

Belton Independent School District
Board of Trustee Meeting Agenda Item
February 24, 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 – Alice J. Tarver Elementary School

This evening, the pledges were led by Alice J. Tarver Elementary students Ava Amenyedor and Adrian Vinod.

Fifth-grader Ava loves English Language Arts and Reading because she enjoys diving into books. She has a passion for drawing and writing poems, stories, and anything that sparks her imagination. Her friends describe her as kind, helpful, outgoing, persistent, and funny.

Second-grader Adrian has a passion for science, enjoying both discovering new things and conducting experiments. He loves playing video games and spending time with friends in his neighborhood. Adrian is also an avid reader, especially enjoying graphic novels. Recently, he won Tarver's spelling bee, outperforming students up to 5th grade. This victory gives him the opportunity to qualify to represent Tarver and our district at regionals this spring.

Student Showcase – High School VEX Robotics

Tonight's showcase highlights Robotics at Belton, Lake Belton, and Belton New Tech @Waskow. VEX competitions inspire STEM learning and career interest.

Belton ISD hosted four regional events, with nine teams earning top awards. Lake Belton won the *Dragons Den Challenge*, sent three teams to 5A UIL State, and secured a Region 4 spot. Belton New Tech @Waskow won *Excellence* and *Innovation* awards, with teams advancing in 3A UIL State.

These achievements showcase the impact of robotics in Belton ISD! They are led by instructors Andrew Berg, Pietro Giustino, Jessica Persilver and Stephen Tysor.

National Football Foundation National Academic Excellence Award Finalist

Congratulations to the Lake Belton High School Broncos varsity football team for being named a finalist for the National Football Foundation National Academic Excellence Award for the fourth consecutive year—one of only seven 5A schools to earn this honor. This award recognizes high school football teams that excel academically, requiring a minimum cumulative team GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.

Representing the Broncos are team captains Jeremiah Battreall, Zach Dodd, Aisea Filtonga, Brett Harmon, Josh Mallard, Tekoa Martin, Eli Mascarenas, and Garrett Roland. The team is led by head coach Brian Cope.

Texas Thespians National Qualifiers

Congratulations to the Belton High School Theatre Department for having Texas Thespians National Qualifiers! Under the leadership of their instructor Melissa Stuhff, while national qualifiers do not compete at nationals, they have achieved the highest designation at the state level.

Audrena Ativalu, Jojo Fogle, and Ava Novak qualified in Group Musical Theatre. Gabriel Rodriguez and Matthew Farwell qualified in Duet Acting, while Archer Whitt, Evie Morrow, and Ada Hall earned recognition in Group Acting. Samantha Doud excelled in Costume Design, and Matthew Farwell placed second in the Democracy Works Essay competition. He also received a commendation for his essay, *The Impact of Arts*, which he presented at the festival.

Congratulations to all on this outstanding achievement!

Texas Music Educators Association All-State Band

Belton ISD is proud to celebrate its Texas Music Educators Association (TMEA) All-State Band members. Students earn this prestigious recognition through a rigorous two-round

audition process, beginning with the region audition and advancing to the area audition. The highest-ranked students at the area level are named All-State musicians.

From the Belton High School Band, Pablo Ureste was selected as a TMEA All-State Jazz musician for the second consecutive year. This year, he achieved 1st Chair in the entire state of Texas on tenor trombone—an incredible accomplishment.

From the Lake Belton High School Band, Adam Namkung earned a place in the TMEA All-State 5A Band. He placed 1st chair at the regional level and 2nd chair at the area level to secure this honor.

Their instructors, Kevin Kwaku and Bobby Yerigan, have played a vital role in their success. Congratulations to these outstanding musicians!

Texas Music Educators Association All-State Choir

Belton ISD is proud to celebrate three students selected for the Texas Music Educators Association (TMEA) All-State Choir. This rigorous process begins in the summer before the school year, with progressively challenging auditions leading to the highest level of vocal achievement in high school.

From the Belton High School Choir, senior Ava Novak placed 3rd chair in the state and will perform with the TMEA All-State Mixed Choir—an honor awarded to only 220 out of 70,000 singers who begin the process. Junior Canaan Hammonds placed 5th chair in the state and is the first alternate for the All-State Tenor/Bass Choir.

From the Lake Belton High School Choir, senior Ethan Smith earned a spot in the Large School All-State Choir for the second consecutive year. This places him among the top 3.75% of all choir participants in Texas, out of 16,000 competitors and 600 state finalists. His achievement continues LBHS's four-year streak of having an All-State Choir member since the school opened in 2020.

Congratulations to these talented students for representing Belton ISD with excellence! Their instructors are Terrance Livingston, Tonya Lovorn, and Charlotte Wurman.

Texas High School Coaches Association Academic All-State Football

Belton ISD is celebrating 33 student-athletes who were named to the Texas High School Coaches Association Academic All-State teams. 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 seven honorees from BHS are Ashton Spillers (First Team); Tristan Hernandez, Logan Lamberte, Collin Sallee, Kegan Sherwood, Collin Taylor and Damien Tiumalu (Second Team). Their coach is Brett Sniffin.

Lake Belton High School:

The 26 honorees from LBHS are Zach Dodd, Hunter Hutchins and Tommy Stephens (First Team); Ty Green, Brett Harmon, Hastin Kelly, Kamryn Lemus, Natalie Myers, Austin Robello, Garrett Roland, Chance Scott and Diego Velazquez (Second Team); Shelby Beck, Bryce Davis, Aisea Filitonga, Travellis Harrison, Brandon Holley, Brayden Jarosek, Damil Khan, Tate Lisenbe, Caleb Loper, Tekoa Martin, Eli Mascarenas, Tucker Schwartz, Brianna Sutterfield and Tyrrence Taylor (Honorable Mention). Their coach is Brian Cope.

UIL Cheerleading State Finalist

Congratulations to the Lake Belton High School Cheer Team for competing in the finals at the UIL Spirit State Cheerleading Competition last month in Fort Worth!

The team secured a spot in the 5A-D1 Division finals, finishing 18th in the state—a remarkable achievement. Their dedication, hard work, and school spirit make us incredibly proud. LBHS Cheer is led by Coach Laura Bulls. Great job, Broncos!

Temple Rotary Educator of the Month

Yanitza Arroyo Sifuentes has been honored by the Temple Rotary Club as the Rotary Educator of the Month for January in recognition of her exceptional dedication to Belton ISD. She currently serves as a dual language teacher at Charter Oak Elementary School and is in her ninth year in education, with four of those years spent in Belton ISD.

Veronica Champion Laras, dual language coordinator, shared high praise for Mrs. Arroyo Sifuentes, stating:

"Yanitza is a passionate advocate for her bilingual students. She leads with dedication, striving to ensure equity for every student in her classroom. She fosters a culture of value, support, and growth while continuously seeking opportunities to enhance instruction. Through collaboration across the district, she enriches her teaching to provide the best possible learning experience for all."

Belton Rotary Educator of the Quarter

Rose Morales has been honored by the Belton Rotary Club as the Rotary Educator of the Quarter for February in recognition of her exceptional dedication to Belton ISD. She

currently teaches first grade at Leon Heights Elementary and is in her 23rd year in education, with 22 of those years spent serving in Belton ISD.

Lexie Newberry, Principal of Leon Heights Elementary, shared her admiration for Mrs. Morales, stating:

"Mrs. Morales is an exceptionally gifted educator. She inspires students to think critically, fosters a classroom environment where they feel confident taking risks, and encourages collaboration in learning. Her lessons are thoughtfully designed to meet students' needs, making learning both engaging and hands-on. The energy in her classroom is so inviting that once you step out, you immediately want to go back in. A lifelong learner, she continuously seeks opportunities to challenge both herself and her students."

Department Showcase - Career & Technical Education

This evening for the department showcase, we are proud to celebrate the impact of Belton ISD Career and Technical Education (CTE), a key part of our Career Readiness Department alongside Advanced Academics and JROTC. Through hands-on learning, CTE prepares students for high-wage, high-demand careers with industry skills and certifications.

This past year, 817 students earned nearly 1,000 certifications, showcasing CTE's success. Recognized as a CTE District of Distinction, BISD ranks among the state's top programs, thanks to our dedicated educators, students, and industry partners.

We're proud of our BISD CTE team for inspiring career exploration and shaping students' futures. Denise Ayres leads the department as Director of PK-12 Career Readiness.

Community Partner Recognition - Meta, Temple Data Center

This month, we are proud to celebrate our partnership with Meta Temple Data Center, whose generous investment has significantly impacted Belton ISD. Representing Meta tonight are Holli Davies, Community Development Manager, and Derek Drawhorn, Temple Data Center Director.

Thanks to Meta's \$10,000 investment last year, our robotics programs have expanded across Belton ISD, enhancing STEM learning opportunities. What began as a goal to grow robotics experiences has flourished into competition fields at every middle and high school. Our students now host events, compete year-round, and have advanced from local to national competitions.

Fiscal Implications:

None.

Administrative Recommendation(s):

None.