

Belton Independent School District

Board Meeting Minutes

Regular Board Meeting, November 18, 2024 - 6:15 p.m.
Pittenger Fine Arts Center, 400 N. Wall Street, Belton, TX 76513

Board Members Present:

Manuel Alcozer
Chris Flor
Rucker Preston
Janet Leigh
Suzanne McDonald

Board Members Absent:

Jeff Norwood
Erin Bass

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 6:20 pm. He stated that a quorum of Board Members was present, noted Mr. Jeff Norwood and Ms. Erin Bass was absent, that the meeting had been duly called, and notice of the meeting had been posted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code Chapter 551.

2. Recognitions

Student Pledges – Southwest Elementary School

The evening's pledges were led by Southwest Elementary fourth-graders Rhylee Henry and Rylan Jimenez.

Student Showcase – South Belton Middle School Orchestra

The evening's student showcase features the South Belton Middle School Chamber Orchestra. The nine-member ensemble of seventh and eighth-grade musicians performed Gargoyles and Falconer by Doug Spata, with Winter Lights by Seth Bedford as a festive finale. The South Belton Middle School Chamber Orchestra is under the direction of Carlos Martinez.

UIL State Solo & Ensemble Outstanding Performer

Lake Belton High School Orchestra student Emily Jeong earned Outstanding Performer award at the 2024 UIL State Solo and Ensemble Contest for her viola solo performance. Taught by Jenna Burchell, Emily achieved this honor among nearly 100,000 students participating in regional UIL music contests, with only two to three percent of solo performances earning this prestigious recognition at Texas State Solo-Ensemble Competition.

Marching Band State Qualifiers

The Lake Belton High School Stampede Marching Band performed at the UIL State Marching Band Contest at the Alamodome in San Antonio. Their 2024 show, "Eternal Glory," showcased the music of Dmitri Shostakovich, featuring pieces like Symphony No. 10, Symphony No. 5, Piano Concerto No. 2, Jazz Waltz No. 2, and Fire of Eternal Glory. The band is led by directors Bobby Yerigan, Craig George, Jacob Guerrero, Grant Shane, and Jessie Arbolay. The Board celebrated the Stampede for their outstanding performance and continued excellence.

Temple Rotary Educator of the Month

Pamela Rodriguez was honored by the Temple Rotary Club as the November Rotary Educator of the Month for her exceptional service to Belton ISD. Pamela is a lead social studies teacher, UIL liaison, and mentor teacher at Belton High School. She is currently in her 16th year with Belton ISD

Department Showcase - Teaching & Learning

The Teaching and Learning Department drives student success by crafting curriculum, supporting instructional practices, and offering professional learning across all core areas. They also oversee programs tailored to students' unique needs, including those for English learners, gifted students, advanced academics, career and technology education, 504 services, special education, and more. The Board thanked the team for their unwavering dedication, expertise, and passion for supporting campus leaders, teachers, and all of our learners.

Community Partner Recognition - Acer

Belton ISD celebrated the strong partnership with Acer. Acer's Temple repair facility supports our Techsperts program and ensures students have reliable technology. By working closely with our Techsperts, Acer helps students earn certifications and gain practical experience, even offering summer employment. Their team provides efficient weekly device repairs, keeping our technology ready for classroom use and minimizing learning disruptions. Each summer, Acer manages an extensive device refresh, updating and preparing all devices for the new school year.

3. Public Comments Regarding Items on the Agenda

Janet Brown - Agenda item 5.A.

4. Public Hearing

A. Public Hearing Regarding the 2023-2024 School Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST) Report

Melissa Lafferty, Chief Financial Officer, gave an overview of the Schools FIRST rating system, a report based on district staff, student, and financial data for the prior school year as reported to the Texas Education Agency (TEA), with the primary goal of reporting the overall financial health of a school district's financial resources.

Ms. Lafferty reviewed the 20 indicators in the worksheet for the report and noted that BISD received a rating of (A) Superior with a score of 98 for 2023-2024 based on 2022-2023 fiscal year data. She also explained that a public hearing is required for this report.

Mr. Alcozer opened the public hearing at 6:46 p.m. There were no comments during the hearing therefore the hearing was closed.

Chris Flor expressed his sincere thanks to the Business Services team for their work on this annual report.

5. Reports

A. Instructional Materials Selection Report

Gabi Nino, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning, provided a report on the unified instructional materials review process required through TEA, in accordance with House Bill 1605.

TEA has adopted and made available a state-wide textbook Open Education Resource (OER), more commonly known as Bluebonnet Learning. Should these materials and/or the High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM's) be adopted, Belton ISD could receive a \$20, \$40 or \$60 incentive per student to offset the cost of purchasing and printing materials. Ms. Nino informed the Board of the projected timeline, key milestones and system alignment that would have to take place, should the TEA materials be considered and possibly adopted.

Chris Flor shared that as the materials and process are reviewed, he wanted everyone to keep in mind the *art* along with the science of teaching, and ensure the curriculum will also allow teachers to continue cultivating exceptional learning experiences.

B. 2023-2024 Financial Report

Melissa Lafferty, Chief Financial Officer, presented an overview of the preliminary results of the 2023-2024 budget. Ms. Lafferty reminded the Board that during the August 19, 2024 Board Workshop, the finance team projected a budget deficit of \$4.23 million dollars. As the external audit draws to a close, the District will realize an actual budget deficit of approximately \$3.91 million dollars. This is nearly \$300,000 dollars less than anticipated at the August 19, 2024 Board Workshop, maintaining a fund balance of 24%. Ms. Lafferty reviewed the fund balance for both Debt Service and School Nutrition, noting only marginal change from August. The 2023-2024 School Year Comprehensive Annual Financial Report will be presented in the December Regular Board Meeting.

C. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Malinda Golden shared highlights from across the District tied to the Belton ISD Vision, community engagement and Journey of a Graduate competencies. The highlights included: Special Olympics, United Way Kids Campaign, Veterans Day celebrations, Ag Barn Dedication, Faith-Based Leaders meeting, BNT@W Robotics competition and classroom experiences. Dr. Golden expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to share these experiences with the Board.

D. Board Highlights

Janet Leight led the conversation by sharing her experience at the Ag Bard Dedication event and the City of Belton coin toss at Tiger Field. Chris Flor attended the Story Book Night event at Chisholm Trail elementary school, along with the BNT@W Robotics competition, and the Belton City Council Meeting. Rucker Preston spoke to the theater performances, and various events across the District. Suzanne McDonald shared her gratitude for the opportunity to speak at the Lake Belton High School academic awards ceremony and Manuel Alcozer expressed his pride in our community and students who participated in the Budget Advisory Committee.

6. Consent Agenda: Consider and Take Appropriate Action

A. Minutes of Previous Meetings:

1. October 21, 2024 Workshop Meeting
2. October 21, 2024 Regular Meeting

B. Unaudited Financial Report for the Month Ending October 31, 2024

C. Gifts, Grants, and Bequests

D. Budget Amendment #2 for 2024-2025

E. Expenditures over \$50,000

1. Renewal of True North, LLC for Sentry Management Security Services

- F. Supply, Equipment, and Service Bids
 - 1. RFQ #2401-905-374 for Districtwide Building Energy Auditing Services
- G. Resolution Regarding Votes Cast to Elect Directors for the Tax Appraisal District of Bell County for the Year 2025
- H. Acceptance and Close Out of the Agricultural Facility Project and Approval of Final Payment
- I. Oncor Electric Delivery Company LLC for Electric Supply and Right-of-Way Easement at Delta Facility
- J. Texas Association of School Board's Initiated Localized Policy Update 123 - 2nd Reading
 - 1. DCE(LOCAL): Employment Practices - Other Types of Contracts
 - 2. DGBA(LOCAL): Personnel-Management Relations - Complaints/Grievances
 - 3. EEH(LOCAL): Instructional Arrangements - Homebound Instruction
 - 4. GF(LOCAL): Public Complaints
 - 5. FNG(LOCAL): Student Rights & Responsibilities - Parent Comp/Grievance
- K. Local District Update - 2nd Reading
 - 1. FFA(LOCAL): Student Welfare - Wellness and Health Services
 - 2. FFAC(LOCAL): Wellness and Health Services Medical Treatment
 - 3. FNCE(LOCAL): Student Conduct - Personal Telecommunications/Electronic Devices

Rucker Preston made a motion, seconded by Janet Leigh, to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion carried by a vote of (5-0).

7. Board Requests for New Information and/or Reports

None.

8. Public Comments Regarding Non-Agenda Items

None.

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

The Board went into closed session at 7:34 p.m.

- A. Student Disciplinary Matter - Texas Government Code, Section 551.082
- B. Personnel - Texas Government Code, Section 551.074
- C. Consultation with Attorney - Texas Government Code, Section 551.071

10. Reconvene in Open Session

The Board reconvened in Open Session at 8:20 p.m.

11. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Manuel Alcozer, President

Erin Bass, Secretary