

# Belton Independent School District

## Board Meeting Minutes

Regular Board Meeting, January 27, 2025 - 6:15 p.m.

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

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### Board Members Present:

Manuel Alcozer  
Chris Flor  
Erin Bass  
Janet Leigh  
Suzanne McDonald  
Jeff Norwood  
Rucker Preston

### 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 6:24 pm. 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 – Chisholm Trail Elementary School**

The evening's pledges were led by Chisholm Trail Elementary fourth-graders Colin Flanigan and Tatum Strickland.

#### **Student Showcase – Sparta Stars Dance Team**

The evening's student showcase was the Sparta Stars Dance Team. Established in 2022, the team currently consists of approximately 40 dancers. Last year, they competed at the American Dance Team Central Texas Classic at Belton High School, where they earned a Division 1 Championship. The Sparta Stars are led by Director Jenn Hoelscher, with support from Assistant Directors Kelly Rhodes and Christina Guerra.

#### **Esports State Championship Finalists**

Belton High School and Lake Belton High School Esports teams competed in the State Championship Finals. The Vanta Esports Fall 2025 Championship, hosted by Baylor University, featured competition among over 60 teams statewide.

BHS students Penn Baldrige, Marcel Byrd, Javonni Haggins-Fore, Aaron Lancaster, and Owen Pierce represented their school in Fortnite. LBHS students Noah Brown, Skylar Cross, Elijah McQueen, Shawn Scholten, Lincoln Southworth, and Anthony Tran competed in Overwatch 2, while Rylan Parr and Gabriel Vacula participated in Super Smash Bros.

The BHS team is coached by Scott Adams, Shawndra Elliott, and School Resource Officer Jacob Schmille, while the LBHS team is led by Coach Kristie Shepherd.

#### **Texas Musical Educators Association All-State Orchestra**

The Board celebrated Lake Belton High School junior Emily Jeong on being selected for the TMEA All-State Orchestra! This marks her third consecutive year as an All-State musician. Her instructor is Jenna Burchell.

### **Presentation of Child Safety Fees from the City of Belton**

The Board welcomed Belton Mayor David K. Leigh for presenting Belton ISD with the city's allocation from the County Tax Assessor's collections. In Bell County, \$1.50 from each vehicle registration is designated to support child safety initiatives. The City of Belton has a longstanding tradition of contributing its annual allocation to Belton ISD to support our crossing guards program. This year, the District received \$25,869.73.

### **New Administrator Introductions**

Akeiah Cipolla was named the principal of South Belton Middle School. With nearly 13 years of experience in education, Cipolla has been serving as the interim principal since December 2024. Prior to that, she served as the assistant principal of the campus since May 2020. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature and Culture from Ellis University in Chicago, Illinois, and a Master of Arts in Educational Administration from San Angelo State University.

### **Community Partner Recognition - Belton ISD PTA/PTO Organizations**

The Board of Trustees celebrated the Belton ISD PTA Organizations as January's Community Partner Recognition. Their unwavering support, dedication, and countless volunteer hours make a meaningful impact on our students, staff, and schools. Additionally, they partner with us by participating in valuable listening sessions with Dr. Golden, helping to shape and support the future of Belton ISD.

### **School Board Appreciation Month**

The Big Red Community celebrated the Belton ISD's Board of Trustees all January for School Board Recognition Month. These dedicated volunteers are passionate advocates for public education, serving our students, staff, and taxpayers with a commitment to Belton ISD's mission. They bring vision and leadership, bridging the community and the classroom to create exceptional learning experiences for each and every student in our district.

### **Belton ISD's School Board members include:**

Manuel Alcozer, President (Area 5) – serving since 2018  
Chris Flor, Vice President (Area 4) – serving since 2018  
Erin Bass, Secretary (Area 2) – serving since 2021  
Janet Leigh, Trustee (At-Large) – serving since 2017  
Suzanne M. McDonald, Trustee (Area 3) – serving since 2013  
Jeff Norwood, Trustee (Area 1) – serving since 2016  
Rucker Preston, Trustee (At-Large) – serving since 2023

### **3. Public Comments Regarding Items on the Agenda**

None.

### **4. Reports**

#### **A. Mid-Year Goals & Key Progress Measures Report**

Dr. Michael Morgan, Deputy Superintendent, introduced this report informing the Board that

leaders closest to the work will provide a report on each goal and highlighting the progress made toward each Key Progress Measure (KPM).

Christine Parks, Chief Communications Officer, provided an update on Goal 1, Gabi Nino, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning, provided an update on Goal 2, Todd Schiller, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, provided an update on Goal 3, Dr. Morgan provided an update on Goal 4, and Melissa Lafferty, Chief Financial Officer, provided an update on Goal 5. To date, all Goals are in progress and nearing completion.

**B. Academic Progress Report**

Gabi Nino, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning, provided a report on Mathematics interim testing data in relation to STAAR testing data. Mr. Chris Flor highlighted marked improvements at the 4th grade level, and inquired about the variations in results at the 7th grade level. Ms. Nino explained that the data reflects only the students that test in on-level math. In 7th grade, students are able to take either on-level or advanced math. Those taking advanced math are not included in the presented data.

**C. PEIMS & CCMR Audit Report**

Shad McGaha, Chief Technology Officer, provided a follow up report on the findings of a review conducted on Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) and College, Career and Military Readiness (CCMR) and the response plans in place.

**D. Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Malinda Golden shared highlights from across the District tied to the Belton ISD Vision and the exceptional learning experience. The highlights included: Night of Champions Basketball, advanced science courses, examples of continuous improvement from across the District, professional development, robotics competitions, military ambassador training, and 8th grade career day. Dr. Golden expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to share these experiences with the Board.

**E. Board Highlights**

Mr. Flor led the discussion sharing about the 8th grade career day at the Cadence Bank Center in partnership with Central Texas Workforce Solutions. Nearly 2,000 BISD 8th grades interacted with future employers as part of the future goal of career readiness. Ms. Janet Leigh shared appreciation to the Belton Chamber of Commerce for hosting their annual event. Mr. Rucker Preston shared experiences at a wrestling event, BHS staff lounge reveal, the Faith-based leaders meeting, and an elementary school spelling bee. Mr. Preston expressed his gratitude for Project Heartbeat and all of the support they provide BISD students & families.

**5. Consent Agenda: Consider and Take Appropriate Action**

- A. Minutes of Previous Meetings:
  - 1. December 16, 2024 Workshop Meeting
  - 2. December 16, 2024 Regular Meeting
- B. Unaudited Financial Report for the Month Ending December 31, 2024
- C. Gifts, Grants, and Bequests
- D. Budget Amendment #4 for 2024-2025
- E. Expenditures over \$50,000

1. SHI Government Solutions for Video Surveillance Cameras for New Additions at Southwest Elementary School, Lake Belton Middle School, and Belton High School
  2. Renewal of CDW Government Inc. for Google Workspace for Education Plus
- F. Supply, Equipment, and Service Bids
1. RFP #2411-350-379 - Custodial Supplies
  2. RFP #2412-100-378 - Sale of Property, Miller Heights Elementary School
- G. Agreement with Mantis Innovation for the Procurement of Electricity Services
- H. Interlocal Agreement with Region 10 Multi-Region Purchasing Cooperative
- I. Contract with Bell County Office of Elections Administration for Election Services for the May 3, 2025 Trustee Election
- J. Resolution Concerning Payments to District Employees During Emergency Closure Due to Inclement Weather and Reduction in Educator Required Days of Service
- K. Texas Association of School Board's Initiated Localized Policy Update 123 - 2nd Reading
1. CQC(LOCAL): Technology Resources - Equipment

Suzanne McDonald made a motion, seconded by Jeff Norwood, to approve the consent agenda as presented. Janet Leigh abstained. The motion passed, 6-0-1.

#### **6. Board Requests for New Information and/or Reports**

None.

#### **7. Public Comments Regarding Non-Agenda Items**

Brad Thomas - Staffing/Budget

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

The Board did not convene in closed session.

- 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 did not convene in closed session.

#### **10. Adjourn**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

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Manuel Alcozer, Board President

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Erin Bass, Secretary