



**BELTON**™  
NEW TECH HIGH  
@ W A S K O W

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Who we are?**

Belton New Tech High School @Waskow is a small, comprehensive four-year public high school. Belton New Tech opened in 2011. We believe in learning that encourages creativity and innovation by challenging everyone to use their collaborative voice to achieve excellence.

### **Where does the name "New Tech" come from?**

The first New Tech high school was founded in 1996 in Napa, California, when local business leaders, frustrated by the lack of skilled graduates ready for college or the workplace, came together with the idea of starting a school that would teach the skills necessary to thrive in the new economy. Napa New Tech's success is nationally recognized for innovation and excellence in high school education. By traditional measures New Tech students surpass their state and local peers with high attendance, graduation rates, and test scores. They also emerge ready for college and careers of the future. BNTH@W opened its doors in 2011 by joining New Tech Network- a consortium of schools working to replicate the success of this school in Napa. Today there are over 100 schools in the network with more schools joining each year.

### **What is Project-Based Learning?**

PBL uses the latest technology to engage students with 21<sup>st</sup> Century issues and questions relevant to their lives. In New Tech classrooms, teachers design real world projects and applications tied to state and district standards for the students' interest. Students work in teams and acquire leadership and collaborative skills to prepare them for the future.

### **How is BNTH@W different?**

BNTH@W's approach to PBL fundamentally changes the role of student and teacher. Teachers become facilitators who guide learners to take charge of their own learning, invent their own solutions, and develop self-management techniques. Select courses will be integrated such as language and social studies, to capture the common themes and connections that are present in real world applications. Curriculum is not driven by the textbook but by the state standards, and instruction is engaging and rigorous.

### **Can I participate in band, choir, athletics, clubs, etc. if I go to BNTH@W?**

Yes, learners at BNTH@W and Belton High School play sports together on the same team. BNTH@W provides a daily shuttle that runs learners back and forth between both campuses to accommodate the BHS bell schedule and early release times for games and competitions. BNTH@W learners may participate in UIL activities including, but not limited to, band, choir, orchestra, and athletics. Learners also participate in ROTC and various CTE courses (see course catalog for detailed list of course offerings).

### **Does BNTH@W cover the same state standards at Belton High School and other high schools in the state?**

Yes. All schools in the district and state are accountable to uphold the same Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards adopted by the State of Texas. At BNTH@W, our staff spends considerable time developing relevant projects and problems that align with the state standards. Our learners are individually evaluated on their mastery of these standards as part of each project they complete or problem they solve.

**If I go to BNTH@W, will I still have to take tests and quizzes?**

Yes. While most learning in New Tech schools occurs within group collaboration, learners are still held accountable for their own understanding of the content taught in each course. Assessment of individual understanding can take many forms including traditional tests and quizzes. Learners also participate in the state End-of-Course Exams (EOCs).

**If someone in my group doesn't do his part of a project, will it hurt my grade?**

Most projects and problems are assessed using a variety of measures including group benchmarks and evaluation/collaboration. For this reason, we start all projects and problems with social contracts. These are written agreements between group members that outline how the group will operate, who will be responsible for each task, and what will happen when someone doesn't do his/her share of the work.

**If I don't like BNTH@W once it starts, can I transfer to Belton High School?**

Yes, but only after completing the first year. We respect that some people may find project and problem-based learning is not their preferred learning style, but we require that all learners spend a full year working in it before deciding to leave. We require this for three primary reasons:

- The beginning of the first year can be stressful for some students. We don't want anyone to make a rash decision they regret later.
- Our program is unique in the way courses are integrated and sequenced. While our courses cover the same content standards as Belton High School, they may not do so in the same order. Transferring out of our program mid-year could lead to missing important information.
- We believe that there is value in keeping a commitment. Allowing students to leave early would contradict that belief.

For the beginning of a learner's junior year, learners will commit for two years resulting in graduation from Belton New Tech High School @Waskow. Learners will not be allowed to transfer to Belton High School once beginning their junior year at BNTH@W.

**Do I have to purchase a laptop if I choose to attend BNTH@W? What if it is damaged?**

No, you do not purchase your own laptop. BNTH@W will provide you with your initial Apple MacBook Pro laptop. Learners and guardians are required to sign a laptop user agreement as well as an acceptable use policy before a laptop is checked out to the learner. The information in both of these outlines proper and improper use of school district property and charges that can occur due to damages to your laptop (broken screens, dents, etc.). Laptops are property of BISD but are the responsibility of the learners to care for them throughout the duration of their high school career at BNTH@W. The learner will pay a \$30 user fee. If the laptop needs a repair, the learner will pay a \$50 repair/replacement fee. If a learner needs to have a laptop re-imaged, the learner will pay a \$15 re-imaging fee. Apple considers the charger to be a consumable product; therefore, learners whose chargers are damaged due to normal wear and tear will be responsible for the \$80 replacement fee. All chargers must be purchased through BNTH@W.

**What is the process for admittance for students who receive special education services?**

- **Legacy:** An ARD meeting will be scheduled during the first two weeks of March. The ARD Committee will determine if enrollment at BNTH@W is appropriate.
- **Campout:** The number of students accepted at Campout will be publicized the week after spring break. If a student served by an IEP and is in the initially accepted group at Campout, the student will be granted "conditional approval". An ARD meeting will be scheduled by the last week of April. The ARD Committee will determine if services that are available at BNTH@W are appropriate for IEP implementation.
- **Lottery:** If your child's name is drawn during the lottery rounds, an ARD meeting will take place no less than ten school days following the lottery.

**What special education services will be offered at BNTH@W?**

Students who are enrolled at BNTH@W will receive inclusion services, appropriate related services, and accommodations that are determined by the ARD Committee and available on the campus and as a part of the special education continuum within the district.

**What Special Education staff will be assigned to BNTH@W?**

An inclusion teacher will be assigned to the campus.

**What are the characteristics of students who are eligible for special education services who will be successful at BNTH@W?**

The students who will be most successful are those who are self-motivated. These students must be willing to work hard and to be a contributing team member. Our learners are able to manage freedom of choice and independence in such a way that they can complete rigorous work and interact effectively with their peers and adults.

**What classroom accommodations will be available for students served by special education?**

Students who are enrolled at BNTH@W and receive special education services must be successful with classroom accommodations that are determined by the ARD Committee as appropriate in a project-based learning environment. These accommodations may be different than those implemented in the traditional learning environment.