



EAST OTERO SCHOOL DISTRICT R-1
301 RATON AVENUE
LA JUNTA, COLORADO 81050

BOARD WRAP-UP

Board of Education Meeting
February 27, 2023

1. **ROLL CALL** – Ayala, Backes, Bickel, Derbigny and Leyba.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. **RECOGNITION - ELD DEPARTMENT**

Superintendent Lovato congratulated and thanked the ELD department, including Cassandra Siefkas and Dee Rangel, for finalizing an OCR audit.

4. **STUDENT RECOGNITION - SCIENCE FAIR PARTICIPANTS**

The Board recognized and congratulated the Science Fair participants/winners. The Primary School participants were: Adrianna Ayala, Abraham Ouattara, Mary Leyba, and Tanis Aragon. The sponsor is Diana Remick. The Intermediate School participants were: MeeLa Roller, Krissany Lee, Nathan Baldwin, Aaron Ortega, Leila Berg, Drelynn Mondragon-Owen, Kaylyn Martinez, Gianna Ayala and Acelyn Sutherland. The sponsor is Linda Fief. Also from the Intermediate School were: Mathieu Arguello, Peyton Marx, Krissany Lee, Acacia Manyik, Lillian Seaba, Chloe Escobedo-Bonetta, and Kendyl Osborn. The sponsor is Jaye Senner. The Junior/Senior High School participants were: Zoey Montoya and Everett Ediger, *How Soil Qualities Affect Where Aphonopelma Hentzi Burrows in the Colorado Grasslands*, 1st place 9-12, Best in Upper Fair, qualified for state and international science fair; Maria Martos, *Bet on the Compost*, 2nd place 9-12, Colorado Soil and Water Conservancy best project 9-12, qualified for state science fair; Adam Ouattara, *Fires in the Comanche Grasslands*, 1st place 6-8, Colorado Soil and Water Conservancy best project 6-8, qualified for state science fair; Drake Coffield-Bamber and Bryce Bickel, *3D Fly Trappas*, 3rd place 9-12, Otero Biology Dept Outstanding Project, qualified for state science fair; Kaitlyn Kinder and Akroma Hernandez, *The Moon's Sanity*, Otero Psychology Dept Outstanding Project; Crispin Encinias, *How Does Octane Affect MPG?*; Aiden Rivas and Logan Courtney, *Earth's Reflections*; and Natan Rogers, *A.R.M.* The sponsor is Julia Barta. Zoey Montoya and Everett Ediger, Maria Martos, Adam Ouattara, Drake Coffield-Bamber and Bryce Bickel qualified to compete in the Colorado Science and Engineering Fair. Zoey and Everett also qualified for the International Science and Engineering Fair. That event will be held May 13-19 and in Dallas, Texas.

5. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA – AGENDA APPROVED AS PRESENTED**

2. **CONSENT AGENDA**

A. **Personnel Approval**

- **Stephen Mathews - Resignation as English Language Arts teacher at the Junior/Senior High School effective March 27, 2023**
- **Redecca Murphy - New Hire as Health Aide at the Junior/Senior High School for the remainder of the 2022-2023 school year**

7. **NEW BUSINESS**

B. **Addition - Approve Superintendent Contract**

6. **CONSENT AGENDA - APPROVED CONSENT AGENDA WITH AN AMENDED MOTION**

A. **Personnel Approval**

- Valentina Gutierrez - Resignation as ELD Paraprofessional at the Junior/Senior High School effective January 28, 2023
- Aubrey Ayala - Transfer from Junior/Senior High School Health Aide to the Junior/Senior High School Secretary for the remainder of the 2022-2023 school year
- Senon Frentress - Resignation as Special Education Paraprofessional at the Junior/Senior High School effective February 27, 2023
- Donald Brooks - Resignation as Science Teacher at the Junior/Senior High School effective May 25, 2023
- Jerri Ann Stover - Resignation as 5th Grade Teacher at the Intermediate School effective May 25, 2023
- Alex Romero - New Hire as Junior/Senior High Bookkeeper for the remainder of the 2022-2023 school year

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- Javier Muniz - New Hire as District Mechanic for the remainder of the 2022-2023 school year
- Stephen Mathews - Resignation as English Language Arts teacher at the Junior/Senior High School effective March 27, 2023
- Redecca Murphy - New Hire as Health Aide at the Junior/Senior High School for the remainder of the 2022-2023 school year

B. Approve Additional Substitute Teachers for 2022-2023

C. Approve Resolution Authorizing Signing of Checks/District Bank Accounts at Colorado Bank and Trust

D. Approve Additional Out-of-District Students for the 2022-2023 School Year

7. FINANCIAL REPORT

Superintendent Lovato told the Board much time has been spent in cleaning up the books. He reviewed a general fund and grants report. Superintendent Lovato said there were some glitches with payroll again this month, but the number has decreased. He is confident next month will be correct. Superintendent Lovato said the district is consistent. He explained the grants weren't drawn down in January but will be in February. Director Backes said this report seems informational and feels it does not need to be an action item. Superintendent Lovato said the quarterly report should be voted on for approval and is fine with the monthly report just being an informational report. Director Leyba stated the Board will continue with the approval of this report and go forward with approving a quarterly report while leaving the monthly report as informational. **THE FINANCIAL REPORT WAS APPROVED AS PRESENTED**

8. MINUTES – Minutes of the Regular Meeting on January 23, 2023 **APPROVED AS PRINTED**

9. PRESENTATIONS

Auditor's Report – Ronnie Farmer

Ronny Farmer, the District's Auditor, gave a preliminary report to the Board. He explained when he began the audit, the books weren't closed as they should have been. There were 30 journal entries that had to be made, which is much more than a district this size should be making. Mr. Farmer shared with the Board that the district has plenty of cash, although there was a large amount of receivables at the end of the year, which was due to funds not being requested in a timely manner.

The audit is complete as far as the financials go, but he still does have some work to do be finalizing the audit. The submission to the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) is on Tier 1. He explained the CDE submission is becoming more extensive each year and some districts spend up to 40 hours on the submission.

Mr. Farmer said CDE will write a letter to the Otero County Treasurer to withhold funds until the audit is complete. He said the audit must be completed by March 31.

Superintendent Lovato explained the inconsistency in the account numbers to the Board. He said he has had to combine duplicate accounts due to that inconsistency. The coding in the accounting systems has been quite interesting and is requiring a lot of clean up. Superintendent Lovato stated he didn't realize how off the coding was.

Director Leyba clarified that an account can't be deleted in School Data Systems (SDS). Superintendent Lovato said in order to retire an account number entirely could take three years as you have to account for the last three years of financials. Director Leyba asked if these are things the Board should focus on. Mr. Farmer suggested the Board look at the monthly report and keep an eye on any changes. He explained around 12% of the budget should be spent every month. Mr. Farmer said the one-page balance sheet and the 15-page financial report generated from SDS would be a benefit for the Board.

Director Derbigny asked Mr. Farmer if the district is out of the woods yet and if we have knowledge of what needs to be done in order to be in compliance. Mr. Farmer said it will most likely take another year to get everything corrected.

Director Backes asked Mr. Farmer when internal controls are discussed is there any written policy/procedure or is it just an interview with staff. Mr. Farmer said it is just an interview with staff. He said written policy and procedure have to be updated and can change on a continual basis.

Director Ayala clarified the audit must be completed by March 31 and Mr. Farmer said yes, that is a self-imposed deadline. She asked if there is anything Mr. Farmer recommends. He said Ms. Huckaby need to attend any CDE training and that CDE will also help with the submission process. Superintendent Lovato shared that Ms. Huckaby has joined a CDE cadre and that CDE has been to the district. Director Ayala told Mr. Farmer she appreciates his delivery and she has a clear picture of where the district is at. Superintendent Lovato added the district's net position

is sold and the issues are bookkeeping issues, not banking issues. Mr. Farmer stated there is no evidence of fraud. Director Leyba said she feels Superintendent Lovato, Ms. Huckaby and Mrs. Ortiz are working hard.

Secondary Principal's Report – Jennifer Foxhoven/Ken McNerney

Jennifer Foxhoven, Junior/Senior High School Principal, said staff is learning as they go with NWEA. Director Derbigny asked about the data results and if students are taking the correct amount of time on task. Mrs. Foxhoven shared staff is looking at data and comparing it to the pacing charts to make sure the progression is correct. She said 9th through 11th grade students haven't been tested before. In years past, it has only been Kindergarten through 8th grade students being tested. Director Ayala asked if students are being encouraged to complete state testing. Mrs. Foxhoven said her message to students is how you do anything is you do everything. Director Derbigny asked if everyone opted out of the state testing if there is still a way to measure where students are. Mrs. Foxhoven stated there is also IXL which is a diagnostic test. She also shared there is a test make-up plan in place in order to get as many students tested as possible. Director Backes asked if there is anything being done to get the students excited about testing. Mrs. Foxhoven said teachers are encouraging their students.

Ken McNerney, Tiger Trades Academy Principal, shared a report with the Board. He said TTA students are only tested twice as they are continuously tested in Odysseyware. Odysseyware is a self-paced course. Mr. McNerney said 80% of TTA student are on track to complete their course work by the end of the year and 25% of Seniors have completed all of their course work for graduation and are just working on electives. Director Ayala praised TTA for working with students who don't fit into the regular school day.

Director Derbigny asked why it is a bad thing for students to opt out of state testing. Superintendent Lovato said low participation hurts accreditation and districts lose points on the accreditation rubric. Director Ayala asked if there is anything done for students with test anxiety. Mrs. Foxhoven said teachers give an encouraging speech to students prior to their taking the test. Director Leyba said there should be a push for more community involvement in what businesses are looking for in worker's knowledge. She said this input would also be valuable when the CDE academic standards are being adjusted. Mrs. Foxhoven said when standards are being worked on, that information is shared with teachers.

10. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The dry wall is up and being taped at the bus barn. The heating equipment should be in by the end of the month. The fire suppression will begin installation.

Superintendent Lovato said questionnaires have been sent out to staff for their opinion on the calendar. He said the goal is to have a calendar on the March agenda for approval.

Regarding the Primary School plumbing issues, Superintendent Lovato said he has been in contact with the general contractor who has stated they will be happy to fix anything that happened on their watch. Superintendent Lovato did say, however, there may be cast iron pipe issues that will have to be dealt with.

Superintendent Lovato recognized the work being done with building level coordination. He is seeing more involvement and collaboration and commended all the buildings.

Director Bickel asked about a comment one of the Science Fair students made, which was fundraising. She asked Superintendent Lovato if the district is paying for the kids to attend the Science Fair competition. He said yes, however, the district will only pay for the students and not family to attend. Superintendent Lovato also shared he will be looking into Science Fair sponsorship being an extra duty for staff. Director Ayala commented that is this should become an extra duty she would like to see some expectations attached to that. Superintendent Lovato said the extra duty would only be at the secondary level due to the travel involved.

Director Ayala asked for an estimated completion date on the bus barn. Superintendent Lovato said it should be April for the interior and certificate of occupancy.

Director Ayala asked if the district is seeking any outside input for the calendar from parents. There is currently one parent on the calendar committee. Director Leyba said the Board has the power to create and dissolve any committees in the district and she would like the calendar committee to be approved by the Board. She would like the committee to have staff, parents and students involved. Superintendent Lovato explained getting good representation is difficult but does like to get feedback when he can. Assistant Superintendent Nuschy said he agrees that is one area where parents could feel like their voice matters.

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11. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Superintendent Evaluation Results (Leyba)
- b. Approve Superintendent Contract (Leyba) **RENEWED SUPERINTENDENT'S CONTRACT TO JUNE 30, 2025 AT THE CURRENT SALARY OF \$114,600.00 PLUS \$1,800.00 FOR TRAVEL EXPENSES.**

12. BOARD COMMENTS

- ✓ Director Backes said it is always nice to see Science Fair presentations especially with a few teachers taking that on and promoting Science. She said it was nice to have Mrs. Siefkas and Mrs. Rangel at the meeting tonight and celebrate their extraordinary accomplishment.

13. ADJOURNMENT – MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:58 p.m.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

DEE LEYBA, President **ANGELA AYALA, Vice President**
DARLENE DERBIGNY, Secretary/Treasurer **KIDRON BACKES, Director**
KRISTIN BICKEL, Director