



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

BOARD WRAP-UP

Board of Education Meeting

April 28, 2025

1. **ROLL CALL** – A. Ayala, S. Ayala, Hines, Kolomitz and Leyba.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
3. **RECOGNITION OF THE 2025 VALEDICTORIAN AND SALUTATORIAN** - The Board of Education recognized the following students for their hard work and achievement at La Junta Junior/Senior High School:
 - 2025 Valedictorian – Kinsley Mayo
 - 2025 Salutatorian – Zoey Montoya
4. **RECOGNITION OF THE BOETTCHER SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT** – Zoey Montoya was recognized by the Board for being a Boettcher Scholarship recipient.
5. **CELEBRATIONS-ART SHOW WINNERS** – The Board recognized students from the Primary School, Intermediate School, Junior/Senior High School and Tiger Trades Academy for their artistic talents and awards.
6. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA – AGENDA APPROVED AS PRESENTED**
7. Accept Dr. Blincoe's Resignation and Mutual Separation Agreement (Leyba) **APPROVED AS PRESENTED**
8. Appoint Jared Wilson, Chief Academic Officer, Richard Romero, Safety and Security Officer and Heather Nelson, Business Manager as the Interim Committee Responsible for Managing the Day to Day Operations of the District (Leyba) **APPROVED AS PRESENTED**
9. **CONSENT AGENDA - APPROVED CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED**
 - A. **Personnel Approval**
 - Nicole Romero - Resignation as 3rd Grade Teacher at the Intermediate School effective May 23, 2025
 - Caitlin Masterman - Resignation as 4th Grade Teacher at the Intermediate School effective May 23, 2025
 - Joseph Farra - Retirement as Swimming Pool Manager effective March 31, 2025
 - Judy Muniz - Retirement as Paraprofessional at the Junior/Senior High School effective May 23, 2025
 - Ellen Froman - Retirement as Assistant Principal at the Junior/Senior High School effective May 31, 2025
 - Justin Weber - Retirement as P. E. Teacher at the Junior/Senior High School effective May 23, 2025
 - Megan Fry - New Hire as a Paraprofessional at the Intermediate School for the remainder of the 2024-2025 school year
 - Sarah Lopez - Resignation as Student Advocate at the Junior/Senior High School effective April 8, 2025
 - Brian Amaya - New Hire as a Paraprofessional at S.E.A.L. Academy for the remainder of the 2024-2025 school year
 - Diego Vigil Reyes - New Hire as a Paraprofessional at the Intermediate School for the remainder of the 2024-2025 school year
 - Kimberly Flores - Resignation as Custodian at the Intermediate School effective April 25, 2025
 - B. **Approve Resolutions Authorizing Signing of Checks/District Bank Account at First National Bank and Colorado Bank & Trust**
10. **MINUTES -**
 - A. Minutes of Regular Meeting March 24, 2025, Special Meeting April 1, 2025 and Special Meeting April 15, 2025. **APPROVED AS PRINTED**

11. PRESENTATIONS –

Santa Fe Trail BOCES Update:

Natalie Brown and Sandy Malouff with the Santa Fe Trail BOCES gave a presentation to the Board. Ms. Brown explained what BOCES (Board of Cooperative Education Services) is. She said there are seven districts that are part of the Santa Fe Trail BOCES and BOCES exists to supply educational services to districts that districts can't afford on their own. They provide the special education services and operate as special education administrative units. Ms. Brown listed the services they provide:

Audiologist • Autism Team • Behavior Interventionist • Child Find • Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant • Extended School Year Services • Grant Management • Gifted & Talented Education Coordination • Hearing Interpreter • Hearing Teacher • Alternative Program (SEAL Academy) • Induction Program • Occupational Therapist Santa Fe Trail BOCES • Physical Therapist • Preschool Special Education • Professional Development • Projects Coordinator • School Psychologist • Secretary • Speech Therapist • Speech Therapist Assistant • SWAAC (Statewide Assistive Technology Augmentative & Alternative Communication) Team • Transition into Post-Secondary • Vision Teacher Statewide Alternative

Ms. Brown explained what the S.E.A.L. Academy is (Southeast Alternative Learning) program is. Ms. Brown said students who attend the Academy are mostly elementary students. S.E.A.L. Academy provides a more structured environment for students while receiving additional support. Staff tries their best to make sure the curriculum aligns with the student's district curriculum.

Director Kolomitz asked how many La Junta students attend S.E.A.L. Academy. Ms. Brown said there are 21 pre-K to 9th grade La Junta students. She said La Junta has traditionally had a high population of students at S.E.A.L. Director Leyba asked if we have a high population because we are a bigger district and Ms. Malouff said yes, and explained there tends to be a higher population of students with needs in larger districts. She said La Junta has strong processes students go through before they are sent to S.E.A.L. Academy. Director A. Ayala asked what the maximum number of students S.E.A.L. Academy can handle. Ms. Brown said 40 students. Ms. Griffy added there are three students who transitioned back to the Intermediate School from S.E.A.L. Academy last week. Ms. Malouff said the goal of S.E.A.L. is to give students the skills they need in order to transition back to their district.

Director Leyba pointed out that if the district didn't have BOCES, then special education services would have to be funded completely by the district and that is not cost effective. Ms. Brown explained there are certain criteria that need to be met before districts can be their own administrative unit. She said it is much cheaper for districts to pay BOCES compared to hiring just one specialist and BOCES offers several specialists to districts. She said large urban districts have the funding required to hire specialized employees, where rural districts do not. Ms. Malouff also shared that Santa Fe Trail BOCES is the only one in the state that has a S.E.A.L. Academy program.

12. OPERATIONS UPDATE -

Mr. Romero told the Board he was able to obtain an additional \$197,000 of the School Security Disbursement grant. He said the Business Office will be working with the principals and directors on their wants and needs list.

Mr. Romero shared Frontline is the new job application software. He explained potential employees can now apply online instead of submitting paper applications only. A computer will be set up at Central Office in case the applicant doesn't have internet access. Mr. Romero said Dawn Ortiz, Human Resources Coordinator, will attend the May meeting to give an update to the Board. He said the district will continue with Colorado School District Self-Insurance Pool for our insurance purposes. Also, health, vision and dental insurance for employees will not have any increases this year. Mr. Romero said May 1 is open enrollment for health insurance. American Fidelity will be in the district beginning May 1 to meet with staff in their buildings as well as Mark Kube, the district's insurance broker, will be at Central Office the afternoon of May 1 to meet with any staff member who has questions regarding health insurance. Mr. Wilson shared that Ms. Ortiz has also been in contact with Mr. Kube to set a date for him to come and speak with staff explaining the insurance.

Director A. Ayala asked Mr. Romero if there is still a capital improvement list. Mr. Romero said he believes Mr. Miell has that list on his computer. She said she would like to see it to know what is upcoming. Director Hines asked what the grant money will be used for and Mr. Romero explained it will be for access control at the Junior/Senior High School gymnasium and interior access control will be started. Director A. Ayala asked if it would be beneficial for staff to have a teacher resource night where a financial advisor, tax professional and an insurance representative to help

staff and answer questions. Director Hines asked when someone applies through Frontline if the application is received by human resources and then sent to the principals and Mr. Romero said it is.

13. FINANCIAL UPDATE -

Ms. Nelson was not present at the meeting. Mr. Romero said Abacus is working on the budget and entering it into the SDS (Specialized Data Systems) software. With the budget being in SDS, it will make the audit much easier. A rough draft of the budget will be ready the beginning of May and the 2025-2026 preliminary budget will be approved at the June Board meeting. Director Kolomitz asked if the Board will see a copy of the budget before then and Mr. Romero said yes. Mr. Romero said Abacus is also working on a financial report that Ms. Nelson can give the Board. He said this can be a monthly report versus a quarterly report.

Mr. Romero said the auditor is finalizing the 2022-2023 single audit and is working on the 2023-2024 audit. The journal entries have been completed for the 2023-2024 year. In addition, a questionnaire is being worked on for the auditor. Director Leyba asked if a completion date for the audit is known yet and Mr. Romero said he doesn't know.

14. CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER UPDATE -

Mr. Wilson began by informing the next Board meeting date needs to be moved due to conflicting with the Memorial Day holiday. It was decided the May meeting will be moved to May 12. Director Hines asked if the Board work sessions will begin again.

Mr. Wilson updated the Board on TNTP. There is a kick-off conference June 9-12 and a meeting with TNTP will be in May to review the snapshot they gained when they were in the district in February. Mr. Wilson said Josh Smith will be the "boots on the ground" worker for TNTP. Mr. Smith has some Turnaround School knowledge as well as middle school principal experience. He will also be visiting the district. A plan will be created on how to begin next school year.

Mr. Wilson said UVA was here on April 27 and he is prepping for the July 13-18 conference in Virginia.

Abre is a data warehouse that will allow staff to look at all data (test scores, attendance, etc.). Mr. Wilson said building leaders will decide what data to isolate that fits best for them.

On May 15, Mr. Wilson said there will be a virtual meeting to present the district's needs for the BEST Grant that has been applied for. He explained that if the BEST Grant isn't received, options are being looked at to try and get some repairs completed. Director A. Ayala asked when the district will be informed if the BEST Grant was received and Mr. Wilson said as soon as all presentations are completed, districts will be informed.

Mr. Wilson was asked about the district's strategic plan. He said originally Empower was name as the strategic go-to. He said Empower has agreed to work with Mr. Smith (who will be an independent contractor) and will be under the TNTP umbrella. Director Kolomitz asked if this has been communicated to CDE and Mr. Wilson said it has.

Discussion was held regarding if the district did not receive the BEST Grant. Director Leyba said it is her understanding that it is not in the best interest to use the grant Mr. Romero obtained on the roof repairs as that would be wasting taxpayer dollars on one hand, and on the other hand, if repairs were made, it could change the amount of BEST Grant received. Mr. Wilson said he will continue to try and get some repairs completed, but will be communicating with the BEST Grant staff. Director A. Ayala asked when the district will know if the BEST Grant was received. Mr. Wilson said as soon as the presentations are completed, districts will find out the results.

Mr. Wilson said the scanning system for kids commuting between classrooms at the Junior/Senior High School. This program is being funded by the School Health Professional Grant through BOCES and it is providing better security for students, by showing what students are out of the classroom at a specific time. Mr. Wilson said he prefers to use this system not as a "gotcha" but as a data collection system. It gives a different perspective of looking at data. Director Leyba asked if this is something that is being looked at district-wide. Mr. Wilson said this program is also integrated with Infinite Campus and is currently only being used at the Junior/Senior High School.

Director Kolomitz asked when the district will receive test results. Mr. Wilson said NWEA results are received quickly and CMAS results won't be known until the fall.

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15. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Approve Certified Staff Employment Renewals - Resolution 2025-2N, Resolution 2025-2P and Resolution 2025-3
APPROVED AS PRESENTED
- b. Approve Capturing Kids Hearts Renewal **APPROVED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$20,850-.00 AS PRESENTED**
- c. Approve the Purchase of New Math Curriculum **APPROVED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$75,898.36 AS PRESENTED**

16. BOARD COMMENTS

- ✓ Director Kolomitz said the recognitions tonight were really great and as a district we should be really proud of the accomplishments of the students. He thanked Mr. Wilson and Mr. Romero for giving great presentations. He did say a plan needs to be put in place for a superintendent as soon as possible.
- ✓ Director A. Ayala said she got to spend a lot of time at the Intermediate School participating in Career Day. She congratulated all of the children that were recognized tonight and gave a great kudos to staff. Director A. Ayala reminded fellow Board members there will be an Arbor Day celebration honoring Mr. Bill Remick on Wednesday at 11:00 a.m. at Tiger Trades Academy.
- ✓ Director Hines gave a shout out to the CKS showcase awards received. She said the program is reaching students. Director Hines also gave a shout out to the Dress for Success Closet at TTA. She said a student was able to get a suit for prom through the program. She said prom is this weekend and said have fun and be safe.
- ✓ Director S. Ayala gave a shout out to all of the artists and enjoyed seeing them recognized tonight.

17. ADJOURNMENT – MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:20 p.m.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

DEE LEYBA, President *ANGELA AYALA, Vice President*
SARA HINES, Secretary/Treasurer *STACEY AYALA, Director*
GREGORY KOLOMITZ, Director