

**Belton Independent School District**  
**Board of Trustee Meeting Agenda Item**

**October 20, 2025**

**Item:** Recognitions

**Contact Person:** Christine Parks

**Presented for:**  Action  Report Only

**Supporting Documents:**  None  Attached  Provided Later

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**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 – Hubbard Branch Elementary School**

This evening, the pledges were led by Hubbard Branch Elementary students Logan Anderson and Sophia Ladof.

Logan is a first grader who loves math and science—especially since his mom is a mathematician and he enjoys working with technology. Outside of school, you'll often find him playing football, video games, or baseball. His friends describe him as playful and full of energy.

Sophia, a third grader, says math is her favorite subject because she likes working with numbers and wants to be confident managing money when she's older. When she's not at school, she enjoys playing with her sister and their cats. Her friends would describe her as kind and a little bit silly.

**Student Showcase – Lake Belton High School Floral Design**

Tonight, we're highlighting the creativity and skill of Lake Belton High School's Floral Design students—where art meets industry.

In these courses, students learn design principles, color theory and floral techniques—from simple bud vases to elaborate wedding and memorial pieces. Beyond the classroom, they explore the business side of the floral industry, gaining real-world skills in customer service, sales and event preparation.

Belton ISD offers Floral Design, Advanced Floral Design and Practicum in Floral Design. Advanced students design for campus and community events, while practicum students manage orders, deliveries and a flower subscription service for staff—operating much like a real floral shop.

Last year, more than 200 students earned Texas State Florists' Association certification, showcasing their creativity and career-ready skills.

### **Special Olympics Bocce Ball**

The Board is proud to recognize the outstanding accomplishments of the Belton Champion Special Olympics Team. On Saturday, September 27, the team competed in the Area 12 Bocce Competition in Waco—and their hard work paid off in a big way. After weeks of dedicated practice, the Champions brought home six gold, three silver and two bronze medals.

This achievement reflects not only the athletes' perseverance and teamwork but also the support of their coaches and sponsors, Lauren Marx, Misty Norwood and Donna Shriner, along with the many teachers, parents and staff who cheer them on every step of the way.

The Belton Champions will return to competition on Friday, October 24 for the Area 12 Bowling Competition at Fort Hood. Congratulations to our athletes and coaches for representing Belton ISD with excellence and pride.

### **Advanced Placement (AP) Scholars**

Belton ISD is proud to recognize 248 high school students that were named Advanced Placement (AP) Scholars by the College Board for their outstanding performance on AP exams taken last spring.

AP courses challenge students with college-level learning while building perseverance and critical thinking—key competencies in Belton ISD's Journey of a Graduate.

This year, 128 students earned the title of AP Scholar, 44 achieved AP Scholar with Honor and 76 were recognized as AP Scholars with Distinction.

Students who achieve an average score of at least 3.25 on all AP exams taken, along with scores of 3 or higher on four or more exams, earn the title of AP Scholar with Honor. In

Belton ISD, this distinction was awarded to 44 students—2 from Belton New Tech @Waskow, 17 from Belton High School and 25 from Lake Belton High School.

The district is honored to celebrate these students and their teachers for this remarkable academic achievement.

### **BigFuture Merit Award Recipients**

Belton ISD is proud to recognize students from Belton High School, Lake Belton High School and Belton New Tech High School @Waskow who have been honored through the College Board's BigFuture Merit Awards for their outstanding academic achievements.

These awards celebrate students who have demonstrated exceptional academic success in the classroom and on College Board assessments, connecting them with colleges and scholarship opportunities across the country.

This year, 163 Belton ISD students earned this distinction. Belton High School recognized 63 students, including 9 first-generation honorees and 54 for school achievement. Belton New Tech High School @Waskow celebrated 21 students, including 3 first-generation honorees and 18 for school achievement. Lake Belton High School recognized 79 students, including 11 first-generation honorees and 68 for school achievement.

Belton ISD congratulates these students for their hard work, determination and academic excellence—shining examples of the Journey of a Graduate in action.

### **National Merit Scholars**

Belton ISD is proud to recognize four outstanding students for their achievements in the 2025 National Merit Scholarship Program.

Belton High School seniors Anahitaa Malhotra and Katherine Nickerson have been recognized as National Merit Commended Scholars for their exceptional academic promise, ranking among the top 50,000 students nationwide.

Lake Belton High School seniors Dhruv Bhat and Alex Yuen have been named National Merit Semifinalists—an honor that places them among the top one percent of high school seniors nationwide. As semifinalists, they are now eligible to continue in the competition for two of approximately 7,500 National Merit Scholarships worth nearly \$30 million.

The district is proud to celebrate these remarkable students for their outstanding academic achievement and representation of Belton ISD at the national level.

### **The Journey of a Graduate Milestones Award**

Belton ISD is proud to introduce the Journey of a Graduate Milestones Award, a new recognition honoring middle school students who exemplify the district's core competencies—communication, collaboration, perseverance, adaptability, empathy and critical thinking.

One student from each middle school campus will be recognized for demonstrating growth and leadership in action.

Tonight, we are honored to recognize our first recipient, John Hodges, an eighth grader at Lake Belton Middle School, nominated by Sydney McAfee, a sixth-grade English Language Arts teacher and National Junior Honor Society sponsor, for his exceptional communication and collaboration skills.

Since seventh grade, John has volunteered at nearly every home volleyball and basketball game, working the concession stand with enthusiasm and professionalism. He's known for greeting customers with a smile, coordinating with other volunteers and stepping in wherever help is needed—even with the not-so-glamorous jobs.

John's positivity, teamwork, and servant leadership embody the spirit of the Journey of a Graduate and remind us that leadership often begins with a willingness to serve.

### **Purple Star Campus Designations**

Belton ISD is proud to recognize three new campuses that have earned the Purple Star Campus Designation from the Texas Education Agency: Chisholm Trail Elementary, High Point Elementary and Lake Belton Middle School.

This honor recognizes schools that go above and beyond to support military-connected students and families. With nearly 30 percent of Belton ISD's students identified as military-connected, these campuses demonstrate the district's strong commitment to creating welcoming, supportive environments for all learners.

These schools join Lakewood Elementary, Southwest Elementary, Belton Middle School and Belton High School, bringing Belton ISD's total to seven Purple Star campuses across the district—a proud reflection of the Big Red Community's continued dedication to serving those who serve our nation.

### **Temple Rotary Educator of the Month**

Belton ISD is proud to recognize Ashley Miers as the Temple Rotary Club's Educator of the Month for September for her outstanding service to students in the Delta 18+ Program.

Now in her ninth year in education and second with Delta, Ashley brings passion and heart to her work every day. While raising her children, she served as a paraprofessional at Belton High School and earned her degree and special education certification from the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor.

Delta Principal Tammie Baggerly describes her as an exceptional educator who fosters independence, creates meaningful learning experiences, and builds strong connections with families. A three-time Big Red Heart Award recipient, Ashley exemplifies dedication and excellence in serving Belton ISD students.

### **Belton Rotary Educator of the Quarter**

Ms. Melissa Johnson is being recognized by the Belton Rotary Club as the Rotary Educator of the Quarter for her outstanding service to Belton ISD. She serves as a kindergarten teacher at Southwest Elementary School and is in her eighth year in education, including two years at Southwest.

Southwest Elementary Principal Felicia Gibson shared, “Ms. Johnson is an incredible asset to our school, consistently demonstrating a passion for teaching and a deep commitment to student success. She creates a classroom environment where every student feels seen, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. Her innovative teaching methods and tireless dedication make a difference in the lives of our students every day.”

### **Department Showcase - Principals Month**

Each October, we join schools across the country in celebrating National Principals Month—a time to recognize the incredible leaders who make such a difference on our campuses every single day.

Our principals set the tone for learning, build strong relationships, and work tirelessly to support students, staff and families. Their leadership and heart shine through in everything they do—from morning greetings to late-night events.

We’re proud to recognize our Belton ISD principals: Sheila Surovik, Cheyenne Babb, Ashlie Thomas, Sydnie Sewell, Courtney Brewer, Lexie Newberry, Holly Griffith, Amber Ross, Rebecca Vaughn, Felicia Gibson, Debi Younger, Brooke Itz, Megan Crook, Rachel Ramirez, Dominic White, Akeiah Cipolla, Claudia Knox, Steele Hantgin, Dr. Kimberly Winters, Tammie Baggerly and William Yuengel.

Their dedication and passion make a lasting impact across our district. Tonight, and throughout the year, we say thank you for leading with vision, compassion and that unmistakable Big Red pride.

## **Community Partner Recognition – Lena Armstrong Public Library and the Friends of the Belton Public Library**

We are excited to celebrate the Lena Armstrong Public Library and the Friends of the Belton Public Library as this month's Community Partner recipients.

In honor of Belton Children's Book Week, happening November 3–7, these partners are bringing our Big Red Community together through The Big Red Read — a shared reading experience featuring *Stuart Little* by E.B. White.

Thanks to their coordination and generosity, each Belton ISD elementary campus has received 20 copies of the book, giving students the opportunity to fully participate in this community-wide celebration of literacy.

This partnership reflects the power of community support in fostering a love of reading and learning across Belton ISD. We are grateful to the Lena Armstrong Public Library and the Friends of the Belton Public Library for their dedication to our students and schools.

### **Fiscal Implications:**

None.

### **Administrative Recommendation(s):**

None.