Belton Independent School District

Workshop Meeting Minutes

Board Workshop Meeting, June 15, 2026 - 5:00 p.m.

Dragon Room, 400 N. Wall Street, Belton TX, 76513

Board Members Present:

Manuel Alcozer
Jeff Norwood
Rucker Preston
Chris Flor
Brandon Bozon
Riley Beck
Erin Bass

Board Members Absent:

1. Call to Order:

Chris Flor, Board President, called the workshop meeting of the Belton Independent School District Board of Trustees to order at 5:00 p.m., that the meeting had been duly called, that Brandon Bozon was attending the meeting via video conference, and notice of the meeting had been posted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code Chapter 551.

2. Public Comments:

None.

3. Board Workshop

A. Budget & Compensation

Ms. Melissa Lafferty, Chief Financial Officer, engaged the Board in a budget discussion, where they reviewed an estimated $2.6 million surplus for the current 2025-2026 school year, positioning the fund balance around 24%, with an additional potential $2 million depending on a pending state property value appeal. For the 2026-2027 academic year, projected base revenues are expected to fall to approximately $151.8 million due to the loss of disaster-related tax rate adjustment. To maintain a balanced budget, the district has identified over $4 million in reductions and nearly $1.8 million in additions, largely driven by special education staffing needs, alongside rising utility and insurance costs.

The board weighed two primary scenarios to balance compensation adjustments with facility investments, considering whether to allocate $1 million or $500,000 to capital projects. To address ongoing facility challenges like HVAC and roofing needs, the board discussed utilizing an estimated $2.5 million in remaining bond savings and potentially transferring the year-end surplus into a dedicated capital projects fund. Finally, the district reviewed a third contingency scenario that explores a Voter-Approval Tax Rate Election (VATRE) using 3.17 pennies to generate roughly $154 million in total revenue.

Mr. Todd Schiller, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, discussed with the Board 3 potential compensation scenarios as follows:

Scenario 1: Proposes a $1.479 million total package featuring a 1.2% average teacher increase (step increase plus $200), a zero-year hiring schedule of $55,300, and a 1% increase for all other staff categories.
Scenario 2: Proposes a $1.9 million total package featuring a 1.5% average teacher increase (step increase plus $425), a zero-year hiring schedule of $55,500, and a 1.5% increase for other staff. This scenario also introduces a $2,000 stipend for certified high school math and science teachers to remain competitive.
Scenario 3: (VATRE-dependent): Proposes a $2.6 million total package with a 2% average teacher increase (step increase plus $760), a zero-year hiring schedule of $55,760, and a 2% increase for other staff. The high school math and science stipends would be increased to $4,000.

Benefits vs. Direct Salary: The board discussed the rising costs of health insurance, which is expected to increase by about 9%, while the district's contribution remains flat at $410 per employee. The board discussed the tax advantages of increasing the district's health benefits contribution instead of salaries. However, because only about one-half of the staff (approximately 1,400 employees) utilizes the health insurance, it was widely agreed that direct salary adjustments are a more visible and effective tool for overall recruitment and retention.

<u>Adjourn:</u> There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

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Chris Flor, Board President

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Rucker Preston, Board Secretary