

Belton Independent School District

Board Meeting Minutes

Regular Board Meeting, April 21, 2025 - 6:15 p.m.

Belton High School, 600 Lake Road, 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 6:24 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.

Recognitions

Student Pledges – Sparta Elementary School

The evening's pledges were led by Sparta Elementary second graders Hadley Parsons and Landry Smith.

Student Showcase – Tiger Media

The evening's showcase was the upgraded Tiger Media spaces—made possible by the 2022 Bond. These enhancements include a modern classroom, dedicated photo and video studios and a BenQ interactive display to elevate instruction and creativity. The program is led by Mark Fitzwater and Alyssa Vargas-Leon.

Texas High School Coaches Association Academic All-State Basketball Qualifiers

The Board celebrated eight student-athletes who have been named to the Texas High School Coaches Association Academic All-State basketball teams.

From Belton High School basketball, Hudson Belobrajdic, Jason Green and David Shelburne were named to the Second Team. They are coached by Phil McCaslin.

From Belton High School girls basketball, Tyler Waldrep was named to the First Team and Gabriella Heltness received Honorable Mention. They are coached by Anne Marie Zuilhof.

Representing the Lake Belton High School boys basketball team, Hunter Hutchins was named to the First Team and Nelson Hayes received Honorable Mention. They are coached by Zane Johnston. From Lake Belton High School girls basketball, Natalie Maldonado was named to the Second Team. She is coached by Tiffney Barnes.

Texas High School Coaches Association Academic All-State Wrestling Qualifiers

The Board celebrated four student-athletes with Academic All-State honors in wrestling by the Texas High School Coaches Association.

From Belton High School, Ty Wilt received an Honorable Mention. He is coached by Scott Clark.

Representing Lake Belton High School, Scarlett Williams was named to the Second Team, while Travellis Harrison and Caleb Ighomon received Honorable Mentions. They are coached by Kevin Grimm.

Swimming State Qualifiers

Belton ISD congratulated ten swimmers who qualified for state competition, with students earning placements in a range of events including the 200, 400, and 500 meter relays and freestyle races.

Belton High School's state qualifiers are Olivia Brillhart, Mackenzie Gingerich, Liliana Nelson, Addison Richardson, and Ema Whitzel, coached by Chris Knipp.

Lake Belton High School's qualifiers include Gwen Clark, Christine Kim, Brooke Phillips, Elizabeth Simeroff, and David Stewart. They are coached by Natalia Hazlewood.

Powerlifting State Qualifiers

The Board recognized nine student-athletes named powerlifting state qualifiers. From Belton High School they are Byonka Donaldson, Melissa Farmer, Lauren Seidel and Kennedy Weston. They are coached by Barry Campbell.

Lake Belton High School qualifiers are Aleyna Castor, Scarlytt Cotham, Brett Harmon, Jaya Lisenbe and Christian Morales. Their coaches are Ryan Grave and Greg Rudolph.

Daughters of the American Revolution, Betty Martin Chapter Essay State Winner

Belton ISD proudly shared that Ojun Ogwudu, a 7th grader at Belton Middle School, won first place in the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) American History Essay Contest—marking the first state-level win in the history of the Betty Martin Chapter!

Ojun's essay on the Edenton Tea Party stood out among entries from across Texas. She was recently honored at the DAR State Conference, where it was also announced that her essay won first place at the divisional level and is now advancing to the national competition.

Ojun was supported in this achievement by her history teacher, Nick Graham, and BMS instructional coach Kat Knox, who helped facilitate this opportunity.

National History Day State Qualifiers

Belton ISD recognized 41 students who represented the district at this year's State History Fair at the Bob Bullock Museum and the University of Texas at Austin—our second-largest group to date.

Students conducted in-depth primary source research and presented their findings through documentaries, exhibits, performances, websites, or papers.

We're especially excited to share that three projects from Lake Belton Middle School are advancing to the National History Day competition in June in Washington, D.C. and the University of Maryland. These outstanding projects explored topics such as HIPAA and patient rights, ethical dilemmas during the Manhattan Project, and how Betty Crocker cookbooks reflected evolving women's rights.

Congratulations to these students, their families, and their dedicated sponsors, Paige Hooten and Deb Hosch, for this incredible achievement!

Texas Association of Student Councils Top Video Winners

Belton High School Student Council was named a Top Video Winner at the Texas Association of Student Councils Annual Conference! Only ten high schools and five middle-level councils across the state received this prestigious recognition.

TASC is the largest student council association in the world, and the honored videos represent the very best submissions from across Texas. Belton High School's winning entry, "Big Red Traditions: Burning of the B," showcased the spirit and pride of their campus community.

Special thanks to sponsor Danielle Conner for her leadership and support!

Business Professionals of America State Qualifiers

The Workplace Skill Assessment Program (WSAP) prepares students to succeed and assesses real-world business skills and problem-solving abilities in finance, management, IT, and computer applications. It is the Business Professionals of America's showcase program, allowing students to demonstrate their career-readiness at regional, state, and national conferences across more than 90 competitive events.

Belton ISD proudly recognized the students and staff who have advanced to the state level in 24 categories. The program is led by Amanda Simpson and Megan Shick.

- Administrative Support Team
- Advanced Spreadsheet Applications
- Banking & Finance
- Financial Analyst Team
- Health Research Presentation
- Payroll Accounting
- Personal Financial Management
- Fundamental Spreadsheet Applications
- Database Applications
- Business Law & Ethics
- Computer Security
- C++ Computer Programming
- Java Computer Programming
- SQL Database
- Linux OS Fundamentals
- Python Programming
- Fundamentals of Web Design
- Computer Modeling
- Small Business Management
- Prepared Speech
- Individual Presentation
- Medical Coding
- Health Administration Procedures
- Health Research Presentation

Technology Student Association State Qualifiers

The Technology Student Association (TSA) is a national non-profit career and technical student organization (CTSO) for middle and high school students engaged in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

Belton ISD proudly recognized our students and staff who have advanced to the state level in 10 categories. The program is led by Pietro Giustino and Jessica Persilver.

- Audio Podcasting
- Architecture
- Children's Stories

- Coding
- Future Technology & Engineering Teacher
- Robotics
- Systems Control Technology
- Technology Bowl
- Music Production
- Architectural Design

VEX Robotics State Qualifiers

Belton ISD proudly celebrated exceptional students and staff who advanced to the state level in the VEX Robotics competition in both UAVs (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles – Drones) and Robotics. 7 students qualified for the World Championships that will be held May 6-14, at the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center in Dallas. They are led by Jessica Persilver and Steve Tysor.

Temple Rotary Educator of the Month

Christina Botha is being recognized by the Temple Rotary Club as the Rotary Educator of the Month for March for her outstanding service to Belton ISD. Christina serves as a 3rd grade English Language Arts teacher at Tarver Elementary School. She is in her 11th year in education, 4th year at Tarver Elementary.

2024-2025 Bilingual Leader Cohort - Bilingual Champions

This year, Belton ISD launched the Bilingual Champions Leadership Cohort, a district-wide initiative representing Pre-K through 5th grade teachers. Participation in this intense learning cohort was through a voluntary application process. Participants volunteered their time in the evenings and on weekends to invest in learning! The program empowered these bilingual educators to grow as leaders in pursuit of excellence in bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism. Through targeted leadership learning, cohort members strengthened their skills using practical tools and research-based knowledge in highly effective strategies to support the linguistic, academic, social, and cultural needs of dual language students. The goals of this cohort include an investment in both student and staff success as well as program sustainability. The inaugural Bilingual Champions are Sonia Aleman, Rosangelica Reyes, Angie Cruz, Rocio Reyes, Marcia Pinto-Reis, Maribel Velez, Sylvia Morales, and Gloria Rafael-Tovar.

Department Showcase - Student Services

The department showcase highlighted the incredible work of BISD Student Services, under the leadership of Assistant Superintendent of Operations, Dr. Cassandra Spearman.

This dedicated team plays a vital role in district operations—managing student transfers, records requests, attendance intervention and training, and supporting campus administrators. They also oversee the Student Code of Conduct Handbook, coordinate School Health Advisory Committee (SHAC) meetings, and lead essential training for administrative staff.

Community Partner Recognition - Texas Tour Gear

Belton ISD is proud to recognize our strong partnership with local business Texas Tour Gear. More than just a vendor, Texas Tour Gear consistently goes above and beyond to support the district's audio-visual needs with professionalism and care.

They play a key role in providing audio support for major district events—including board meetings and convocations—and we're especially grateful for their help facilitating today's offsite board meeting.

We are grateful for their ongoing partnership and commitment to the District.

3. Public Comments Regarding Items on the Agenda

None.

4. Action Items

A. Consider, Discuss, and Take Appropriate Action Regarding the Adoption of Instructional Materials for the 2025-2026 School Year

Dr. Malinda Golden, Superintendent of Schools, introduced Ms. Gabi Nino, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning, to provide a presentation on Instructional Materials Adoption. Ms. Nino shared that Belton ISD convened an Instructional Materials Review Committee composed of teachers, coaches, principals, and district leaders, evaluated all state-approved high-quality instructional materials for K-5 Reading and K-12 Math in digital and print formats. The committee assessed alignment with TEKS, research-based practices, and the Belton ISD framework, also gathering campus feedback. Input was also collected from district teachers via survey and from families and community members before recommendations were made.

The following State Board of Education approved High Quality Instructional Materials materials are recommended for adoption:

- K-5 Reading Language Arts: Texas myView Literacy - SAVVAS Learning Co. English/Spanish
- K-5 Mathematics: Bluebonnet Learning Elementary Math - Texas Education Agency

Erin Bass made a motion, seconded by Jeff Norwood, to approve the adoption of instructional materials for the 2025-2026 school year as presented. The motion passed unanimously (7-0).

5. Reports

A. Annual Board Training Credit Report

Mr. Manuel Alcozer reported that all Board members exceeded annual training requirements for the reporting period (May 1, 2024 through April 30, 2025). He thanked them for their service and countless volunteer hours, beyond training credits, they dedicate to the community, students and families. See attachment.

B. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Malinda Golden shared her experiences visiting campuses and attending events across the District tied to the Belton ISD Vision, Values and Beliefs, and Journey of a Graduate. Dr. Golden also spoke to State Accountability and the various contributing factors since 2019, including the States recalibration of ratings, that impacted District's overall rating. Belton ISD's scores have been shared with families.

D. Board Highlights

Suzanne McDonald led the conversation by sharing her experience at Southwest Elementary during Read Across America Week, her campus tour at Chisholm Trail and Sparta, as well as a groundbreaking at Family Promise. Rucker Preston spoke to the State of the City event for the City of Temple, advocating at the Capitol, and campus visits. Erin Bass shared about reading in classrooms, Spring Fling, and middle school track achievements. Chris Flor shared accolades on the achievements of our CTE students and teachers at the State level, UIL Fine Arts performances. Jeff Norwood spoke about the Reverse Job Fair and Special Olympics.

6. Consent Agenda: Consider and Take Appropriate Action

A. Minutes of Previous Meetings:

1. March 24, 2025 Workshop Meeting
2. March 24, 2025 Regular Meeting

B. Unaudited Financial Report for the Month Ending March 31, 2025

C. Gifts, Grants, and Bequests

D. Budget Amendment #7 for 2024-2025

E. Supply, Equipment, and Service Bids

1. RFP #2502-750-381 for Point-Of-Sale Software and Equipment

F. Administrator Contract Renewals and/or Extensions and Professional Contract Renewals for 2025-2026

G. Audit Engagement Letter for 2024-2025

H. Instructional Materials Allotment and TEKS Certification

I. Renewal of Regional Day School Program for the Deaf Shared Services Agreement

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

1. CAA(LOCAL) Fiscal Management Goals and Objectives: Financial Ethics

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

7. Board Requests for New Information and/or Reports

None.

8. Public Comments Regarding Non-Agenda Items

Kyle Pierce - Student Electronic Devices

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

The Board went into closed session at 7:54 p.m.

A. Student Disciplinary Matter - Texas Government Code, Section 551.082

B. Personnel - Texas Government Code, Section 551.074

1. Summative Evaluation of the Superintendent

C. Consultation with Attorney - Texas Government Code, Section 551.071

10. Reconvene in Open Session

The Board reconvened in Open Session at 8:53 p.m.

11. Adjourn

Adjourn: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

Manuel Alcozer, President

Erin Bass, Secretary