



## **Boerne Middle School South**

Schools Transforming Learning Designation Program

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[VIDEO](#)

### **Overview and Background:**

Boerne Middle School South (BMSS) is located in the southern portion of Boerne ISD just outside of San Antonio. Due to our climbing enrollment over the past several years, our district is considered a fast growth district, with BMSS being the largest middle school. We are home to 915 students. Currently our enrollment is made up of 19% Economic Disadvantaged, 28% At-Risk and 6% of our students are considered Emergent Bilinguals. With the increase in students in our district, an additional middle school was built in 2019. A large portion of students were rezoned from BMSS to the new middle school. Since that time, there have been many changes in leadership at BMSS as well.

Boerne Middle School South is proud of its dedication to fostering a culture of innovation, collaboration, and student centered learning: known as our “Culture of Excellence.” As a nominee, our school has demonstrated a commitment to empowering students through instructional practices that prioritize their needs, alongside a focus on continuous growth for both students and educators. With transformative leadership and a shared vision for excellence, BMSS continues to cultivate learning environments where students are inspired to reach their full potential and succeed in an ever evolving world. Our goal is to create a shared vision among all stakeholders that supports students during one of the most formative periods of their lives.

### **Focus Areas:**

BMSS has achieved success through various initiatives over the years. While celebrating these accomplishments, our guiding coalition chose to focus our efforts on building a “Culture of Excellence.” This focus landed on three key areas: school culture, student engagement, and fostering a sense of belonging for students, staff, and families. These areas align with the principles outlined in Article V: Organizational Transformation, which emphasizes the importance of a shared vision and collective effort among stakeholders in achieving excellence.

In collaboration with the recently established BISD District Mission and Vision, our team focused on creating a culture where everything we do is purposeful and driven by a commitment to excellence. We aim to provide students, staff, and families with a sense of ownership and pride, ensuring that every individual feels valued and part of the BMSS community. Through this shared vision, we strive to create a place where students, staff, and families have a sense of ownership and belonging and are proud to be a “South Charger.”

### **Work:**

Our team's work began with input from students, staff, and families, gathered through a survey and feedback. While we observed many positive developments within our school, we also recognized the need to prioritize building a stronger culture. BMSS has consistently achieved impressive results in and outside of the classroom. While these accomplishments are significant, we believed that prioritizing school culture was essential for sustaining long-term success.

We also continued to enhance professional development for our staff. Teachers met weekly in professional learning communities to review data, discuss instructional strategies, and engage in backward planning to meet the diverse needs of our students. Student voice became a central element



in driving change, ensuring that students felt a personal connection to the school and its mission. Staff participated in relationship centered professional development that focused on student centered activities that helped build trust in the classroom to help foster a sense of belonging.

Through collaborative efforts, we established clear, campus-wide expectations for behavior and engagement, focusing on areas such as the cafeteria, hallways, arrival/dismissal, and classrooms. We began meeting with students one grade level at a time through campus wide expectation assemblies. We shared reminders on the morning announcements. Posters were placed in prominent areas around the campus. Instead of focusing on “rules” of what ‘not to do’ we focused on what students were supposed to do. For example, “Chargers will....walk with a purpose in the hallway when going to class.” “Chargers will...put phones away during the school day.” Feedback from staff and students informed the development and implementation of these initiatives, creating a unified approach to improving school culture.

### **Results:**

The Quaglia Institute identifies three key principles for student engagement: Self-Worth, Engagement, and Purpose. One key initiative involved creating visual representations of student success throughout the school. We introduced murals, student showcases, banners celebrating achievements, a “College Corner,” creating a “Military Way,” and increased visibility of BMSS logos and school colors. These elements contributed to a sense of pride and belonging, motivating students, staff, and families to engage more deeply with the school community.

Additionally, we focused on recognizing students who had not been traditionally acknowledged. For the first time, we highlighted Honor Roll students and offered Attendance Incentives, providing a meaningful way to celebrate their achievements each nine-week period. The data supports the success of these initiatives: student attendance increased by 1% year-over-year (December 2024: 96.6% vs. December 2023: 95.4%).

We also prioritized staff engagement through the creation of the “Sunshine Committee,” a group tasked with organizing social events and fostering a positive workplace culture. The committee organized fun food days, hosted a staff Christmas party, and facilitated after-hours social outings. Additionally, we set a goal for 100% staff participation in the PTO. While we did not reach 100%, the participation rate rose to 92%, a substantial increase from the previous year (< 40%). Staff recognition became another key focus. The “BMSS Staff Member of the Week” initiative was established, allowing staff members to nominate a colleague who had gone above and beyond. The selected individual received a certificate, candy, and a designated parking spot as a token of appreciation.

Our team also recognized the importance of connecting with our elementary school feeders. BMSS administration visited feeder campuses during 5th-grade lunches, distributing BMSS t-shirts and “swag” to incoming students. This initiative helped students feel valued before even stepping onto the middle school campus. Our Athletics Department also played a key role by sending athletes to elementary schools to assist with student drop off, inviting the local Charger Youth Football team to join them on the sidelines for a game, fostering a sense of connection and pride in BMSS from an early age.

### **Conclusion:**

While Boerne Middle School South has made significant strides in fostering a culture of excellence, we understand that we are still a work in progress. We are committed to reflecting on our practices and continuously improving. By prioritizing school culture, student engagement, and a sense of belonging, we have created a transformative learning environment where all students can thrive. The “Culture of Excellence” at BMSS reflects our dedication to educational excellence, and we remain focused on empowering every student to achieve their full potential.