



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



**BOARD WRAP-UP**

**Board of Education Regular Meeting  
September 23, 2024**

1. **ROLL CALL** – A. Ayala, S. Ayala, Derbigny, Hines, Leyba (via Zoom).
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA – AGENDA APPROVED AS PRESENTED**
  7. **NEW BUSINESS**
    - A. **ADDITION - Approve Access Control Upgrade**
4. **CONSENT AGENDA - APPROVED CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED**
  - A. **Personnel Approval**
    - Brenda Johnson - New Hire as Special Education Paraprofessional at Child Development Services for the 2024-2025 school year
    - Emily Headlee - New Hire as Health Aide at Tiger Trades Academy for the 2024-2025 school year
    - Christina Mackey - New Hire as Junior High TAC Tutor at the Junior/Senior High School for the 2024-2025 school year
    - Shawna Frankmore - New Hire as High School TAC Tutor at the Junior/Senior High School for the 2024-2025 school year
    - William Tyler - New Hire as Junior High Student Council Advisor at the Junior/Senior High School for the 2024-2025 school year
    - Jennifer Ritter - New Hire as Media Coordinator at the Junior/Senior High School for the 2024-2025 school year
  - B. **Approve Additional Out-of-District Students for the 2024-2025 School Year**
  - C. **Approve an Additional Substitute Teacher for the 2024-2025 School Year**
  - D. **Approve Winter Extra Duty Assignments for the 2024-2025 School Year**
5. **MINUTES** – Minutes of the Regular Meeting on August 26, 2024. **APPROVED AS PRINTED**

**6. PRESENTATIONS:**

**New Procedure for Home Athletic Events – Duane Grasmick**

Duane Grasmick, La Junta Junior/Senior High School Athletic Director, explained to the Board that at last week's home football game there was a student there who ended up fighting several times with other students. After investigating the incidents, it was discovered the student wasn't a La Junta Public Schools student. Mr. Grasmick would like to implement student ID's be required for the Junior/Senior High School students (grades 7-12) to enter home games. He will also be implementing that any 6<sup>th</sup> grade or below student be accompanied by a parent, guardian or an adult who will be responsible for them. Mr. Grasmick feels these procedures will help with crowd control at the games as well as turning over supervision of the younger students to the parents. He said a letter will be going out tomorrow to parents informing them of this change.

Director A. Ayala asked if this will be for all events. Mr. Grasmick said this will be for any event that a gate fee is charged. Director Derbigny asked if students have to show their student ID's at any other place at any other time. Mr. Grasmick said this is currently being discussed for something to be implemented in the future, such as scanned ID's. Superintendent Blincoe said this will also give the student ID a purpose for students. Director A. Ayala commented that as she has been leaving games, she has noticed an elderly crowd that rightfully moves at their own pace and younger kids are running to get out. She said this is a safety concern. She asked if this might hurt attendance at any of the activities. Mr. Grasmick said it might bring more parents to events if their child wants to attend and can't go without them. He said this will be implemented next week for the Homecoming events. Director Derbigny inquired about the student who got hit in the fight last week

and if they were injured. Mr. Grasmick said no, but a complaint was filed with the police. Director A. Ayala asked how this will curb the outside activities of students. Mr. Grasmick said they will be told to leave and once a student leaves an event, they won't be allowed back in. Director Leyba asked what platform games will be streamed on. Mr. Grasmick said NFHS. He explained there have been some technical problems.

#### **Transportation Update – Naomi Herrera**

Superintendent Blincoe introduced Naomi Herrera, Transportation Director and shared the transportation department recently completed an audit from the Colorado Department of Education School Transportation Unit. Ms. Herrera was happy to announce the district was one of two districts in the state to pass the audit on the first try. She introduced Javier Muniz, District Mechanic, gave him praise for that accomplishment, and asked him to speak about the audit.

Mr. Muniz explained that he joined the TAC (Transportation Advisory Council) committee with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) when he was first hired. Being a part of this committee, Mr. Muniz explained he learned what was required for reviews. He shared he keeps maintenance files up to date and during the audit, all files for the past two years were reviewed. Mr. Muniz also had files for the past seven years available, if needed. He also said it took him around four months to get the files in order. Mr. Muniz said the auditor was here for a half day.

Ms. Herrera thanked the Board for approving the purchase of the new buses at the last meeting. She said the special needs bus should arrive in January 2025 and it will be about a year before the mini bus arrives. Ms. Herrera stated she hopes that timeline will be sooner as another mini bus is very much needed. Superintendent Blincoe said he, Ms. Herrera and Ms. Nelson, Business Manager, will be meeting to get future transportation needs built into the budget earlier.

#### **Colorado Department of Education – Dr. Sam Schneider**

Dr. Sam Schneider with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) spoke to the Board about the Colorado School Performance Framework and Accountability System. He explained the accountability framework in the state of Colorado and said elementary and middle school students are scored on academic achievement (grade level achievement expectation) at 40% and academic growth (academic gains from year to year) at 60%. The secondary students are scored on academic achievement at 30%, academic growth at 40% and postsecondary and workforce readiness (what extent are students successfully ending their K-12 career) at 30%. He shared the additions to this year's frameworks are Science testing for 5, 8 and 11 grade students. The PSAT and SAT tests have been re-normed. The transition is purely online for these tests. When schools reach year 4 on the accountability clock, a state review panel visits and develops recommendations for year five. In year five, schools are required to be in front of the state board of education for a hearing. At the hearing, the State Board of Education hears the Commissioners report, the state review panel's recommendation, the district proposal and public comments. The school will present a plan for improvement. Dr. Schneider explained there are five options the state board of education can choose for schools in year five of turnaround: 1) be fully or partially managed by a public/private entity; 2) convert to a community school model; 3) build an innovation plan and become an innovation school; 4) convert the school to a charter school; and 5) close the school.

Dr. Schneider talked about positive trends. He shared that the Intermediate School moved from Turnaround to Priority Improvement and every school moved up one level from 2023 to 2024. The district achieved an Exceeds rating for the dropout rate. The district is in year two on accountability clock and has to get one more year of improvement to get off accountability clock. The Intermediate School increased by 9% and there was an overall increase of 3% for the district. There were slight improvements in academic achievement at 2% and growth at 0.4%, however, mostly students are not making a year's growth. 50 median growth percentile is about a year's growth. Superintendent Blincoe said research shows in lower economic areas, students do worse on growth as they don't get the same opportunities as other students. Dr. Schneider said the district and the Intermediate School are showing what is possible.

The hearing before the State Board of Education will be on February 12, 2025. Dr. Schneider said the State Board loves to hear from local board members. He said he will be working with the Intermediate School to start a plan to improve. Dr. Schneider touched on what the hearing will look like, stating the hearing will be quasi-judicial. He said the presentations by CDE and the school/district will be around 30 minutes each. The CDE Commissioner's remarks will be around five minutes and then a questions and answers deliberation by the Board for about 60 minutes. At the conclusion of the hearing, the State Board of Education will vote to direct an accountability pathway and have the Attorney General's office draft an order reflecting the decision.

Suzanna Cordova, the CDE Commissioner, will come in January to visit the Intermediate School. She will visit to learn more about the context and improvement efforts. This will also help her understand the challenges facing the school to support the board in their decision-making during a hearing. Dr. Schneider shared Commissioner Cordova was a superintendent and knows the realities of what all this entails.

Dr. Schneider said he has not seen the State Board of Education recommend any other options besides option 1) be fully or partially managed by a public/private entity. He said UVA (University of Virginia-Arlington) could also be a partial manager. There are other companies that could be considered as well such as: TNTP, Inc. (has been in partial management with Aguilar, Aurora and Adams School Districts); and Relay (has been in partial management with Pueblo Schools). Partial managers can continue work after UVA is done. Dr. Schneider also stated an electronic survey will be released in January for the entire community to submit comments. With a good response, the State Board of Education will feel the public is engaged about what is going on in the district.

The EASI Grant funding is being used to support the UVA partnership. It is specifically used for districts to get extra support they need. It is helpful for districts to have a multi-year plan. In the future EASI Grant funds could be used for district strategic planning (supports work with an external partner to develop a district strategic plan and/or graduate profile), accountability pathways (supports the funding and work with a partial manager), a district design + led plan (a tailor-made plan designed to obtain funding for specific district initiatives) as well as Board services (professional learning and support for local board alongside CDE, Colorado Association of School Boards (CASB) and Colorado Association of School Executives (CASE)).

Dr. Schneider said work should continue to focus on building district infrastructure for improvement as well as support for the instructional transformation efforts.

Superintendent Blincoe said the Board will hold a work session on October 1, 2024 with Dr. Henry Roman. He also has spoken with Matt Cook from CASB to come and do training with the Board. He said Empower Education and CEI (Colorado Education Initiative) could help build a strategic plan on where the district wants to go for the next five years.

Dr. Schneider said all the partnerships spoken of tonight are approved partnerships through CDE and are approved with distinction. He shared they have a track record of doing great work.

Mrs. Apodaca, Intermediate School Principal, commented 3<sup>rd</sup> grade achievement is consistently higher than other grades. Dr. Schneider said the 9% increase by the Intermediate School is a very big jump. He also said a school district had a similar jump and they were in the top third of frameworks across the state. Dr. Schneider said a 9% increase in improvement would put the Intermediate in the top 18% of improved schools or districts last year.

Director Leyba thanked Dr. Schneider for his presentation. She asked what, if any, impact will the suggestions from the accountability task force (1241 task force-a task force created from House Bill 23-1241 to study academic opportunities, inequities, promising practices in schools, and improvements to the accountability and accreditation system) have for schools on the clock if any of those are adopted. Dr. Schneider said their considerations are mostly geared right now towards what data points go into the framework than they are what options we are reaching here. He said this task force should not impact the hearing in February 2025. Director Leyba asked if the body of evidence that is being put together to present to the State Board will be available for public viewing. He said it will become a public document when it is posted to the State Board of Education's BoardDocs. There will be both informal and formal transparency. Director Leyba asked what happens if the district moves back on the accountability scale. Dr. Schneider said when a district on turnaround or priority improvement moves up a level, they would be called Year 5 On Watch. If they move up again then the clock resets. If the year after that, they drop down to turnaround or priority improvement, they would go to Year 6. The On Watch year just pauses you for one year.

Mrs. Miller asked about the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade data and how their growth is measured. Dr. Schneider said 3<sup>rd</sup> grade is scored only on academic achievement and not academic growth.

Director Derbigny asked about the partial management and if there are experts for our size of district. Dr. Schneider said these companies are experts in academic transformation. Their strategies and efforts don't just work in rural settings, they also work in urban and city settings.

Director A. Ayala asked if we were on yellow (priority turnaround) and got yellow again, then what. Dr. Schneider said if a district stays in yellow for two years in a row, then they come off the clock. If they slip back down, they will be in Year 1 on the clock. Dr. Schneider said

Director A. Ayala asked Dr. Schneider if he believes a Chief Academic Officer is appropriate to add to the district. He said CDE doesn't make personnel recommendations. Director A. Ayala asked if it fits in with the plan. Dr. Schneider said it does and a lot of school districts use that position to help focus remain on instruction. He said positions like that are helpful for building pipelines within the district and can help create lines of promotion to help create stability. This employee could be promoted to superintendent at some point. He also stated the district needs to make sure the right candidates are available but this is part of a larger strategy.

## 7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Superintendent Blincoe shared he was at a conference last week and learned a lot about school finance.

Dr. Schneider and Superintendent Blincoe will be working on the EASI Grant starting in October for submission in December. He believes the district will receive \$100,000 in grant monies over the next two and one-half years. This money will be used for the UVA partnership and the other partnership the district decides on. It will also be used for strategic planning and Board training as well as the different/direct activities that the district will be doing.

Director Leyba asked if the EASI Grant could pay for or contribute to the Chief Academic Officer position. Superintendent Blincoe said there are specific things the grant can be used for but he doesn't believe personnel is one.

## 8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. Approve Policy JLCD on Second/Final Revision (Blincoe) **APPROVED ON SECOND/FINAL READING AS PRESENTED**

## 9. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Approve Curriculum and Instruction Position [Chief Academic Officer] (Blincoe) **APPROVED AS PRESENTED**
- b. Approve Children's Literacy Center Tutoring Program (Blincoe) **APPROVED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$28,800.00 AS PRESENTED**
- c. Approve Access Control Upgrade (Blincoe) **APPROVED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$322,255.00 AS PRESENTED**

## 10. BOARD COMMENTS

- ❖ Director S. Ayala shared that this weekend is the Tarantula Festival as well as the Art Project. She said TTA students and the cheerleaders will be participating in the Art Project and invited everyone to come and check it out.
- ❖ Director A. Ayala said FFA will be holding a corn hole tournament at the Tarantula Festival. She said she is pleased at the progress we are making as a district. She told staff in the audience they are appreciated, especially working all day and then coming to a two-hour Board meeting.
- ❖ Superintendent Blincoe added that at the next Board meeting a District Advisory Council (DAC) representative will be at the meeting to give a report.
- ❖ Director Leyba thanked Mark Archuleta and Jack Waring with the technology department for running the tech side of the meeting. This will be publicized more to increase awareness.

## 11. ADJOURNMENT – **MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:03 p.m.**

### **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

***DEE LEYBA, President***  
***DARLENE DERBIGNY, Secretary/Treasure***

***ANGELA AYALA, Vice President***  
***STACEY AYALA, Director***  
***SARA HINES, Director***

