

BOARD BRIEFS

April 2023



Trustees Approve Facility Improvements

Facility projects in Belton ISD, funded by a May 2022 bond, took another step forward on Monday following the Board of Trustees' approval of guaranteed maximum prices for the first phases of the renovations and additions.

Three projects are underway to address growth and equitable facilities across the district — an addition to Southwest Elementary, a Fine Arts expansion at Lake Belton Middle School and additions and renovations at Belton High School.

Michael Morgan, assistant superintendent of operations, told the board that splitting the approvals into multiple guaranteed maximum prices (GMP) is all about efficiency.

At Monday's meeting, trustees approved a Guaranteed Maximum Price of \$1,085,116 for site work and utility prep for the addition at Southwest. The board will consider two additional GMPs for

additional work on the project in May and June.

Trustees also approved a GMP of \$3,552,863 for site work and long-lead items for the Fine Arts expansion at LBMS. A final GMP for all remaining work will be considered in May.

For the additions and renovations at BHS, trustees approved a GMP of \$12,423,229 for site work and long-lead items. A final GMP for all remaining work will be considered in May.

Student Showcase - North Belton Middle School Advanced Treble Choir



The North Belton Middle School Advanced Treble Choir was the student showcase. The school's choirs have been busy this year, performing at two Austin Spurs basketball games, Christmas on the Chisholm Trail in downtown Belton and at local nursing homes and elementary schools. Twenty-two students were selected to participate in the TMEA Region 8 middle school choir and all three seventh- and eighth-grade choirs recently earned Sweepstakes recognition at the UIL concert and sight reading contest. Before tonight's meeting, they performed "Nine Hundred Miles" by Cristi Cary Miller, "Laudate Dominum Omnes Gentes" by Patti Drennan and "Round and Round We Go."

Members of the group are Autumn Adams, Bailee Baker, Jenna Benedick, Leah Bruno, Kai Duggan, Maryah Espinoza, Kaylee Fraguada Ortiz, Lilliana Herrera, Feeonah Holt, Jayma Koontz, Swikriti Lamichhane, Hayden Maroney, Alana Martinez, Lexi Miller, Everly Miller, Lucy Parra Delliquadri, Alayna Prager, Aiyana Rodriguez, Elizabeth Sandlin, Emma Scholz, Bailey Schorn, Mya Sexton,

Zahara Simmons, Hadyn Smith, Ariana Tijerina, Wirhalex Toledo and Katelyn Ward. The director is Aleisha Martinez.

Board Hires Two New Principals

Trustees approved the hiring of two principals — Fredrick Lilly II at North Belton Middle School and Julee Manley at Burrell Elementary.



Lilly, who is in his ninth year in education, currently serves as the middle school principal in the Camden Fairview School District in Camden, Ark., where he is from. He's previously served as a teacher, coach and assistant principal. Lilly holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Arkansas-Monticello and a master's degree from Mississippi College.



Manley, who is in her 21st year in education, currently serves as the principal of Sparta Elementary in Belton ISD. She has also worked as a teacher, campus instructional specialist and assistant principal in surrounding school districts. Manley holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor and a master's degree from Texas A&M University-Central Texas.

Board Recognition - Youth Judicial Program State Qualifiers/Winners



The Belton New Tech @Waskow appellate court team of Isabelle Ryals and Cayden Ratliff placed sixth at the state YMCA Texas Youth and Government competition in March — just one place shy of qualifying for nationals.

Other state qualifiers are the appellate court team of Benjamin Garcia Soto Jr. and Zoe Shattuck and the mock trial team of Luke Cripe, Kory Turner, Alexia Howard, John Mosko III and Austin Barriere and the mock trial team of Isabelle Allen, Kylani Buchanan, Brayten Harrison, Jaelan Hurtado, Cadence Lohman and Sven Polk.

New Tech began offering a legal studies program in August. It is led by teacher Neill Plemons.

Congratulations to these students for their successes and for demonstrating so many of Belton ISD's Journey of a Graduate competencies.

Spring Demographer Report Highlights Continued Fast Growth

Trustees heard a demographic report from Zonda Education that highlighted Belton ISD's continued fast growth, especially compared to other school districts in Region 12.

Region 12, which includes school districts for Killeen, Temple, Waco and Midway, saw an average year-over-year enrollment increase of 0.9% from the previous school year to now. Belton ISD averaged a 2.4% increase, or an addition of 318 students. Looking at the last five years, Region 12 districts averaged a 1.4% increase while Belton ISD jumped 18.3%.

Demographers will continue to keep a close eye on the area's housing market, which has continued at a strong pace despite rising interest rates this spring. The district currently has 53

actively building subdivisions with groundwork underway on about 1,939 lots. Fourteen future subdivisions are also within the district.

Belton ISD currently has about 13,300 students, but five-year enrollment projections have the district headed toward 15,580 students. Ten-year projections could top 17,330.

Board Recognition - UIL Cross-Examination Debate State Qualifiers



Here's a celebration that reflects all of the district's Journey of a Graduate competencies. Two teams of students from Lake Belton High School — seniors Tayor DeNeve and David Larsen and juniors Nosa Agbonghae and Elliott Lehnham — placed first and second, respectively, in the 5A UIL Cross-Examination Debate District Meet in January. This qualified them for the state meet held in March. DeNeve also received the Top Speaker Award at the district meet. Hannah Bryant is the team's coach.

Board Recognition - Texas Association of Future Educators National Qualifiers



Two Lake Belton High School seniors earned a top award at the Texas Association of Future Educators (TAFE) 39th annual Teach Tomorrow Summit in March.

Annabella Loertcher and Haylee Bella won gold for the interactive bulletin board they designed and created. Their almost perfect score of 99 out of 100 qualified them to compete at the Educators Rising National Conference, to be held June 29-July 2 in Orlando, Fla. Their teacher is Kimberly Williams.

We appreciate how this Career and Technical Education program allows students to showcase their critical thinking, collaboration and perseverance Journey of a Graduate competencies.

Board Committee Reports

Policy: The policy committee met on April 4 and reviewed several policies, including FFAC(LOCAL), GKD(LOCAL), EIC(LOCAL) and DC(LOCAL).

Facilities: The facilities committee met on April 10 and heard updates on 2022 bond projects.

Board Recognition - Texas State German Contest State Qualifiers/Winners



Students from Belton High School and Lake Belton High School competed in Winterfest earlier this year. Winterfest is the regional German arts and academics contest. Nine students qualified for the Texas State German Contest, highlighting their critical thinking skills from the district's Journey of a Graduate competencies.

Advancing students were Kaitlyn Brown, Marc Crosby, Nate Griffith, David Larsen, Connor McLeod, Abigail Meizius and Bonnie Murray from Lake Belton High School; and Lena Cook and Isabelle Staten from Belton High School.

Several placed at the Texas State German Contest held last month at Texas State University which included students from 41 schools.

State winners included Brown, Griffith, Larsen, McLeod and Murray (third place — pass auf! team); Larsen (first place in poetry memory 4, culture 4 and vocabulary 4); Cook (ninth place — advantaged speakers test); and Staten (10th place — needlework).

Lena Cook and David Larsen also were named to the National German Exam Honor Roll for outstanding performance on the 2023 National German Exam for High School Students. Over 12,300 students take the exam each year. Cook placed fifth in the state on the exam.

Sandra Dieckman is the German teacher at both schools.

Congratulations to all for showing such perseverance — a Journey of a Graduate competency — in learning another language.

Board Recognition — SkillsUSA State/National Qualifiers



Twenty-two Belton ISD students qualified for the state SkillsUSA Championship competition in April. These career competition events involve industries in directly evaluating student performance with the goal to keep training relevant to employers' needs.

Eight construction students from Belton High School took home state medals. Chad Robertson placed first in carpentry and the group of Brandon Bechtel, Victor Flores, Haden Mosley and Kyler Quinn placed first in TeamWorks. All advance to the National competition in June.

Two students placed second — Nathaniel Hernandez in plumbing and Misael Cuevas in carpentry. Kelon McBride placed third in masonry.

Other students qualifying for state included Oscar Flores, Jose Esquivel, Evan Hall, William Furst, Shane Johnson and Shelby Gilbert.

Michael Carrillo is the sponsor.

BHS students Makayla Thomson, Anastasia Rittenhouse and Jisella Wightman earned first place in forensic science. Their sponsor is Willie Ward.

Four Lake Belton High School students qualified for the state competition in photography and design. They are Trinity Fly and Mary Hayes (photography); and Rhiannon Gaddis and Meili Mason (design). Their teacher is Brittany Truitt.

Montgomery Pomykal, also from LBHS, qualified for the automotive service technology state competition. His teacher is Brent Sharp.

In Belton ISD, we believe that the learning experiences of our students are enhanced through engagement with our community — and CTE programs like SkillsUSA are a great example of it.

Board Recognition - Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) Culinary Arts State Qualifiers/Winners



Several Lake Belton High School students qualified for the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America state competition in culinary arts. Stephanie Martinez placed third in the culinary arts level 3 event and now advances to the national competition in July. Irma Lopez placed fifth in cupcake presentation level 2.

Other LBHS state qualifiers include Tobbie Berrian, Megan Kyle, Karroline Bullock and Anna Stum.

Congratulations to these students for their successes and for demonstrating many of Belton ISD's Journey of a Graduate competencies.

The culinary arts instructors at LBHS are Noemi Virostek and Tug Ledermann.

Texas Thespians Junior National Qualifiers



Two Belton Middle School thespians — Isha Jinadatha and Natalia Kolls — competed in duet acting at the Junior Thespian Festival in February. They earned a superior rating and were named national qualifiers. This means the girls are invited to compete at a national competition this summer in Indiana.

Congratulations to these students as well as Kaitlyn McDearmont, the BMS theatre director.

Texas High School Coaches Association Academic All-State Recipients



Belton ISD is celebrating student-athletes and athletic trainers who were named to Texas High School Coaches Association Academic All-State teams in cross country, volleyball and football. To be nominated, seniors must be in good standing with their team, of good moral character and have an overall GPA of 92 or above. Class rank and SAT/ACT test scores are also taken into consideration.

Swimming

Thomas Nelson (elite team); Caleb Bovell and Keegan Dang (first team); Malia Rodriguez (second team); and Sydney Alamein (honorable mention). Chris Knipp is the head coach.

Basketball

Chris Scott and Druw Bramlett (first team); and Trinity Espitia and Emerson Foutz (second team). Eric Regier is the head girls coach. Jason Fossett is the head boys coach.

Recipients from Lake Belton High School:

Basketball

Floyd Bristol (honorable mention). Zane Johnston is the head boys coach.

These recognitions highlight the district's value of a continuous improvement mindset modeled by staff and cultivated in classrooms and athletic endeavors.

Temple Rotary Educator of the Month



Roxanne Howell is being recognized for her outstanding service to Belton ISD. Mrs. Howell is a math teacher at Lake Belton Middle School. She is in her 27th year working in education, 15 of them spent in Belton ISD.

Jennifer Holmes, assistant principal at Lake Belton Middle School, said this about Mrs. Howell:

Mrs. Howell goes above and beyond for all students at LBMS. She not only spends class periods working with struggling students, but she supports each and every student by offering two days a week after school to work with students. She also gives up two Saturdays a month to work with students that are struggling with grades or attendance. She spends a lot of her time helping students that have been unsuccessful in math in previous school years and helps to ignite their love of the subject. She dedicates her time to helping student fill in their gaps with learning. Mrs. Howell demonstrates a student-centered approach in all that she does.

We are glad to have this World-Class Employee in the Big Red Community!

Belton Rotary Educator of the Quarter



Alycia Digby is being recognized by the Belton Rotary Club for her outstanding service to Belton ISD. Alycia serves as an intervention teacher at Chisholm Trail Elementary. She is in her seventh year in education, all of which are in Belton ISD.

Elizabeth McMurtry, principal at Chisholm Trail Elementary, said this about Mrs. Howell:

Alycia has always been a data-driven educator, but the student group she serves has changed to a campus-wide approach when taking on the role of intervention teacher. She has helped lead the establishment of our PLC Guiding Coalition on campus and the refinement of our Rtl practices, both of which have led to increased student and teacher growth and engagement. She is a leader on campus and a champion for all, pushing each of us to do our best.

Congratulations to this student-centered educator!

Department Showcase - Student Services, Safety & Security



The Student Services department is responsible for many operational functions that support student learning. This team, for example, manages the student transfer process, student records requests, attendance intervention and training and supporting campus administrators. They also review and update the Student Code of Conduct and Student Handbook each year, coordinate School Health Advisory Committee (SHAC) meetings and execute annual student services training for all administrative staff.

The Safety and Security department operates alongside Student Services and is responsible for the overall safety and security of the district. This team runs monthly safety meetings at each campus and for the district. Team members include eight school resource officers, 18 security guards, a safety coordinator and an emergency preparedness coordinator.

We are grateful for the often behind-the-scenes work these staff members do to foster a safe learning environment for all students. They are truly World-Class Employees!

Consent Agenda Highlights

- Unaudited financial report for the month ending March 31, 2023
- Gifts, grants, and bequests
- Budget amendment #6 for 2022-2023
- Board resolution extending depository contract
- Expenditures over \$50,000 (GoGuardian)
- New CTE course at South Belton Middle School for 2023-2024 school year

To review Belton ISD board meeting agendas and full packet materials, [click here](#).



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