



JANUARY 2025

# BIG RED LETTERS

BELTON ISD SUPERINTENDENT DR. MALINDA GOLDEN

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Hello Belton ISD,

Welcome back and Happy New Year! The district calendar is filled with celebrations before the break and it is incredible to see our students, staff, and families enjoy this time together. Our staff did an incredible job balancing the excitement of the season while remaining focused on providing exceptional learning experiences as we wrapped up the first semester strong. This is evident in our students' interim data as we are seeing growth in all subject areas and with each and every student group.

I am so grateful to the community for how you wrap your arms around our students to make sure that they are able to experience the magic of Christmas regardless of their circumstances. The support provided through CASA, Angel Tree, Feed My Sheep, local churches, and so many other organizations is extraordinary. Your generosity makes a difference in the lives of our children who receive these gifts. They may not ever fully understand who made it possible for them to open gifts on Christmas morning or enjoy a traditional holiday meal, but they undoubtedly feel the kindness, love and support from the community around them.

What stands out to me the most as I look back on the weeks leading up to Christmas break is our students involved in acts of service and demonstrating empathy in action. From food drives to collecting toys to serving meals to families, our students were actively involved in activities focused on serving others. Our students are bringing Belton ISD's vision to life as they enrich their communities and it is profound. I am in awe of our students and staff and hope that you see this as a point of pride for the entire Belton ISD community as well.

Looking forward to continuing to work together for each and every learner as we start this second semester!

Sincerely,

Malinda Golden, Ph.D.  
Superintendent

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X @GOLDEN4ED

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# HAPPY HOLIDAYS 2024 Merry Christmas



## Belton ISD Celebrates Artistic Talent in 2024 Holiday Card Contest

Belton ISD hosted a Holiday Card Contest, celebrating the artistic talents of middle and high school students from across the district. These young artists competed for the honor of having their work selected as the official Belton ISD holiday card for 2024. With numerous outstanding submissions, the judges faced a challenging decision.

Congratulations to the winners of Belton ISD's 2024 Holiday Card Contest: North Belton Middle School seventh-grader Ruby Kiesling; South Belton Middle School eighth-graders Christina Mallette and Juliet Mendoza; Belton High School seniors Destiny Alvarez and Yasmeen Zayed; and Lake Belton High School sophomores Selad Graves and Lacy Wilber, juniors Bailey Caldwell and Cody Tyler, and seniors Xavier Ainsworth, Areli Curiel, and Victoria Stanford.

These talented students were guided by their art instructors, Jannet Alardin, Amy Bralett, Angelia Rios, and Emily Simeroth. All entries are showcased at the Belton ISD Central Administration Building.



## Lakewood Elementary Celebrates 37 Years of Kinder Tea Tradition

Lakewood Elementary School upheld its cherished 37-year tradition of Kinder Tea, which began in 1987. This tradition was initiated by Latecia Shope, a 39-year Belton ISD veteran who now serves as an instructional coach at Tarver Elementary School, along with another staff member. Their goal was to teach kindergarteners the spirit of giving during the holiday season, showing them that Christmas is about more than just receiving gifts. Originally, students prepared and served food to their families. After the pandemic, the tradition was adapted, and students now serve bottled water with candy canes.

Each kindergartener takes on special roles, such as greeting guests, taking coats, escorting attendees to their seats, and serving refreshments. The Kinder Tea also features a variety of festive performances, including "S-A-N-T-A," "Hip Hop Elves," and the beloved "Jingle Bell Dancers," which has been a consistent highlight since the tradition's inception.

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## Spreading Holiday Cheer: Belton ISD Gives Back

This holiday season, the Belton ISD family came together to spread kindness and joy across the Big Red Community. The Belton High School Counseling Department hosted a Big Red Food Drive, collecting 1,124 pounds of food and over \$1,500 in donations to provide warm Thanksgiving meals for BISD families in need. Our athletics teams organized the 5th Annual Athletics Toy Drive, delivering toys to bring holiday cheer to children at CASA of Bell and Coryell Counties. Delta students and staff volunteered their time to support Feed My Sheep, serving others in our community. The Belton ISD Leadership Team joined the efforts by volunteering at Helping Hands Ministry to assist local families during the holiday season. Through the Project HEARTBEAT Angel Tree, staff and community members ensured every child received a special gift. Additionally, Board Vice President Chris Flor and his CGI team generously provided gifts for 25 Angel Tree students and contributed to other holiday initiatives.







# Belton ISD Scores Big in Giving Back This Holiday Season

The Belton ISD family has gone above and beyond to spread kindness and generosity across the Big Red Community. Belton High School's basketball team hosted an exciting Tip-Off Event, where boys and girls Tiger basketball teams from BHS, SBMS, and BMS, competed in a 3-point shootout, dunk contest, and more. Entry to the event was a canned good, with all donations going to Helping Hands Ministry.

The LBHS Human Services Practicum students collected non-perishable items for Being His Hands and Feet Ministry of Belton.

At Chisholm Trail Elementary, Principal Sewell took a pie to the face as a fun reward for the class that donated the most food to Helping Hands Ministry. In total, the district donated an incredible 5,179 pounds of food to the Food for Families drive, representing 36% of the total community donations.





## **Celebrating Community and Holiday Magic in Belton ISD**

Belton High School welcomed Hubbard Branch Elementary students and their families to the BHS Family Christmas Dinner, creating a warm and festive gathering that celebrated connection and community during the holiday season.

Meanwhile, the holiday magic was alive and well at Belton Early Childhood School, where dedicated elves stayed busy baking cookies, repairing the sleigh, and spreading holiday cheer. The gym was beautifully transformed into a magical Winter Wonderland, delighting students and staff with its enchanting festive atmosphere.





SAVE THE DATE!



**January 14:** Parents as Partners Virtual Lunch and Learn: Course Selection for Middle School

**January 14:** Parents as Partners - Understanding How to Support Your Student's Giftedness

**January 20:** District Closure

**January 27:** Regular Board Meeting

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**February 11:** Parents as Partners - Job Opportunities for Students with Special Needs

**February 17-18:** Student Holiday

**February 24:** Regular Board Meeting

**February 26:** Parents as Partners - ESL/Bilingual Event

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**March 10-14:** District Closure

**March 24:** Regular Board Meeting

**March 25:** Parents as Partners - Virtual Lunch and Learn: Preparing Your Child for STAAR

## **2024-2025 Academic Calendar**

**Take the Journey**

**Stay Connected**

**We are Hiring**

**Belton Independent School District**

**400 North Wall Street | [www.bisd.net](http://www.bisd.net) |  
[communications@bisd.net](mailto:communications@bisd.net)**