



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

BOARD WRAP-UP

Board of Education Meeting

July 13, 2020

1. **ROLL CALL** –Backes, Bickel, Derbigny and Leyba. Director Ayala was absent.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA – AGENDA APPROVED AS PRESENTED**
 2. **CONSENT AGENDA**
 - A. **Personnel Approval**
 - Carol Morgan - Resignation as Instructional Coach at La Junta Primary School effective August 1, 2020
 - Tammy Evett - Resignation as Library Aide at the Junior/Senior High School effective July 31, 2020
 - Kyle Schrock - New Hire as Math Teacher at the Junior/Senior High School for the 2020-2021 school year
 6. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - D. **ADDITION - Declare a Critical Shortage**
 4. **CONSENT AGENDA - APPROVED CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED**
 - A. **Personnel Approval**
 - Yvonne Petrie - Resignation as Third Grade Teacher at La Junta Intermediate School effective June 24, 2020
 - Ivan Pacheco - Resignation as Physical Education Teacher at La Junta Primary School effective July 1, 2020
 - Morgan Sutton - New Hire as Kindergarten Teacher at La Junta Primary School for the 2020-2021 school year
 - Carol Morgan - Resignation as Instructional Coach at La Junta Primary School effective August 1, 2020
 - Tammy Evett - Resignation as Library Aide at the Junior/Senior High School effective July 31, 2020
 - Kyle Schrock - New Hire as Math Teacher at the Junior/Senior High School for the 2020-2021 school year
 - B. **Approve Compliance Report for the 2019-2020 School Year**
5. **MINUTES**

Approve Minutes of June 24, 2020. **APPROVED AS PRINTED**
6. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Superintendent Lovato updated the Board on the bus barn construction project. He said there was a glitch in getting some of the architectural plans approved. Mr. Miell has been working hard to get things moving because we are closing in on the completion window. The bus barn plans are due to the City of La Junta for review on Wednesday. Open bidding for the interior will also be released on Wednesday. He said there should be a notice in the newspaper for that. Superintendent Lovato said he would like to get the route buses moved to East School now and park them on the basketball courts in case the bus barn is not completed when school begins. This will prevent bus routes needing to be reconfigured. Currently the buses are parked at the high school. A couple of sections of fence will need to be removed in the southwest corner. He said the old playground equipment that is there will be scrapped and removing the really old equipment that is on the southeast corner. After the City puts in the electrical in the next couple of weeks, we should be good to go. He said the completion is still being planned for mid-August, however, you are always at the mercy of construction.

All of the athletic schedules we have were posted. Superintendent Lovato said he is still unsure of what CHSAA is going to do and is not trying to get ahead of things, but he wanted to release the schedules so people could plan effectively. He said some summer sports are happening now, minus any contact sports. He informed the Board this is not a decision the district will make individually. New Mexico has switched their football program to the

BOARD WRAP UP – July 13, 2020

Page | 2

spring, but he does not know if Colorado will follow on that decision. He said there is a lot of discussion on being able to have extracurricular activities. One extracurricular activity that is difficult to support now is band due to the hygiene of using the instruments and right now band is on hold, but we are trying to get everything else moving. He stressed the schedules were released in order to communicate, but things could change.

Regarding the swimming pool, Superintendent Lovato said he is not ready to open it full time for open swim. He said lap swim will open this Wednesday and there will be one open lane between each lane. Water aerobics will occur if spacing can be maintained. He said the locker rooms will be open because those are the only available restrooms, however, he is asking people come dressed for swim.

Superintendent Lovato shared he and the administrators are moving as quickly as they can in regard to students returning to school given the situation. The start date of school was moved back on this year's calendar to help accommodate 4-H students and the fair. The fair will look different this year and the 4-H activities are still going to happen, but there will be no carnival. He said for us this works out as the first day of school is August 24. Other surrounding districts will be starting school before us, which will allow us to see what is working and what isn't working.

Superintendent Lovato shared he recently had a meeting with the Otero County Commissions, the Otero County Health Department and the Santa Fe Trail BOCES superintendents and everyone is hoping the county will be in the Protect Your Neighbor phase soon. He said if not, a variance will be able to be written. Superintendent Lovato said all school districts in Otero, Bent and Crowley counties are working on being consistent in re-opening schools. He shared that with La Junta Public Schools being the largest district, there are more situations to think about.

Currently, there is an online platform for students grades 5-12 available. Superintendent Lovato said the lower grade levels can be accommodated if necessary for those students who will require online due to health conditions. He said so many questions come up and when one question is answered, two more arise. Some of the questions have been regarding coughing, congestion and allergies, with symptoms being similar to COVID. Superintendent Lovato said nurses in the area are communicating on these types of concerns.

Superintendent Lovato said he is meeting with the principals tomorrow and is planning on releasing a survey on Wednesday for teachers to complete asking for any special circumstances they may have as well as any ideas. He is also planning on releasing another parent survey on Wednesday as well. Superintendent Lovato said weekly communication will occur until school starts and he will submit communication to the newspaper also. He said he will try to communicate as we go. On Thursday, Superintendent Lovato will meet with all superintendents in the 3-county area. He shared the S-CAP districts have also been meeting and there is an upcoming summit in Buena Vista to discuss re-opening school. Superintendent Lovato said rural districts are trying really hard to make their regional voices heard and he feels confident schools will be on target for in person learning.

There have been 75 responses to the survey that was released last week. Regarding the one-mile radius busing question, about 55% of responses said this wouldn't affect them. 50% of the responses stated they would be driving their kids to school. Superintendent Lovato said safety is the number one priority and students will be living with COVID for the rest of their lives. He said he is trying to be very understanding of that and has been clear the two sides, safety and education, are both very important. He said he wants to be aware of what is going on with the teachers. We have teachers who have new additions to their families that we are concerned about. He said their needs are trying to be met without compromising their families. Superintendent Lovato said he has all these things on his radar and is not ignoring them. There is a plan in place for a lot of things, but not for everything. He shared he is doing the best he can to meet the needs of the kids and there are many needs that are out of our control, but the district is still being expected to meet those needs. Just last week, we were thinking students would have to eat lunch in their classrooms and now they will be able to eat in the commons in groups of 50 or less. Superintendent Lovato said we will keep working on it and hopefully will be over communicating in the next five weeks. He said he is very confident of what the district is doing and is trying to do. He understands the state can come in any time and say things can't be done like they are being done. There will be a contingency plan in place for online. Google classroom will be utilized. Technology and hot spots are available.

Director Backes asked about online learning and hybrid learning. She inquired about those students and parents who found online learning to be successful for them if we will be offering a full-time online option. Superintendent Lovato said an online option will be available for students in grades 5-12 and that is the direction that education turned prior to COVID. He is a little nervous that the volume of online requests might be high and some teachers may need to switch to online teaching. He said if is available, he will open it up to everyone.

BOARD WRAP UP – July 13, 2020

Page | 3

Director Derbigny commented on the district taking student temperatures when getting on the buses and arriving at school. Superintendent Lovato said right now, temperatures are being taken for those that come into the buildings and coaches are taking temperatures of the athletes. He is hoping that when the county enters the Protect Your Neighbor phase, parents will be able to symptom check their children. He said students who don't feel well will still be checked. Unless the district is required to take student temperatures, he is hoping to trust that students are well and asks parents to not send students to school if they are showing symptoms and not feeling well. Director Derbigny clarified there won't be temp taking on buses and that students health will just be parent certified. Superintendent Lovato said yes, that is what the district is hoping for unless the government says otherwise.

Director Leyba would like to see a survey sent out specifically to students and stated she would like to hear from them. Superintendent Lovato asked her if she has specific questions she would target directly to them. She inquired about what questions will the teachers and parents will be asked. Superintendent Lovato said the next step questions are what the principals are currently working on. He said the questions that are coming are how comfortable are you and do you prefer to wear a mask or not wear a mask. He said these would be fair questions for students. He said there are a lot of opinions on what a mask would look like for kids. Some more questions might be asking what are your expectations, are you comfortable with large or small groups. He said he will try to give some climate survey questions to gauge how people are feeling about that. Director Leyba said those questions could be worded for students as well. Superintendent Lovato said he assumes on some of the questions parents will be asking their students to help them answer them, although he realizes some may not. He again said there weren't many responses to the survey released last week and requested people take the survey.

Director Backes asked Superintendent Lovato if some of the COVID relief funds could be used to accommodate class size and possibly purchase items to hold class outside, i.e., shade structures. Superintendent Lovato said that is a possibility and that anything is on the table right now. He said the way the state order reads right now he feels we should be okay with classroom volume.

Superintendent Lovato said he would like to have a special Board meeting on July 28, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. He shared two Board meetings per month might be required until school begins.

Superintendent Lovato said whether students are homebound or in person, attendance will be taken. This will be face to face attendance as students at home will be joining the class through technology. If a student is not able to log in, they will contact the building for attendance and explain they are having difficulty. At this point, the district can send a tech to fix the issue. He said the district is trying to make things as seamless as possible.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. Approve Revised Policies IKE, GBGD, GCBA, GCCBA and GCLC on Second/Final Reading (Lovato) **APPROVED AS PRESENTED**

8. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Approve Rotary Membership (Lovato) **APPROVED AS PRESENTED**
- b. Approve Writing Alive Curriculum (Lovato) **APPROVED AS PRESENTED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$59,666.20**
- c. Approve Revised Exhibits GDBA-E-1 and GDBA-E-2 on First/Revised/Final Reading (Lovato) **APPROVED AS PRESENTED**
- d. Declare Critical Shortage (Lovato) **APPROVED AS PRESENTED**

9. BOARD COMMENTS

- ✓ Director Leyba thanked everyone who was in attendance and appreciates the conversation that was had at the District Advisory Council meeting. She shared that there was representation from preschool to higher education, which is a good mix of our community.
- ✓ Director Backes said she is appreciative of the goal being over-communication with the community. She likes seeing the polls and also liked hearing the suggestion for student polls. Director Backes feels the key to making the polls work effectively is to have good participation. She said giving feedback will help with a good start to the year. She is thankful that our district will have a couple of weeks to see how other schools start and maybe learn from things that they are finding that aren't working in their schools. She feels that will be helpful for us. As a community, hang in there with us and we will see what orders are in effect when we are able to open the doors and start the school year and hopefully it will be a great school year and Tiger Pride!

13. ADJOURNMENT – **MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:09 p.m.**

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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