



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

**BOARD WRAP-UP**

**Board of Education Meeting**  
**February 26, 2024**

1. **ROLL CALL** – A. Ayala, Derbigny, Hines, Leyba. Director S. Ayala was absent.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. **STUDENT RECOGNITION – SCIENCE FAIR PARTICIPANTS**

The Board recognized the Science Fair participants/winners.

*Primary School:*

Participants were: Violet Ayala, Violet Carpenter, Krislynn Durga, Natasha Fief, Taylor Fischer, Shayla Ford, Sadie Goldsberry, Zoey Hayes, Austin Kadlecek, Claude Randall, Sophia Rocha, and Persayeus Salas. RESULTS: Lower Fair (K-2): First Place - Flavor Bombs - Violet Carpenter; Second Place - Boiling Water - Taylor Fischer; Third Place - My at Home Lava Lamp - Krislynn Durga RESULTS: Top Lower Fair Project (K-5) - Violet Carpenter.

*Intermediate School:* The Intermediate School received the Dr. Joel Gray Regional Science Fair Champion Award for being the top overall scoring school!

Participants were: Abraham Ouattara, Konnor Voigts, Adrianna Ayala, Anakin Ayala, Dimitri Romero, MeeLa Roller, Gideon Wallace, Jennylynn Zamora, Nathan Baldwin, Acacia Manyik, Zyion Lucero, Lillian Seaba, Kenzie Grasmick, and Kendyl Osborn.

*Class II (3rd-5th Grades)*

1st Place - Abraham Ouattara - On This Farm There was a Meal Work, E-I-E-I-O

2nd Place - Nathan Baldwin - Airplane Forces

3rd Place - Jennylyn Zamora - Pop! It's a Sprouter!

*Colorado Chapter Soil and Water Conservation Society*

1st Place - Kendyl Osborn - Shells to Cells (Advances to compete at the Colorado Science and Engineering Fair at CSU-Ft. Collins)

2nd Place - Lillian Seaba - High Plains Water

NASA Earth Systems Science Project Award - Gideon Wallace - Electricity, Away!

Student Award of Geoscience - MeeLa Roller - Brr, It's Freezing Cold

United States Agency for International Development - Abraham Ouattara - On This Farm There was a Meal Work, E-I-E-I-O

Ricoh Sustainable Development Award 2024 - Acacia Manyik and Zyion Lucero - Breaking Down the Facts Biodegradable vs Traditional Plastics

Student Scientist Advanced to compete at the Colorado Science and Engineering Fair in April - Kendyl Osborn

*Junior/Senior High School:*

Class III 6-8th grade projects: 3rd place - Gianna Murphy, 8th grade, "The Durability of Homemade Perfume"

Class IV 9-12th grade projects: 2nd place - Yale Science and Engineering Association Award; American Psychological Association Award - Zoey Montoya and Everett Ediger, 11th and 12th grade, "Determining Prosodic Patterns in the Speech of Online Science Communication" Taking the Pulse of the Planet Award - Julian Chapa and Isaiah Peralta, 10th grade, "Highway to Hail"

*State Qualifiers:*

Gianna Murphy; Julian Chapa; Isaiah Peralta; Zoey Montoya; Everett Ediger

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### 4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA – **AGENDA APPROVED AS PRESENTED**

#### 1. OPENING ITEMS

C. Konnor Voigts, Adrianna Ayala, Anakin Ayala, Dimitri Romero, Kenzie Grasmick were added to the Intermediate School science fair participants.

### 5. CONSENT AGENDA - **APPROVED CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED**

#### A. Personnel Approval

- Trisha Ortega - Resignation as Paraprofessional at the Primary School effective February 1, 2024
- Hannah Gomez - New Hire as the Assistant Speech and Debate Coach for the 2024 season
- Scott Sutherland - New Hire as an Activity Bus Driver for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year
- Diego Haun - Resignation as High School Assistant Baseball Coach effective February 2, 2024

#### B. Approve Spring Sports Extra Duty Assignments for the 2023-2024 Season

#### C. Approve an Additional Out-of-District Student for the 2023-2024 School Year

#### D. Approve an Additional Substitute Teacher for 2023-2024

### 6. MINUTES – Minutes of the Regular and Special Meetings on January 22, 2024 and January 29, 2024 **APPROVED AS PRINTED**

### 7. PRESENTATIONS

#### *Maintenance Update – Crispin Miell*

Crispin Miell, Maintenance Director, shared some of the projects that have been completed:

- Scoreboard at Tiger Stadium installed
- HVAC project completed with kinks being worked out
- ADA swing at the Intermediate installation completed; students will be able to use next week
- Intermediate flooring/painting in main hall and commons completed
- Automatic flushers/faucets district-wide installation 50% complete

Upcoming projects:

- Installing shade structures, with possibly Tiger Trades Academy and Voc Ag students assisting in installation
- Particle board in the TTA gym replaced
- Court lines painted and hoops installed on the outdoor court at TTA
- Flooring/painting on the wings of the main floor at the Intermediate
- Exterior painting at the Intermediate, including the cupulas, pillars, downspouts and lettering on the building (sidewalk mural will be looked at as well)
- Walk off carpet installation at the Junior/Senior High School
- Concrete at Tiger Gym/Stadium replacement
- Junior/Senior High School exit lights repaired/refreshed
- Researching grant opportunities for roof replacement at the Junior/Senior High School; contractor estimated replacement cost around \$4,000,000
- Looking at an electrical upgrade at the Junior/Senior High School as the panels are outdated

Director Derbigny asked if there were issues with the electrical outlets and HVAC not working at TTA. This was mentioned at the annual Meet and Confer meeting with staff. Mr. Miell said he had a work order and replaced a breaker. Mr. McNerney added that the work orders that were turned in for TTA has been completed. Director A. Ayala asked if a structural engineer has been contacted regarding the Junior/Senior High roof to see if the roof can be restructured. Mr. Miell said it would be more cost effective to build a new structure and added the roof replacement on that building will be a big project. Director A. Ayala inquired if there were any plans to replant trees in Orahoad Park at TTA with the bus barn fencing installation. She said she would like to see the TTA students begin planting trees on Arbor Day, similar to what the Primary School does. Mr. Miell said there are trees in the park that need removal and that the trees were planted too close together to thrive. Director A. Ayala suggested contacting the Otero Museum for a donation to purchase more trees. Director Leyba asked how the work order system operates. Mr. Miell said teachers send an email or talk to the principal about the issue. There is a designated staff member in each building that submits the work order electronically. Mr. Miell receives the work order request and it is immediately sent out to the corresponding maintenance staff member. Once the job is done, Mr. Miell closes out the work order and the building gets notification. Director Leyba asked how many maintenance staff there are. Mr. Miell said there are four who manage the building infrastructure and two grounds staff. Director Derbigny informed Mr. Miell one staff member at TTA stated her students couldn't charge their computers due to having not enough outlets in the classroom. Mr. Miell said if a work order is entered, he can look at the problem. He doesn't know a problem exists if no work orders

are received. TTA staff also requested fans installed in the restrooms. Mr. Miell said he will look into that. Mr. Miell shared with the Board that a new asbestos inspection and updated files recently occurred. He said the company did a thorough job.

***Junior/Senior High School Report – Jennifer Foxhoven***

Mrs. Foxhoven began by thanking Superintendent Lovato for adding Science Fair to the daily schedule at the buildings.

Parent-teacher conferences were held last Thursday evening and Friday morning. Parents voiced their preference at the STP (Student-Teacher-Parent) meeting on having traditional parent-teacher conferences. Self-care booths were set up for parents and students, as well as a potato bar. Parents were also offered a chance to set up a parent portal account through Infinite Campus and pay any fees owed to the bookkeeper. There was also a donated clothing give away. Mrs. Foxhoven said once kids saw an adult take an item, they began taking items also.

Mrs. Foxhoven announced upcoming student happenings. She said winter sports wrapped up and spring sports are underway. The students enjoyed the Snowcoming (similar to Homecoming) event returning. There were dress up days, games during lunch, and a queen and king were crowned during the dance. Mrs. Foxhoven said it was nice to see the school spirit. The Tiger Talkers have been doing well with junior high student, Gianna Ayala taking 1<sup>st</sup> in Poetry Interpretation and high school students, Jackie Becerra and Lexi McClure placing 2<sup>nd</sup> at the 4A State in Duo Interpretation with their piece, "How to Survive a Horror Movie!" The spring play, Disney's Newsies JR will be held March 28, 29 and 30. Mrs. Foxhoven said the stagecraft class has been working to clean up the staging area in preparation for the production

In the CTE (Career and Technical Education) department, FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) has 47 members and 35 of those student qualified to compete in the state competition in April. The FBLA officers will be going to the Intermediate School for Dr. Seuss day for fun activities and reading to the students. FFA (Future Farmers of America) has 66 members and each member completes their own SAE (supervised AG experience). The students are tracking over \$200,000 worth of assets in their entrepreneurship enterprises. Everett Ediger was the district champion in Extemporaneous Speaking, the state champ in Agriscience Farming in Natural Resources, and bronze at nationals. The student project auction will be held on May 11.

There is a great working relationship between the Junior/Senior High and Otero College. Students recently went to the college to see the Smithsonian Institution Exhibition. Mrs. Foxhoven said the accuplacer testing date is March 27. Currently, there are 91 students taking a concurrent course with 165 courses total, which is almost two courses per student. There are eighteen students who attend classes on the Otero campus.

The juniors are gearing up for FAFSA and creating FSA IDs with the help of GearUp. There are 52 Juniors and 66 Seniors in the GearUp program. The seniors are working on scholarships. The Junior/Senior High School is holding FAFSA nights.

Senior meetings will be held to make sure students are on track to graduate, with credit recovery taking place if necessary.

The district utilizes the outside counseling services of Willow Tree and Valleywide Health Care Services. Mrs. Foxhoven thanked the Board and Superintendent Lovato for the counseling services for both staff and students.

Miss Hallie Romero, district social worker, recently gave a Handle with Care presentation. This is a program that encourages local agencies to communicate with the school district to support students within school time. No details are shared with the school but this allows the school to handle students with care in times of distress.

Director Derbigny asked about credit recovery and if that took place during the school day. Mrs. Foxhoven said it takes place during the subject class time the student is lacking in. Director Leyba said she has had some people ask if there is another way to access the VocAg room. Mrs. Foxhoven said if she is made aware of a need, accommodations can be made. Director Derbigny asked about the graduation regalia students wear and if there are any conversations had. Mrs. Foxhoven said regalia requirements are not in policy, so students may wear what represents their culture. They are asked, however, to get administrative approval prior to graduation of what they will be wearing. Director A. Ayala mentioned the parents who attended the Friday morning parent-teacher conferences didn't get to experience the self-care booths and there were absent teachers. Mrs. Foxhoven said the self-care booths were only able to be present for one day and some teachers were absent due to athletics obligations. Director A. Ayala suggested splitting booth representatives up so both days of conferences offer something. Director A. Ayala asked if there is another location

for the Ag auction. Mrs. Foxhoven said the event was adjusted last year to ease congestion. Director Derbigny inquired on how many students will be graduating. Mrs. Foxhoven said 97-98 students. Superintendent Lovato added there are 39 seniors at TTA and 69 at the Junior/Senior High School.

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

Superintendent Lovato updated the Board on the progress of the Tiger Trades Academy gym improvements. He said the gaps in the gym walls have to be repaired correctly before the FRP wall paneling installation and that will happen this summer.

The district had an extensive asbestos evaluation completed. Superintendent Lovato said the company that used to do the inspections quit. A new company was found and the district now has a good picture of where the asbestos is in the district.

The district's master plan will be reviewed and revised. Superintendent Lovato said in order to write any grant moving forward, the master plan has to be revised. He said he isn't sure another bond issue would be passed by voters.

Superintendent Lovato talked about transportation. He said the department is struggling due to lack of drivers. He said there are some drivers in training but Superintendent Lovato feels this will continue to be an issue. He said a new special needs bus is a high priority. Work vehicles for maintenance also need updating.

The district was awarded the EASI (Empowering Action for Student Improvement) grant. The UVA-PLE (University of Virginia – Partners in Leadership in Education) would like Superintendent Lovato and the elementary schools to attend an event in Virginia the week before spring break. There is also a remote option in April, if necessary. This grant and process will be instrumental in getting the Intermediate off the accountability clock. Superintendent Lovato said all four buildings will be represented on the UVA project because of the status of the elementary schools with both the federal and state identifications and that is why UVA wanted attendance in person.

Superintendent Lovato gave a shout out to Willow Tree counseling services. He feels this is a priority to maintain.

**9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- a. Approve 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 Calendars (Lovato) **APPROVED AS PRESENTED**

**10. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Superintendent Evaluation Results (Leyba)
- b. Approve I Love You Guys Training (Lovato) **APPROVED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$17,500.00 AS PRESENTED**
- c. Approve Overnight Trip and Funding for TTA (Lovato) **APPROVED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$750.00 AS PRESENTED**

**11. BOARD COMMENTS**

- ✓ Director Derbigny said she is going to miss Superintendent Lovato and is sorry to see him go.
- ✓ Director Ayala said great job to all the Science Fair participants. She was happy to hear La Junta had a great showing and the majority of awards were given to La Junta students

**13. ADJOURNMENT – MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:59 p.m.**

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**

*DEE LEYBA, President*                      *ANGELA AYALA, Vice President*  
*DARLENE DERBIGNY, Secretary/Treasurer*                      *STACEY AYALA, Director*  
*SARA HINES, Director*