



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



**BOARD WRAP-UP**

**Board of Education Regular Meeting**  
**April 29, 2024**

1. **ROLL CALL** – A. Ayala, S. Ayala, Derbigny, Hines, Leyba.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
3. **RECOGNITION OF THE 2024 VALEDICTORIAN AND SALUTATORIAN** - The Board of Education recognized the following students for their hard work and achievement at La Junta Junior/Senior High School:
  - 2024 Valedictorian – David Mackey
  - 2024 Salutatorian – Morgan Foxhoven
4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA** – **AGENDA APPROVED AS PRESENTED**
  6. **NEW BUSINESS**
    - E. **Approve Edgenuity Renewal**
5. **CONSENT AGENDA** - **APPROVED CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED**
  - A. **Personnel Approval**
    - Jaye Senner - Retiring as Special Education Teacher at the Intermediate School effective May 23, 2024
    - Susan Clemons - Retiring as Special Education Teacher at the Intermediate School effective May 23, 2024
    - Carlos Rangel - Resignation as Math Teacher at the Junior/Senior High School effective May 23, 2024
    - Kelli Howell - Resignation as 2nd Grade Teacher at the Primary School effective May 23, 2024
    - Shaelyn Mayo - Resignation as Kindergarten Teacher at the Primary School effective July 31, 2024
    - Joanna Olague - New Hire as a Special Education Paraprofessional at the Primary School for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year
    - Toni Laurent - New Hire as a Teacher at the Primary School for the 2024-2025 school year
    - Jessie Wallace - Resignation as District Nurse effective June 25, 2024
    - Sheila Gimeno - Resignation as 2nd Grade Teacher at the Primary School effective May 23, 2024
    - Amanda Hawks - Resignation as 5th Grade Teacher at the Intermediate School effective May 23, 2024
    - Sean Holcomb - New Hire as Special Education Paraprofessional at S.E.A.L. Academy for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year
  - B. **Approve Additional Substitute Teachers for the 2023-2024 School Year**
  - C. **Approve Revised Policies GCE/GCF, GDE/GDF, JLDAC, AEA and GBI on Second/Final Reading**
6. **MINUTES** – Minutes of the Regular Meeting on March 25, 2024 and Special Meeting on April 10, 2024.  
**APPROVED AS PRINTED**
7. **PRESENTATIONS**

**Tiger Trades Academy Report – Ken McNerney**

Ken McNerney, TTA Principal, shared a report with the Board. He said there are 139 students enrolled at TTA. Out of those 139, 85 students are 100% on campus and 54 are hybrid students. Hybrid students take their core classes online and have at least two electives on campus. The attendance rate at TTA is at 73.9%, which is an increase of 5.2% from last year. Mr. McNerney stated he realizes that is still low and he and his staff are working diligently on increasing the number. Mr. McNerney was pleased to announce out of 38 seniors, 32 of those students will be graduating.

The NWEA testing data was shared. In Math, 81% of students participated and 62% of students met their goal. In Reading, 80% of students tested and 55% met their goal. Language had 82% of 7-11<sup>th</sup> grade students test with 50% meeting their goal. Science showed 58% of 7-10<sup>th</sup> grade students testing and 51% meeting their goal. Mr. McNerney said NWEA data traditionally drops from fall to winter and the TTA data did not. Participation rates have also risen, however, Mr. McNerney would like to increase those rates.

Mr. McNerney reviewed some upcoming events at TTA:

- May 1 – Student Council Trip
- May 2 – Senior Trip
- Science Trip to the Capulin Volcano in New Mexico next week
- Tech Trip to Pueblo next week

The TTA students' film, write and edit their daily announcements with the help of Mr. Salazar. Mr. McNerney shared some of the video announcements with the Board and audience.

Jadiekia Valenzuela, Anabell Valverde and Ms. Rebecca Griffin spoke to the Board. The young ladies were able to attend a conference in Denver and were able to participate as teen counselors and leaders. The girls shared their experience with the Board. Ms. Griffin thanked the Board for allowing the opportunity.

Mr. McNerney reviewed some of the happenings in TTA classes:

- The WORK students have been working on and off campus, putting up garage walls. The students are learning building code and carpentry skills. There are five students working as district employees in the custodial and maintenance departments.
- The students in art class are working on finishing their projects for the Otero College art show, which will be held on May 16. The art class will also go to the La Junta Wipeout Swimming Pool and paint a mural on the fence.
- The animal science class recently toured a horse training facility. They were able to observe how horses are trained as well as help groom the animals. They went to the Blue Ribbon Processing Plant in Fowler and toured the facility.
- The TTA 4-H Club has sixteen students participating. Eight of the students recently finished a hunter's safety course and are now ready to participate in 4-H shooting sports. Another student participated in the 4-H project runway where clothing creation was learned.
- Some students have been participating in the Cat Club and Mexican Heritage project in Rocky Ford on Fridays. Students work on their fair projects twice a month after school.
- The animal science and food safety classes recently were able to complete a community service project at the Colorado Pet Pantry in Englewood. Fifteen students traveled to the warehouse where they sorted pet food and helped load a truck for delivery.
- The Go Green class visited Valley Recycling in Swink and learned what can be recycled and why. This class also visits Evergreen Assisted Living each month to complete a monthly project.

The TTA 4-H Club is the only club that is school sponsored in the entire state of Colorado.

Mr. McNerney invited the Board to attend their Awards Ceremony that will be held on May 16. He said lunch will be served. He also extended an invitation to a petting zoo at TTA on May 15 beginning at 11:00 a.m.

Mr. McNerney thanked the Board and Superintendent Lovato for their continued support of Tiger Trades Academy.

Director Derbigny inquired on where in Pueblo the tech group is going. Mr. McNerney shared the class will be going to a trampoline park to film some video there. She also asked how long the trip will be when students visit the Capulin Volcano. Mr. McNerney said that will be a day trip.

Director A. Ayala commented that TTA has grown substantially since it began. She took a moment to thank all TTA staff for their efforts.

## **8. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Superintendent Lovato began by sharing a preliminary budget report with the Board. He said the state hasn't finalized funding yet and stated there are things that will affect school districts. He is hoping the factors that

the state uses to increase funding for our district will be to look at the at-risk funding. He said he is being pessimistic with the budget in order to not have any surprises.

Superintendent Lovato gave an update on the Meet and Confer requests.

*Dedicated Financial Person:*

Superintendent Lovato stated Heather Nelson is the Business Manager and dedicated financial person for the district. He said he feels this topic was regarding payroll and he explained the turnover in HR and the district using ADP for payroll. Superintendent Lovato shared he is working on bringing in a person to explain tax forms that people have to fill out, as the district cannot give any advice on filling out a W-4. He will also be working on an explanation for staff on how to log into and navigate the Message Center to see their check stubs.

*Cost of Living Raise:*

Unfortunately, this year steps and lanes are the only increases being looked at. Superintendent Lovato explained the step increase is \$850 for certified staff.

*Insurance Fringe Raise:*

The insurance increase this year is just under 6%. The district will be able to cover the cost of the insurance premium for an employee (single, not spouse or family plan). The challenge will be to find a way to increase the fringe by \$50.00 and work that into the budget.

*Building Needs:*

Roofing, plumbing and other aging items requiring maintenance will continue to be looked at. The Intermediate exterior has been approved to be painted this summer and should be finished by the end of June. The roof at the Junior/Senior High School will need replacement in the future.

*Instructional Coach:*

Each building has an assistant principal, one with two. Superintendent Lovato said an instructional coach is not an impossibility, but he doesn't know where he can fit that into the budget.

*New Superintendent:*

The Board will be making their decision tonight on a new superintendent for the district. Superintendent Lovato explained there will be contract negotiations coming up next.

*Staff Lunch:*

Superintendent Lovato said free staff lunch has not been built into the budget yet. He stated staff who are on lunch duty will continue to receive meals paid by the district, but he isn't sure if all staff will receive a free lunch next year.

*Paper Budgeting:*

Superintendent Lovato shared paper use has almost tripled since he has been here.

The regular May board meeting date falls on a holiday and therefore, will need to be moved. The meeting date will be shared once it is determined

## 9. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Selection of New Superintendent **THE BOARD NAMED DR. JAMES REECE BLINCOE AS THE NEW SUPERINTENDING PENDING CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS ON A 4-1 VOTE**
- b. Approve Capturing Kids Hearts Renewal (Lovato) **APPROVED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$19,000.00 AS PRESENTED**
- c. Declare a Critical Shortage of Teachers and Bus Drivers (Lovato) **APPROVED AS PRESENTED**
- d. Approve Certified Staff Employment Renewals - Resolution 2024-2N, Resolution 2024-2P and Resolution 2024-3 (Lovato) **APPROVED AS PRESENTED**
- e. Approve Edgenuity Renewal (Lovato) **APPROVED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$41,500.00 AS PRESENTED**

## 10. BOARD COMMENTS

