

Belton Independent School District
Board of Trustee Meeting Agenda Item
September 15, 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 – Lakewood Elementary School

This evening, the pledges were led by Lakewood Elementary students Adriana Durham and Killian Rush.

Adriana is a first grader who loves recess, especially climbing up to sit on the monkey bars. When she's not at school, she enjoys spending time with her family and watching spooky shows. Her friends say she is nice, kind and respectful.

Killian is a fifth grader who says P.E. is his favorite subject because of all the fun activities. He's also a member of the Lakewood Running Club. Outside of school, Killian enjoys playing soccer and basketball. His best friend describes him as kind, funny, smart, athletic and just a good person!

Student Showcase – BHS Magic Belles

Tonight, we are proud to highlight the Belton High School Magic Belles dance team.

The Magic Belles are more than spirited performers—they balance academics with community service and involvement in groups like JROTC, HOSA, Student Council, Astra, and FCA, as well as church and dance studios.

This summer, they attended the Crowd Pleasers Dance Camp in Dallas–Fort Worth, earning the Fan Favorite Award, High Platinum ratings, and the Overall Technique Award. With football season underway, they're already preparing for spring competitions, including a historic trip to Orlando in February as the first team from this area to compete at the Dance Team Union Nationals.

Under the direction of Rachel Hill and assistant director McKenzie Urteaga, the team is led by Captain Payten McNeely and junior lieutenants Addison and McKenna Christopher.

Please join us in celebrating the Magic Belles for their talent, dedication and trailblazing spirit.

Math Stars National Finalists

We are proud to recognize five Belton ISD elementary students who have been named National Math Star Finalists—one of the nation's most selective math enrichment honors.

Congratulations to Elizabeth D'Arcy, Giuliana Durham, and Aayana Jain (Lakewood Elementary), Roger Wilson III (James L. Burrell Elementary) and Rosalinn "Rosie" Canto (Sparta Elementary) on this remarkable achievement.

From this outstanding group, Aayana and Rosie advanced even further to be named National Math Stars, joining just over 100 students nationwide selected this year.

The National Math Stars program is a rigorous 10-year initiative that provides up to \$100,000 in support through academic advising, tutoring, technology and enrichment opportunities to nurture long-term success in STEM fields.

This recognition reflects the talent and perseverance of these five students, the support of their families and the dedication of Belton ISD educators who are building strong math foundations for the future.

Please join us in celebrating these exceptional students and their incredible accomplishments!

Department Showcase - Fine Arts

This month's department showcase celebrates the vibrant world of Fine Arts in Belton ISD.

At the secondary level, more than 4,450 students are enrolled in Fine Arts programs, while every elementary student has the opportunity to express themselves through music and art. These experiences give students a creative outlet, build confidence and foster a lifelong appreciation for the arts.

Across 18 campuses, 80 inspiring Fine Arts educators bring art, music and performance to life each day. Their passion and expertise help students discover their talents, develop new skills and find joy in creative expression.

The department is guided by a small but mighty administrative team. Leadership and vision are provided by Keith Zuehlke, while Julie Utley ensures that programs remain strong, coordinated and impactful across the district.

We are grateful for the Fine Arts team's dedication to nurturing creativity, inspiring excellence and enriching the lives of each and every student in Belton ISD.

Community Partner – Lisa's Dance Connection

Since fall 2023, Melinda Kuntz of Lisa's Dance Connection has worked with the Magic Belles and LBHS Silver Spurs every other week on ballet technique. As the studio's lead ballet instructor—and mom to both a Magic Belle Officer and a Silver Spur Officer—she brings expertise and passion to her work with our students.

We are grateful to both Cara and Melinda for their dedication and the strong community partnerships that enrich fine arts in Belton ISD.

Community Partner – Pivot Performance Arts

Tonight, we are proud to recognize two community partners who are making a difference for Belton ISD Fine Arts students: Pivot Performance Arts and Lisa's Dance Connection.

Cara Janczak, owner of Pivot Performance Arts, has opened her studio to the Magic Belles for acro training and routine preparation, also providing access to a Marley floor as they get ready for the Dance Team Union Nationals in Orlando this February.

Fiscal Implications:

None.

Administrative Recommendation(s):

None.