to the FFA State Competition through the Tarleton State Area Career Development Events. Their Dairy Cattle Evaluation team earned

2nd place, and the Environmental and Natural Resources team also qualified. Instructors Brad Hobbs (BHS) and Taylor Wells (LBHS) were congratulated.

Texas A&M Area State Qualifiers

Sixteen CTE students from Belton and Lake Belton High Schools excelled at the Texas A&M Area Career Development Events and advanced to state competition. Their Nursery/Landscape and Milk Quality teams earned 1st place, and the Floral and Horse Evaluation teams placed 3rd and 4th. Instructors Lindsey Chapman, Brad and Lori Hobbs, and Corey Killen were congratulated.

Texas Tech State Qualifiers

Four Belton High School CTE students qualified for the FFA State Competition in the Cotton Career Development Event. They showcased analytical skills and understanding of cotton production. Their teacher, Corey Killen, was congratulated.

SkillsUSA Education & Training State Qualifiers

Two Belton High School CTE students in the Education and Training pathway advanced to the SkillsUSA State Competition in the Career Demonstration event. They demonstrated strong communication skills and professionalism. Instructor Marylisa Fanning was commended for her hard work.

SkillsUSA Human Services State Qualifiers

Three Belton High School CTE students in the Human Services pathway advanced to the SkillsUSA State Competition in the Human Services Practicum event. They demonstrated professionalism, interpersonal skills, and the ability to apply knowledge in real-world settings. Instructor Marylisa Fanning was commended for her dedication.

Business Professionals of America National Qualifiers

Lake Belton High School CTE student Lane Cahaya qualified for the Business Professionals of America National Leadership Conference in the Medical Coding 435 event. Lane's success reflected exceptional technical skill and professionalism in healthcare IT. Instructor Megan Shick was congratulated.

Congressional Debate State Qualifiers

Four students from Belton and Lake Belton High Schools qualified for the UIL State Competition in CX Debate and Congressional Debate. They demonstrated strong abilities in research, critical thinking, and persuasive communication. Teachers Hannah Berg and Pam Rodriguez were congratulated.

VEX Robotics World Qualifiers

Six Belton New Tech @Waskow CTE students qualified for the VEX Robotics World Championship. Their achievement reflected technical skill, innovation, teamwork, and engineering knowledge. Instructor Steve Tysor was congratulated.

Texas Association of Soccer Coaches Academic All-State

Nine Lake Belton High School student-athletes earned Academic All-State honors from the Texas Association of Soccer Coaches: Benjamin Asuncion Crabb, Jackson Domek, Erwin Castaneda Frausto, Aiden Kurdi, Brayden Mellon, Kevin Muchunu, Austin Robello, Noah Santos, and Tyrrence Taylor. Their coach was Andrew Kirshner.

Texas High School Coaches Association Academic All-State - Boys Soccer

Belton ISD is celebrating several student-athletes who were named to the Texas High School Coaches Association Academic All-State teams for soccer, tennis, swimming and powerlifting. To be nominated, seniors must be in good standing with their team, have good moral character, and have an overall GPA of 92 or above. Class rank and SAT/ACT test scores are also taken into consideration.

Belton High School:

The three honorees from BHS are Joshua Roberts (Second Team) and Josue Reyes Trejo and Matthew Watkins (Honorable Mention). Their coach is Carlo Mosnia.

Texas High School Coaches Association Academic All-State - Girls Soccer

Belton High School:

The five honorees from BHS are Victoria Lucksinger and Elizabeth Marschall (Elite); Marissa Christenson and Ava Itz (Second Team); and Isabella Stermer (Honorable Mention). Their coach is Oscar Bersosa.

Lake Belton High School:

The four honorees from LBHS are Barrett Burdine, Chelsie Miller (Second Team); Kaylee Hudgens, Olivia Sibley (Honorable Mention). Their coach is Jamie Tibbetts.

Texas High School Coaches Association Academic All-State - Tennis

Belton High School:

The honoree from BHS is Julie He (Elite). Her coach is James Stinson.

Lake Belton High School:

The honorees from LBHS are Rachel Kim (Elite); Nathan Dawson, Luke Droege, Emilio Gonzalez, John Garrett Hale and Jillian Webb (Second Team); and Victoria Melendez-Espino (Honorable Mention). Their coach is Niki Morgan.

Belton New Tech @Waskow:

The honorees from BNT@W are Tran Le, Chinonso Oqwudu (First Team); Lucas Abell, Samuel Emeodi-Wilson, Colton Fry (Second Team); and Ethan Borchers (Honorable Mention). Their coach is Jordan Wedemeyer.

Texas High School Coaches Association Academic All-State - Swimming

Belton High School:

The honorees from BHS are Raef Airhart and Liliana Nelson (Second Team) and Mackenzie Gingerich (Honorable Mention). Their coach is Christopher Knipp.

Lake Belton High School:

The honorees from LBHS are Aidan Fenton and Samuel Stevens (Second Team) and Jacob Gerakos, Lillian Paulk and Brooke Phillips (Honorable Mention). Their coach is Natalie Hazelwood.

Swimming State Qualifiers

Five Belton New Tech @Waskow student-athletes represented Belton ISD at the UIL Swim and Dive State Championships. Claire Thomas placed 12th in the 200 Free and 8th in the 500 Free; Zayne Williford earned 6th in the 200 Free and 9th in the 500 Free; and Caleb Tort-Negron finished 12th in the 100 Fly. Coach Ben Bralley was recognized for their dedication and success.

Texas High School Powerlifting Association Academic All-State

Lake Belton High School:

The honorees from LBHS are Patrick Hart (Elite); Brett Harmon and Travellis Harrison (First Team); and Caleb Ighomon (Second Team). Their coach is Ryan Graves.

Texas High School Women's Powerlifting Association Academic All-State

Belton High School:

The honorees from BHS are Briley Campbell, Julie He and Bella Reyes (Elite). Their coach is Barry Campbell.

Lake Belton High School:

The honorees from LBHS are Abby Rydberg and Tatum Vaughn (Elite); Kaylee Hudgens (First Team); and Aleyna Castor and Taylor Love (Second Team). Their coach is Greg Rudolph.

LBHS Unified Track Meet State Qualifiers

Belton ISD celebrated the success of the Unified Track and Field team, which placed 13th in the state of Texas in its second year. This accomplishment is a reflection of the dedication, perseverance and teamwork of the 34 outstanding student-athletes and partners who represented our district with pride.

New-to-the-Profession Teacher Recognition

Belton ISD celebrated 105 first-year educators. These professionals showed commitment to learning and growth. Through the INSPIRE Academy, they participated in professional development and received support from mentors. They were congratulated on their milestone.

Belton Rotary Educator of the Quarter

Carla Beamesderfer, a sixth-grade math teacher at Belton Middle School, as the Belton Rotary Club's Educator of the Quarter. Now in her 16th year in education and seventh year with Belton ISD, Ms. Beamesderfer is known for bringing math to life through engaging, hands-on lessons that connect classroom learning to real-world applications.

Temple Rotary Educator of the Month - April & May

Cody Ward, a sixth-grade history teacher at North Belton Middle School, as the Temple Rotary Club's Educator of the Month for April. Now in his fourth year—all with Belton ISD—Mr. Ward has become known for his student-centered approach, creative instruction and unwavering commitment to growth. Whether dressing up as historical figures or providing students with multiple ways to express their learning, he creates an engaging classroom environment where students thrive.

Jordan Dawkins, a second-grade teacher at Hubbard Branch Elementary, was the Temple Rotary Club's Educator of the Month for May. Now in her 11th year in education and third year with Belton ISD, Mrs. Dawkins is known for setting high expectations, building strong relationships and creating a classroom environment where all students feel supported and empowered to succeed.

2024-2025 Capturing Kids' Hearts National Showcase Schools Award Recipient

We are proud to recognize Lakewood Elementary for being named a Capturing Kids' Hearts® National Showcase School for the second year in a row. This national honor highlights Lakewood's commitment to creating a safe, supportive and engaging campus culture where relationships are at the heart of student success.

AP School Honor Roll by College Board

Belton New Tech High @Waskow was named to the AP® School Honor Roll for the second consecutive year. The school also earned the Bronze Distinction for Access. The recognized AP teachers are Andrew Berg, Michelle Ciccariello, Mark Durfee, Trisha Kaer, Sabrina Leija, Timothy Potts, Charles Ridgley, Charles Rodarte, Nicolle Santiago, and Ewan Thomson.

Community Partner Recognition - Temple College

Temple College was honored as the Community Partner Recognition. Belton ISD was grateful for its partnership with Temple College, built on expanding access to higher education. That spring, 66 seniors earned college credit. Through professional development and strategic planning, they worked towards ensuring every high school graduate earns college credit. Temple College was thanked for helping create brighter futures for Belton ISD students.

Superintendent's Student Advisory Council

The Board recognized 12 students on the Superintendent's Student Advisory Council, representing all Belton ISD high schools, for their leadership and contributions to district communication and decision-making. This group of students worked directly with Dr. Golden, Cabinet, and Leadership throughout the school year.

4. Public Comments Regarding Items on the Agenda

None.

5. Action Items

A. Consider, Discuss, and Take Appropriate Action Regarding Adoption of District Key Progress Measures

Dr. Michael Morgan, Deputy Superintendent, presented for consideration the 2025-2026 Key Progress Measures as follows:

Goal 1: Strengthen and support the engagement of all stakeholders in the pursuit of the BISD vision.
Key Progress Measure: Establish at least one new strategic partnership between each campus/department and a community organization, business, industry leader, or institution of higher education by January of 2026.

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

Key Progress Measure 1: Increase the percentage of students demonstrating critical thinking, with an emphasis on asking questions and evaluating arguments from 47% to 55% in alignment with the Journey of a Graduate Competency Rubric by May of 2026.
Key Progress Measure 2: Meet all House Bill 3 Goals.

Goal 3: Attract, retain, and support a world class team of employees.

Key Progress Measure: Achieve 80% staff participation in creating and pursuing a professional learning goal aligned with the BISD Leadership Definition by May 2026.

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

Key Progress Measure: Implement Hope Squad at 100% of campuses as measured by active Hope Squad teams with trained students and advisors at each campus, and conduct a minimum of one Hope Squad event by May 2026.

Goal 5: Maximize our use of resources for both current priorities and plans for the future.

Key Progress Measure: Implement Teacher Incentive Allotment systems of support across 100% of designated campuses by May 2026.

Chris Flor, Board Vice President, asked for further explanation on the House Bill 3 implication within Goal 2. Ms. Gabi Nino, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning, presented to the Board further information on the focus of this goal.

The Board engaged in discussion about Goal 5 regarding the function and purpose of the Teacher Incentive Allotment.

Jeff Norwood made a motion, seconded by Rucker Preston, to adopt the 2025-2026 Key Progress Measures as presented. The motion passed unanimously (7-0).

B. Consider, Discuss, and Take Appropriate Action Regarding Resolution to Negotiate the Purchase of Real Property

Dr. Morgan presented to the Board a resolution to negotiate the purchase of real property, as likely the final land purchase from 2022 bond funds. He provided a review of strategic purchases in the south and center of the District, and is exploring possible options in the northern portion of Belton ISD based on District needs. The Resolution authorizes District Administration to identify and negotiate terms of purchase, and bring a contract back to the Board of Trustees for approval at a future meeting.

Janet Leigh made a motion, seconded by Erin Bass, to adopt the resolution authorizing the superintendent to negotiate a contract for property and present the contract to the Board of Trustees for consideration at a future Board Meeting as presented. The motion passed unanimously (7-0).

6. Reports

A.	Academic	Progress	Report
Ms. Gabi Nino, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning, presented the Academic Progress Report to the Board of Trustees which provided an update regarding critical thinking as measured by classroom observations using the Journey of a Graduate Rubric. Ms. Nino's report outlined evaluation, response, highlights, and areas needing improvement.			

B. Goal 5 Report: Special Programs Evaluation

Ms. Nino presented this report regarding the Special Education Programs Evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation was to improve systems and outcomes for students. Data was collected using surveys, interviews, observations, and documentation reviews and future work includes common planning time, identifying opportunities for inclusion, and learning and support for service determination tool.

C. Goal 5 Report: Schoology Program Evaluation

Ms. Melissa Lafferty, Chief Financial Officer, presented a report on the Schoology Program Evaluation. As part of Goal 5, the District undertook evaluating Learning Management Systems, including Schoology, Google Classroom, and SeeSaw. Teacher survey data reflected that elementary principals recommend standardizing on Google Classroom and secondary principals recommend a Google Classroom pilot

program. Recommendations include transitioning elementary schools to Google Classroom and piloting Google Classroom in secondary schools.

D. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Malinda Golden shared her experiences visiting campuses and attending events across the District connected to the Belton ISD Vision, Values and Beliefs, and Journey of a Graduate. Dr. Golden commended Dr. Cassandra Spearman, Assistant Superintendent of Operations, and team for organizing a successful Student Safety Summit.

E. Board Highlights

Rucker Preston started the conversation by sharing his experience at the Teacher of the Year banquet. Erin Bass covered the Superintendent Student Advisory presentations and the collaboration between students and staff, Little Red Relays and thanked the team who coordinated the event, and Healthcare Heros. Chris Flor spoke to Fine Arts performances, and Lakewood's Old Glory Day. Janet Leigh shared her experience attending the Big Red Art Show at Harris Community Center. Manuel Alcozer shared about his meaningful experience at the Teacher of the Year Banquet, along with his tour of a few campuses.

7. Consent Agenda: Consider and Take Appropriate Action

A. Minutes of Previous Meetings:

1. April 14, 2025, Special Meeting
2. April 21, 2025, Workshop Meeting
3. April 21, 2025, Regular Meeting

B. Unaudited Financial Report for the Month Ending April 30, 2025

C. Gifts, Grants, and Bequests

D. Budget Amendment #8 for 2024-2025

E. Expenditures over \$50,000

1. Renewal of Secured Mobility for Smart Tag
2. Capturing Kids' Hearts for Professional Training Services
3. Delcom for Interactive Panels on Campuses
4. PlayWell for Playground at Southwest Elementary School
5. Access Controls for Belton High School, Lake Belton Middle School, and Southwest Elementary School

F. Supply, Equipment, and Service Bids

1. RFP#2504-475-387 for Belton High School Security Fencing
2. RFP #2503-275-385 for Depository Services

G. Resolution of Board to Convene the District's School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) to Recommend Curriculum

H. Pilot Bluebonnet Learning Spanish Math Instructional Materials at Southwest Elementary

I. Low Attendance Day Waivers for 2024-2025

J. Staff Development Minutes Waiver for the 2025-2026 School Year

K. Texas Association of School Board's Initiated Localized Policy Update 124 - 2nd Reading

1. CY(LOCAL) - Intellectual Property
2. EHB(LOCAL) - Curriculum Design: Special Programs
3. EHBB(LOCAL) - Special Programs: GT Students

L. District (LOCAL) Policy Updates - 2nd Reading

1. BBE(LOCAL) - Board Members: Authority
2. BDB(LOCAL) - Board Internal Organization: Internal Committees
3. BDD(LOCAL) - Board Internal Organization: Attorney

M. Board Operating Procedures

N. Amendment to Superintendent's Contract

Jeff Norwood made a motion, seconded by Rucker Preston, to approve the Consent agenda as presented. The motion passed unanimously (7-0).

8. Public Comments Regarding Non-Agenda Items

None

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

The Board went into closed session at 8:53 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. Deliberate the Appointment and Duties of Public Officers – Texas Government Code, Section 551.074

10. Reconvene in Open Session and Take Action, if any, on Items Discussed in Closed Session

The Board reconvened in Open Session at 10:25 p.m.

11. Action Items

A. Consider, Discuss, and Take Appropriate Action Regarding Reorganization of the Board of Trustees

Janet Leigh made a motion, seconded by Jeff Norwood for all Board Officers to remain in the same positions

B. Consider, Discuss, and Take Appropriate Action Regarding Appointment of Board Committees

The Board postponed this Action Item to a future meeting.

C. Consider, Discuss, and Take Appropriate Action Regarding Trustee Resignation

Janet Leigh, Trustee At-Large, submitted her resignation to the Board of Trustees. In accordance with BBC(LEGAL), all public officers shall continue to perform the duties of their offices until their successors shall be duly qualified (i.e., sworn in). Until the vacancy created by a board member's resignation is filled by a successor, the board member continues to serve and have the duties and powers of office.

Rucker Preston made a motion, seconded by Jeff Norwood, to accept Janet Leigh's resignation from the Belton ISD Board of Trustees. The motion passed unanimously (7-0).

D. Consider, Discuss, and Take Appropriate Action Regarding Filling Trustee Vacancy

In accordance with BBC(LEGAL), If a board member submits a resignation, whether to be effective immediately or at a future date, a vacancy occurs on the date the resignation is accepted by the board or on the eighth day after the date of its receipt by the board, whichever is earlier. The remaining board members may fill the vacancy by appointment until the next trustee election.

Erin Bass made a motion, seconded by Jeff Norwood, to appoint Brandon Bozon to fill the vacancy created by Trustee Leigh's resignation, and to serve in the position until the next General Election of the Board of Trustees in May, 2026. The motion passed unanimously, (7-0).

12. Adjourn

Adjourn: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:43 p.m.

Manuel Alcozer, President

Erin Bass, Secretary