



Brownsville Independent School District

Agenda Category: General Function
Contracts/MOU

Board of Education Meeting: 1/13/2026

Item Title: Annual Collaborative Partnership
Agreements

X **Action**
Information
Discussion

BACKGROUND:

Brownsville ISD has maintained collaborative partnership agreements for several years with Gladys Porter Zoo and the Brownsville Historical Association. Most agreements allow Brownsville ISD students to visit the institutions individually or with their classes free of charge throughout the school year. The organizations also provide staff development activities, individualized tours, specialized classes and access of educational materials. Brownsville ISD also gets special access to their facilities for meetings and conferences as part of the agreements. The agreements have been reviewed by legal counsel.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

\$78,480.00 from budgeted Local Maintenance Funds:

\$43,200.00 Gladys Porter Zoo

\$35,280.00 Brownsville Historical Association

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend approval for Administration to continue collaborative service agreements with the Gladys Porter Zoo, and Brownsville Historical Association in the amount not to exceed \$78,480.00 from budgeted Local Maintenance Funds. (Annual Agreement)

Isabel De La Cruz/
Submitted by: Principal/Program Director

Miguel Salinas/
Reviewed by: Staff Attorney

Approved for Submission to Board of Education:


Dr. Jesus H. Chavez, Superintendent

Approved by: Dr. Jesus H. Chavez, Superintendent

When Necessary, Additional Background May Follow This.

CONTRACT

THE STATE OF TEXAS }
COUNTY OF CAMERON }

AGREEMENT REGARDING GLADYS PORTER ZOO SERVICES

The BROWNSVILLE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT (hereinafter "District") agrees to have the Gladys Porter Zoo (hereinafter "Zoo") provide educational services to the Brownsville Independent School District. The Zoo agrees to furnish these services on the following terms and conditions:

1. The Brownsville Independent School District agrees to pay the Gladys Porter Zoo the amount of \$43,200.00 for 48,000 admission tickets.
2. The Zoo agrees to provide the following services, for no further charge, to all students and employees of the Brownsville Independent School District.
 - Provide staff development activities to assist faculty and staff members via three teacher workshops during the school year. Dates and subject matter will be selected at a later date. The Zoo's Education Department will work directly with BISD's Curriculum Department to schedule the workshops, develop content emphasis, and select dates.
 - Provide educational slide and video presentations for any BISD school group. Presentations must be scheduled through the Zoo's Education Department at least two weeks in advance.
 - Assist in the development of educational television and other media programming by providing educational material and facts. If Zoo staff is required to be on-camera, a two week notice is required.
 - Make available for District use the Zoo's education complex, amphitheater, and Special Events Building, space permitting. A two week advance notice is required. The Zoo library is also available during Zoo office hours for any BISD student or faculty member. However, books may not be checked out.

This contract is for the period from January 1, 2026, to January 1, 2027. Renewal of the contract will be contingent upon the following factors:

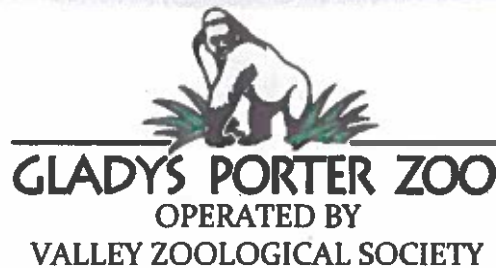
1. Availability of funds,
2. Educational benefits to students and staff, and
3. Modifications, if any, resulting from evaluation findings.

_____/Date:
Patrick M. Burchfield, Director
Gladys Porter Zoo

_____/Date:
Minerva M. Peña, Board Secretary
Brownsville Independent School District

_____/Date:
Daniela Lopez Valdez, Board President
Brownsville Independent School District

_____/Date:
Dr. Jesus H. Chavez, Superintendent
Brownsville Independent School District



November 21, 2025

Isabel A. De la Cruz
Director of Public Relations and Community Engagement
Brownsville Independent School District

Dear Ms. De la Cruz:

The Valley Zoological Society is pleased to invite Brownsville Independent School District to continue our joint program, *Conservation through Education Partnership*. For the period of January 1, 2025 to November 20, 2025, 46 outreach presentations were conducted in the classrooms of your various campuses to 7,817 students and 923 teachers for a value of \$9,060. From January through November; 8,993 students visited the Zoo in connection with this program, and 923 teachers and aides accompanied them at no additional charge. Twenty-eight presentations were given to students and faculty in conjunction with these fieldtrips. This is valued at \$60,482 in zoo admission fees. The District saved \$26,342.

With the increased meeting space at the Zoo, we have been able to dedicate one of the classrooms to HOSA students doing their practicums and working with zoo staff. We hosted 32 HOSA students, on a daily basis, from Pace, Veterans HOSA, and Hanna, as well as 6 to 8 students from the Triple T Program. Additionally, 59 students participated this year on weekends as part of the Students Teaching Students Program.

The existing contract does not expire until December 31, 2025, so we will continue to provide services requested by the district. Please let me know if you need any further information for your presentation to the BISD Board of Directors.

Sincerely,

Patrick M. Burchfield, Ed. D., M. Sc.
Director

500 Ringgold Street • Brownsville, Texas 78520 • Tel (956) 546-7187 • Fax (956) 541-4940

e-mail: educ@gpz.org • www.gpz.org

ACCREDITED MEMBER ASSOCIATION OF ZOOS AND AQUARIUMS

CONTRACT

THE STATE OF TEXAS }{
COUNTY OF CAMERON }{

AGREEMENT REGARDING BROWNSVILLE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION SERVICES

The BROWNSVILLE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT (hereinafter "District") agrees to have the Brownsville Historical Association (hereinafter "BHA") provide field trips and educational services to the District. The BHA agrees to furnish these services under the following terms and conditions:

1. The District agrees to compensate the BHA in the amount of \$35,280.00.
2. The BHA agrees to provide the following services:
 - Waive admission fees for all District students and their sponsors on school-sponsored field trips, club activity, or individual visits to the Stillman House Museum, the Heritage Museum & Preservation Center, the Historic Brownsville Museum, the Old City Cemetery Center, Market Square Research Center, the Historic Alonso Building and the Laureles Ranch House.
 - Provide staff development activities through the Heritage Museum Resource Center and Historic Brownsville Museum in order to help District employees take maximum advantage of BHA services.
 - Provide field trip activities for students and faculty to local historic battlefield sites, the Old City Cemetery and other local sites of historical significance.
 - Make available for District use of any and all BHA physical facilities for various purposes.
 - Assist in the preparation of a unit of instruction relating to local history at schools or at the museums.

- Serve as resource specialists for faculty and student researchers in the District.
- Conduct class tours of all BHA facilities as scheduled by school personnel and the Museum staff.
- Provide films and other media educational materials for teacher use, if available.
- Assist KBSD TV in the production of historical and cultural programs.

This contract is for the period from January 1, 2026, to January 1, 2027.

Renewal of the contract will be contingent upon the following factors:

1. Availability of funds,
2. Educational benefits to students and staff, and
3. Modifications, if any, resulting from evaluation findings.

/Date:

Tara Putegnat, Executive Director
Brownsville Historical Association

/Date:

Daniela Lopez Valdez Board President
Brownsville Independent School District

/Date:

Minerva M. Peña, Board Secretary
Brownsville Independent School District

/Date:

Dr. Jesus H. Chavez, Superintendent
Brownsville Independent School District

December 5, 2025



Dear Ms. De la Cruz,

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the members of the Brownsville Historical Association (BHA), I would like to thank you and the administration for our established partnership over the years. Without the support of BISD our museums would not be able to sustain staff operations, nor would we be able to educate the public and the students of Brownsville on our rich local history.

Now, more than ever, we feel it is important for students and teachers to experience first-hand the history of Brownsville and enhance their knowledge of social studies through summer camps, walking tours and museum programs. Every year, we look forward to the opportunity to present to classrooms on campus in order to expand our outreach and we are happy to visit with teachers about these future prospects.

We are also delighted to attend school career days and host BISD meetings and art exhibits at our various locations. It is my hope that this coming year we host more school groups at our museums and plan educational programs with your staff.

Thank you for supporting our local history museums and historic sites. The opportunity for learning through our historical resources for the Brownsville Independent School District is here in the heart of downtown and we truly value our partnership. We look forward to renewing our Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for 2026 – please reach out to me should you need any additional information or if you would like to meet in person.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tara Putegnat". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Tara Putegnat
Executive Director

BISD Exhibits: 3

Trainings, Meetings, and Receptions: 12

BISD Summary of Attendance

BISD Free Visitor Admission for 2024: 209

Outreach Events: 592

Tours/Fieldtrips: 85

BISD OUTREACH, TOURS, EVENTS, AND MEETINGS HOSTED AT BHA LOCATIONS:

February 11, 2025	BISD Math Dept. Sharon Wells Training	Historic Brownsville Museum
April 6 – 27, 2025	BISD Autism Awareness Exhibit Contact: Michael Garcia and Marivel Graham)	Historic Brownsville Museum (Point of
April 5, 2025	BISD Autism Awareness Reception (Approximately 80 Students and Parents)	Historic Brownsville Museum
April 11, 2025	Youth in Philanthropy Visit (20 students)	Costumes of the Americas Museums & HBM
May 3-24, 2025	BISD Elementary Art Competition Contact: Michael Garcia and Marivel Graham)	Historic Brownsville Museum (Point of
May 3, 2025	BISD Elementary Art Competition Reception (Approximately 150 Students and Parents)	Historic Brownsville Museum
May 9, 2025	Veterans ECHS & 4 Teacher	Historic Brownsville Museum (14 Students
May 20, 2025	Breeden Elementary (15 students 2 teachers)	Costumes of the Americas Museum & HBM
August 30, 2025	Stillman Middle school Photoshoot	Stillman House Museum
September 11, 2025	Simon Celaya Children's Gallery Opening Student presentation from Putegnat Elementary (Aprox. 150 in attendance)	Historic Brownsville Museum

October 22, 2025	BISD Advanced Academics	Alonso Building (Point of Contact: Christina Castro)
October 22 -23, 2025	BISD Math Dept. Sharon Wells Training	Historic Brownsville Museum (Point of Contact: Sally Legault)
November 1-29, 2025	BISD Día De Los Muertos Art Exhibit Contact: Roxana P. Cantu and Marivel Graham)	Historic Brownsville Museum (Point of
November 1, 2025 (Approximately 90)	Opening Reception Día De Los Muertos	Historic Brownsville Museum
November 11, 2025	Coffee with Superintendent	