

**Belton Independent School District**  
***Board of Trustee Meeting Agenda Item***  
***April 20, 2026***

**Item:** Recognitions

**Contact Person:** Christine Parks

**Presented for:**  Action     Report Only

**Supporting Documents:**    None     Attached     Provided Later

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**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 – Sparta Elementary School**

This evening, the pledges were led by students Jameson Davenport-Yates and Murphy Ruiz-West from Sparta Elementary School.

Jameson shared that his favorite subject is science, especially hands-on experiments like learning how wind changes sand. Outside of school, he enjoys playing basketball and piano, and his favorite song to play is Mary Had a Little Lamb. His friends describe him as funny, fast at recess, intelligent and helpful.

Murphy says her favorite subjects are art and reading, and she especially enjoys doing both with her friends. She loves the opportunity to draw, paint and create during art time. Outside of school, Murphy enjoys playing soccer and especially loves when the team earns candy for scoring a goal. Her friends describe her as kind and a good listener, and she is known at school for being safe, respectful and responsible.

## **Student Showcase – LBHS Interdisciplinary Research Symposium**

Tonight's student showcase featured students from Lake Belton High School's inaugural Interdisciplinary Research Symposium, highlighting advanced research and scientific inquiry across science and career and technical education programs.

Through research posters and professional presentations, students from AP Biology, Pathophysiology, AP Environmental Science, and Pharmacy Technician courses demonstrated critical thinking, collaboration and real-world problem-solving while exploring future pathways in science and healthcare.

These students are supported by their teacher, Rychel Soto.

## **Choir Solo & Ensemble State Qualifiers**

Belton ISD is proud to recognize 79 choir students who qualified for the Texas State Solo and Ensemble Contest in May.

These students competed at the UIL Region Solo and Ensemble contest in February and earned the highest rating for their solo performances and/or small ensemble performances. The music performed represents the highest and most rigorous level in UIL competition, reflecting exceptional talent, preparation and dedication.

These students are supported by their teachers, Tonya Lovorn and Terrance Livingston.

## **National History Day State Qualifiers**

Belton ISD is proud to recognize 46 students who qualified for the National History Day State Contest in Austin, including 9 elementary students, 14 middle school students and 23 high school students.

National History Day represents a year-long research journey in which students conduct intensive primary source research, develop original theses and defend their work before panels of expert judges. Students who advance to state are among the top 1% of young historians in Texas, an accomplishment that reflects exceptional scholarship, critical thinking and presentation skills.

These students are supported by their sponsors, Stacey Bovell, Corinna Capraun, Richard Clubine, Richard Russo, Chris Lemley, Eli Jackson, Christina Botha, Debra Hosch and Elizabeth Howson.

### **National Merit Finalists**

Belton ISD is proud to recognize Lake Belton High School seniors Dhruv Bhat and Alex Yuen for advancing to finalist standing in the 2025 National Merit Scholarship Program, one of the nation's most prestigious academic honors.

After earning Semifinalist recognition in the fall, both students advanced by meeting the program's rigorous academic, testing and application requirements. Fewer than one percent of U.S. high school seniors earn this distinction, placing Dhruv and Alex among the top scholars in the country.

As finalists, they are now eligible to compete for National Merit Scholarships that will be awarded later this year. This extraordinary achievement reflects years of dedication, intellectual excellence and relentless perseverance, and it is a proud moment for Lake Belton High School and the entire Big Red community.

### **SkillsUSA District 10 State Qualifiers**

Belton ISD is proud to recognize 60 students who qualified for the SkillsUSA District 10 State competition across multiple career pathways.

SkillsUSA supports students in trade, technical and skilled service programs by developing leadership, workplace readiness and advanced technical skills. Through competition in architecture and construction, hospitality and tourism, health science, arts and A/V technology, transportation, and law and public service, students demonstrate the real-world knowledge and career preparation needed for high-demand industries.

These students are supported by their teachers, Michael Carrillo, Mackenzie Pennacchio, CoryLynn Upton, Alyssa Vargas, Brittany Truitt, Brent Sharp and Willie Ward.

### **Texas High School Coaches Association Academic All-State Basketball**

We are proud to recognize nine student-athletes who were named to the Texas High School Coaches Association Academic All-State Basketball teams.

This honor celebrates student-athletes who demonstrate excellence both in the classroom and on the court, reflecting outstanding academic achievement, discipline and dedication throughout the basketball season.

These students are supported by their coaches, Phil McCaslin, Zane Johnston and Tiffney Barnes.

This keeps the energy up while varying the rhythm across your recognitions.

### **Texas High School Powerlifting Association Academic All-State**

We are proud to recognize nine Lake Belton High School student-athletes who earned Texas High School Powerlifting Association Academic All-State honors.

This recognition celebrates student-athletes who have demonstrated excellence in both academics and athletics, balancing the demands of elite competition with outstanding performance in the classroom. Their achievement reflects discipline, perseverance and a strong commitment to success.

These students are supported by their coach, Greg Rudolph.

### **Texas High School Women's Powerlifting Association Academic All-State**

We are proud to recognize two Lake Belton High School student-athletes who earned Texas High School Women's Powerlifting Association Academic All-State honors.

This distinction celebrates student-athletes who excel in the classroom while competing at a high level, reflecting remarkable discipline, perseverance and commitment to academic and athletic success.

These students are supported by their coach, Greg Rudolph.

### **Powerlifting State Qualifiers**

We are proud to recognize 14 student-athletes who qualified for the state powerlifting meet.

Earning a spot at the state level reflects exceptional strength, discipline and dedication, as these student-athletes have competed at a high level throughout the season while representing Belton ISD with pride.

These students are supported by their coaches, Barry Campbell, Ryan Grave and Greg Rudolph.

### **Swimming State Qualifiers**

Tonight, we are proud to recognize 14 student-athletes who qualified for state swimming competition across Belton ISD.

These swimmers earned state placements across a range of events, including relay competitions as well as freestyle and butterfly races, reflecting exceptional speed, endurance and dedication in the pool.

These students are supported by their coaches, Chris Knipp, Jaynie Ferguson and Jack Prud'homme.

### **Wrestling State Qualifiers**

Tonight, we are proud to recognize two Belton High School wrestlers for outstanding achievements at the state wrestling meet.

Melissa Farmer earned a 5th-place finish at 235 pounds, becoming the first student-athlete in program history to medal at state. Jacob U'ren also advanced as a state qualifier, contributing to a season that produced a school-record 15 regional qualifiers.

These students are supported by their coach, Caleb Newcomer.

### **Department Showcase - Facilities, Grounds & IPM**

This month's department showcase highlights Belton ISD's Facilities, Grounds and Integrated Pest Management teams, whose behind-the-scenes work ensures every campus and district property remains safe, functional and ready for learning.

Together, these departments maintain more than 2.4 million square feet across 20 campuses and 28 ancillary buildings, care for 292.5 mowable acres, support athletic and irrigation systems, and respond quickly during emergencies such as severe weather, debris removal and campus safety needs. Their work ranges from facility maintenance and energy management to groundskeeping, pest prevention, irrigation and daily inspections of play areas and campuses.

The Facilities team is led by Rodney Marek, Grounds is led by Andrew Linklater, and IPM and irrigation operations are led by Kenneth Wilson and James Glenn.

### **Community Partner – Fort Hood School Liaison Officers**

Tonight, we are proud to recognize the Fort Hood School Liaison Officers, who serve through Child and Youth Services, as valued community partners supporting Belton ISD's military-connected students and families.

Through their partnership with our district, these dedicated professionals help military families navigate school transitions, stay informed on district programs and requirements, and access resources that support student success.

Belton ISD is grateful for the Fort Hood School Liaison Officers' continued advocacy, partnership and commitment to serving our military-connected students and families.

#### **Fiscal Implications:**

None.

#### **Administrative Recommendation(s):**

None.