



Technology Department Report 2025

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on recent projects completed by the Technology Department, as well as insight into initiatives currently underway or planned for the near future.

District Computing Devices

The Technology Department currently supports more than 6,000 computing devices and approximately 1,000 other technology assets, including Promethean boards, printers, document cameras, networking equipment, keyless entry access systems, IP intercom, and surveillance systems.

We continue to see a reduction in classroom PC usage as campuses adopt mobile platforms: iPads in Pre-K–1st grade and Chromebooks in 2nd–8th grade. As of this year, all 2nd grade core-tested subjects have transitioned to Chromebooks. Over the next two school years, Pre-K and 1st grade will also move to touch-enabled Chromebooks as iPads reach end-of-life and funding becomes available.

Device Inventory Overview:

- HS Student Chromebooks – 1,200
- Chromebooks (all other campuses) – 3,600
- Student Laptop Cart Computers – 400
- Computer Lab Desktops – 60
- Food Service Desktops – 16
- Student & Teacher iPads – 1,100
- Teacher MacBook Airs – 450
- Promethean ActivPanels – 60

- Student Classroom Desktops – 15
- Library Desktops – 24
- Office/Nurse Desktops – 35

As part of ongoing cost efficiency efforts, we transitioned away from a high-cost Mobile Device Management (MDM) system to a more affordable alternative. The new system still provides essential features such as app deployment, device lock/recovery, and integration with Apple School Manager, while saving the district approximately \$27,000 in annual licensing fees.

2025–2026 School Year Technology Update

E-Rate Funding – Network Switch Replacement

Brownwood ISD's network switching infrastructure is approaching 10 years of service life. Many core switches are nearing end-of-life, raising concerns about reliability, manufacturer support, and compatibility with modern technologies.

These switches power critical systems, including:

- Wi-Fi access points
- Classroom instructional technology
- IP phones
- Security cameras
- Network-based door access controls

By seeking E-Rate funding, BISD can modernize this infrastructure with high-capacity switches that provide faster speeds, enhanced PoE++ support, and greater resiliency. This investment will improve connectivity, support instructional and safety systems, and prepare the district for future growth—while significantly reducing local budget impact through federal funding support.

Estimated Cost: \$250,000–\$280,000 (before E-Rate discount; BISD's historical discount rate is 80%).

Note: The E-Rate discount rate is calculated using the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) percentage combined with the district's urban/rural classification.

District Safety & Security

As part of the district's updated exterior key control plan, several additional locations have been identified for keyless entry access. Phase 1 will include installation of 20 new card readers with associated lock hardware. Additionally, we are migrating from an on-premises server to a cloud-based access control system, improving reliability, accessibility, and system management while reducing the risk of hardware failure.

Cybersecurity

In February 2024, BISD joined the Region Security Operations Center (RSOC) program in partnership with San Angelo State University. This initiative provides 24/7 real-time monitoring and Endpoint Detection & Response (EDR) through CrowdStrike to protect all BISD servers, staff Windows devices, and Mac computers.

Earlier this year, we also implemented a Network Detection & Response (NDR) solution (Darktrace) to monitor server and core network traffic, which is now fully integrated into the RSOC monitoring framework.

Current & Upcoming Projects

- Continued expansion of 1:1 Chromebook/iPad classroom sets and Promethean ActivPanel implementation in Pre-K–3rd grades.
- Replacement of traditional classroom projectors with large-format LCD displays.
- E-Rate Year 27 (2025–2026) network switch upgrades.
- Expansion of keyless access following completion of the district-wide re-core project.
- Preparation for large-scale staff computer replacement over the next 18 months as Windows 10 reaches end-of-life and many current PCs lack Windows 11 support.

Staffing Updates

- Cordon Gilchrist was hired as Campus Technician for Coggin Elementary.
- Jimmy Fisher Jr. relocated to Brownwood High School, where he teaches CTE classes in the mornings and serves as Campus Technician in the afternoons.

Closing

The Brownwood ISD Technology Department remains committed to supporting instruction, safety, and innovation across all campuses. By maintaining modern infrastructure, expanding access to classroom technology, and prioritizing security, we ensure staff and students have the resources necessary to thrive.

We welcome any questions, feedback, or suggestions as we continue moving forward.

Jimmy Fisher Sr

Director of Technology