



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

BOARD WRAP-UP

Board of Education Meeting

June 23, 2025

PUBLIC HEARING OF FY 2025-2026 PROPOSED BUDGET - A public hearing was held for the purpose of hearing written and/or oral comments from the public concerning the annual budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026. There were no comments or concerns brought to the Board's attention.

1. **ROLL CALL** – A. Ayala, S. Ayala, Hines, and Kolomitz. Leyba was absent.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA** – **AGENDA APPROVED AS PRESENTED**

4. **CONSENT AGENDA** - **APPROVED CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED**

A. Personnel Approval

- Jill Dellinger - District Designated Election Official for 2025 (Official Notice of Intent to Participate in Coordinated Election and Designation of Election Official is attached)
- Jon Nuschy - New Hire as P.E. Teacher at the Junior/Senior High School for the 2025-2026 School Year
- Jacob Martinez - New Hire as Music Teacher at the Junior/Senior High School for the 2025-2026 School year
- Nicole Haberman - Resignation as Special Education Teacher at the Junior/Senior High School effective June 10, 2025
- Cassandra Siefkas - Resignation as ELD Coordinator effective May 23, 2025
- Taylor Levshakoff - Resignation as Paraprofessional at the Primary School effective May 23, 2025
- Brenda Woodyard - New Hire as Assistant Principal at the Junior/Senior High School for the 2025-2026 school year
- Kellie Buhr - New Hire as the Instructional Coach at the Junior/Senior High School for the 2025-2026 school year
- Alyssa Lovato - Resignation as P.E. Teacher at the Primary School effective May 29, 2025
- Charity Collins - New Hire as Swimming Pool Manager for the 2025-2026 school year
- Veronika Viescas - Resignation as 4th Grade Teacher at the Intermediate School effective June 2, 2025
- Kirk Shiflett - Transfer from Primary Art Teacher to Junior/Senior High School Art Teacher for the 2025-2026 school year
- Molly Borton - New Hire as Counselor at the Intermediate School for the 2025-2026 school year
- Kristine Laredo Miranda - New Hire as 4th Grade Teacher at the Intermediate School for the 2025-2026 school year
- Karina Aledro - New Hire as 3rd Grade Teacher at the Intermediate School for the 2025-2026 school year
- Estrella Leyva - New Hire as Itinerant Substitute Teacher at the Junior/Senior High School for the 2025-2026 school year
- Eli Gonzales - New Hire as Custodian at the Junior/Senior High School for the 2025-2026 school year
- Kimberly Rosales - New Hire as Custodian at the Primary School for the 2025-2026 school year
- Lisa Villanueva - New Hire as Specials Teacher at the Primary School for the 2025-2026 school year
- Bianca Good - New Hire as Itinerant Substitute Teacher at the Intermediate School for the 2025-2026 school year
- Victoria Rivera - New Hire as Itinerant Substitute Teacher at the Intermediate School for the 2025-2026 school year
- Kaden Ramirez - New Hire as Itinerant Substitute Teacher at the Intermediate School for the 2025-2026 school year
- Cherish Raso - New Hire as Itinerant Substitute Teacher at the Intermediate School for the 2025-2026 school year

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- Sharee Flakes - New Hire as Itinerant Substitute Teacher at the Intermediate School for the 2025-2026 school year
- Martin Ortega - New Hire as Maintenance Staff for the 2025-2026 school year
- Shaelyn Mayo - New Hire as P. E. Teacher at the Primary School for the 2025-2026 school year

B. Approve Out-of-District Students for the 2025-2026 School Year

C. Approve Additional Out-of-District Students for the 2025-2026 school year

5. MINUTES -

A. Minutes of May 12, 2025; May 30, 2025; and June 16, 2025. **APPROVED AS PRINTED**

6. PRESENTATIONS –

Kim Griego - Abacus:

Kim Griego, finance consultant with Abacus, LLC reviewed the 2025-2026 budget with the Board. She pointed out the district is still unaudited so the numbers in the budget may change. She said the budget looks healthy with the operating fund showing a positive \$982,906.02. The grant coordinator with Abacus has met with the head bookkeeper and there will be some grant drawdowns being made. Ms. Griego explained the budget line called “other objects”, which can include dues, fees, etc.

The first column in the budget is the proposed budget, the second column is the current budget, the third column is year-to-date numbers, the fourth column is historic and the last column shows the 2022-23 actual figures.

Director A. Ayala asked why the property budget line was so high in 2022-23 and Ms. Griego said it was from ESSER funds and this is showing the HVAC project. Director Kolomitz asked about the Other Sources budget line. Ms. Griego explained this is the revenue transfer line. She said a certain dollar amount was transferred to special projects. It was decided that not as much needed to be transferred this year. Last year \$1.2 million was put into the capital reserve fund and this year \$560,037.00 was put into capital reserve. Director Kolomitz asked how much is currently in capital reserve and Ms. Griego said there is \$1,312,997.00 in that fund. Mr. Romero shared this is a balanced budget. The operating fund is showing a profit of \$8,498.62. Director A. Ayala said in the past there were issues with funds being transferred. Ms. Griego said all transfers have been made through May and the funds are balanced. Director Kolomitz clarified the total budget is \$16.9 million in revenue and out of that \$14 million is received from the state and \$3 million is from local revenue. Director Hines asked if Board will receive a monthly financial report. Ms. Griego said she will generate a monthly financial report for the Board and can customize it to the Board’s requests.

Building Safe Schools Report – Building Principals:

Jennifer Foxhoven, Junior/Senior High School Principal, said enrollment at the Junior/Senior High School is at 567 students: 7th grade had 110 students, 8th grade had 103 students, 9th grade had 97 students, 10th grade had 92 students, 11th grade had 94 students and 12th grade had 71 students. The dropout rate is at less than 1%. There were no expulsions.

Regarding discipline, there was an increase with 95 suspensions this year and over 60 of those were junior high alone as well as multiple with more than one suspension. Mrs. Foxhoven said next year, a 7th grade hex will be created with all cores in one hex. The only time 7th grade students will leave that hex is for elective classes. She said an 8th grade hex is being looked at as well. Director A. Ayala asked since 60 of the suspensions were junior high students, how will confining them to one hex help mitigate that problem. Mrs. Foxhoven is hoping it will build more belonging, togetherness and cohesiveness. Director S. Ayala asked if the health and wellness class will be re-implemented. Mrs. Foxhoven said all 7th grade students have a semester of the Mindset class. Director Hines asked if these are the same students who were having behavior trouble at the Intermediate. Mrs. Foxhoven will check into that data. Director A. Ayala asked what changed to increase the suspension numbers. Mrs. Foxhoven said students get frustrated due to academic struggling. She said strategies will be implemented to help students. Mrs. Foxhoven spoke about creating an in-school suspension (ISS) and would like to move the student advocate position from classified to certified. She would like that certified staff member to be a TOSA (Teacher on Special Assignment) to run the ISS.

Director A. Ayala asked about a student cell phone ban. Mrs. Foxhoven said this would require a policy change. Director A. Ayala said the climate at the Junior/Senior High School needs to be adjusted and looked at closely. The condition of the building was discussed. Mrs. Foxhoven said the roof has been leaking for many years and a new building is needed. Director A. Ayala said a new building concept will take time, and the roof is an immediate need to improve the climate for students.

Mrs. Foxhoven said a behavior matrix is being worked on. She shared the average daily attendance rate was 88.77%. Mrs. Foxhoven also credited Hallie Romero, District Social Worker, on her efforts for attendance. There were no dropouts this year and the graduation rate was at 98%. Director Kolomitz asked why there is such a range of enrollment from 7th grade to 12th grade. Mrs. Foxhoven said it could be students moving to online education in high school. Director A. Ayala asked if any surveys are sent out to students to gauge student climate. Mrs. Foxhoven said surveys were sent out with S-CAP, but she can send surveys out throughout the year.

Ken McNerney, Tiger Trades Academy (TTA) Principal said TTA had 37 suspensions this year, with two expulsions. Suspensions were down from last year and Mr. McNerney credits this to the in-school suspensions program as well as their restorative justice program. A total of 98 students were enrolled. The average daily attendance rate was 72.07%, which is good for an alternative campus. There was one student who dropped out due to age. The participation rate for the SAT assessment was low, but there was some growth. Director Hines asked if a reward was offered for testing, but was informed that isn't allowed. Director S. Ayala asked if the student who aged-out was given resources to obtain a GED. Mr. McNerney said they were referred to Otero College and the Bueno Hep program.

Claudia Apodaca, Intermediate School Principal, began with her academic report. She shared the Dibels test is given 3-6 grades. She said it was noticed accuracy scored high but comprehension still needs work. Dibels will only be given to third grade next year and focus will be on the NWEA test for 4-6 grades. Trends showed a lot of kids who were at benchmark moved to above benchmark. Mrs. Apodaca said there was good growth in the NWEA test. On the NWEA math assessment, last year 37% of students were at or above growth and this year there was a jump to 44%. On the NWEA reading assessment, last year was at 37% and this year was at 50%. Mrs. Apodaca said this is a great accomplishment. She said this is the highest they have been. Director A. Ayala clarified that all teachers will be using only the new math curriculum without any deviation. Mrs. Apodaca said that is correct. She said the Intermediate is looking at hosting family math nights to assist parents with the new curriculum so they can support their students. She also added parents can go to the Colorado Department of Education's website to see their student's CMAS scores. The school won't receive the performance frameworks until August. She shared she is very hopeful for increased scores.

Regarding the safe schools report, Mrs. Apodaca said the Intermediate School enrollment was at 442 students for the 2024-2025 school year. The average daily attendance rate was 90.59%. Mrs. Apodaca said there were a lot of kids out sick the second semester. The average class size for Intermediate students was 20 students. This year there were 38 suspensions at the Intermediate, which is down significantly from last year. Mrs. Apodaca credits this reduction to the success of the CKH (Capturing Kids Hearts) program implemented in the school, as well as staff efforts. Director Hines asked when the school began the CKH program and Mrs. Apodaca said this is the third year.

Julie Miller, Primary School Principal, shared enrollment for the Primary School at 290 students. In 2012, enrollment was at 365 students and Mrs. Miller said she is not sure why enrollment is dropping. The average daily rate of attendance increased this year to 89.53%. Mrs. Miller said the culture goal for next year will be on attendance and this will be district-wide. There were a total of 10 suspensions. Mrs. Miller said the suspension rate is low due to being able to provide in-school counseling services. Dibels data showed 88% of the Kindergarten students at or above benchmark; 71% of the First Grade students are at or above benchmark; and 76% of Second Grade students at benchmark or above. Altogether, the average was 78% of Primary students at or above benchmark. Mrs. Miller said the NWEA math scores are low and said the Kindergarten team piloted the new math curriculum and Kindergarten students scored highest in the Primary. Director Hines asked if the Dibels assessment increases in difficulty as students' progress in grade levels. Mrs. Miller said it does. Director A. Ayala asked when Kindergarten round-up was held. Mrs. Miller said it is held in April and they have turned it into a transition event trying to get more parents registering their students. Mrs. Miller said this year only around 30 students registered at round up. She said she will be looking at other ideas in order to improve registration numbers. Director Hines asked if staff go to the preschools to register students as in the past. Mrs. Miller said no, but her registrar does go to the preschools and hands out information.

7. INTERIM COMMITTEE'S UPDATE AND RECOMMENDATIONS -

Operations Update – Richard Romero:

Mr. Romero informed the Board that contracts are completed and have been sent out. He said interviews and hiring is ongoing and there are still some spots that haven't been filled. There has been only one in-house applicant for the business manager opening. Mr. Romero said he thinks it might be best to wait for hiring that position until the new superintendent is in place. He said Abacus can handle the duties until someone is hired. He shared he expected more applicants and a look at the salary may need to be looked at.

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The School Security Disbursement Program (SSD) grant funds of \$196,000 that was received will be used to upgrade the Primary School interior doors. Mr. Romero stated he applied for another \$100,000 in funds for fiscal year 2026 and should know the outcome of that application by July 7. Work will begin this weekend to complete the other buildings exterior access control, as well as the Primary interior.

The fire alarm systems inspections will begin tomorrow at the Intermediate and on August 4, 6 and 7 for the other buildings.

Mandatory training for all staff will open on July 1, 2025. The entire library was purchased this year through Vector K-12 and staff will be able to access it, not only for the mandatory training, but for other trainings as it relates to their positions.

Director A. Ayala asked if the training opportunities will be shared. Mr. Romero plans on sending out a district-wide email to let staff know of the training opportunities.

Director Hines asked how much Abacus is paid per month to fill the business manager position. Mr. Romero said the district pays \$6,000 per month. Director Hines asked if it would make more sense to continue with abacus if there aren't any good applications received or even instead of hiring a business manager. Director A. Ayala asked if there is anything Abacus can't fill that the business manager did. Mr. Wilson said yes and no. He said he is reaching out to other districts that use Abacus for their business manager position to see what their processes are. He said a stipend may need to be looked at as there is some in-house legwork that has to happen.

Director Kolomitz asked about the situation on 22nd street. Mr. Romero said he hasn't heard any updates. Director Kolomitz asked if the cooler at the Primary has been fixed and Mr. Romero said as far as he knows, the cooler is up and running.

Chief Academic Officer Update – Jared Wilson:

Mr. Wilson talked about the BEST Grant. He said the district did not receive the grant. He is receiving information from the Colorado Department of Education. He said money is being budgeted to repair hot spots on the roof that are leaking. Director Hines asked how far we missed out on getting the BEST grant. Mr. Wilson said the grant money is awarded to the top twelve and we were in 27th place. He will be meeting with CDE to find out how to do better on the BEST grant application. Director A. Ayala would like a bond to be put together in order to, at the very least, make substantial repairs to the roof. She would like to get some roof repair quotes now, while repairs can be made.

Mr. Wilson talked about the summer programming. He was able to obtain a grant to help with the programs. There was a week of ELA and Math training and he was able to provide a stipend to staff who attended and shared attendance was great. There was a TNTP conference in Denver and administrative staff went to that. In work through UVA, there were 90-day plans created. TNTP has what they call archways. Administrators are currently creating archways. Mr. Wilson said he would like to create a system to include the entire district, as well as the Board and community.

Mr. Wilson said there is a conference with UVA in Virginia the week of July 13 that he and the principals will attend.

Regarding the consolidated application for Title funds, there is part of the funding that hasn't been released yet. Mr. Wilson is working with an advisor in order to get the app completed as soon as he can.

The curriculum has arrived. It has been sorted and will be sent to the buildings. Mr. Wilson thanked Mr. Miell for his help with that.

Mr. Wilson is looking into financially being able to keep in-house mental health counseling. He said he will be looking into possible grant funding.

Director Hines asked if grant funds paid for Willow Tree last year. Mr. Wilson said he wasn't sure. Ms. Romero said the SHP (School Health Professional) grant through BOCES was able to fund a small portion, but it is a big expense.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. Approve 2025-2026 Final Budget and Appropriation Resolution **APPROVED AS PRESENTED**

9. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Approve Revised Policies JF, GBGD, JICJ, IJ, KEC, ACA, JICA, JLCD, JLDAC, and KFA on First/Revised Reading **APPROVED ON FIRST/REVISED READING AS PRESENTED**
- b. Approve Revised Regulation JLCD-R on First/Revised/Final Reading **APPROVED ON FIRST/REVISED/FINAL READING AS PRESENTED**
- c. Approve Revised Policy CBA/CBC on Second/Final Reading **APPROVED ON SECOND/FINAL READING AS PRESENTED**
- d. Approve Interim Committee Stipend **AGENDA ITEM TABLED**
- e. Approve 2025-2026 CASB Membership Dues **APPROVED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$10,882.00 AS PRESENTED**
- f. Approve the Pinnacol Insurance Premium **APPROVED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$84,233.00 AS PRESENTED**
- g. Approve the GoGuardian Renewal **APPROVED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$33,525.00 AS PRESENTED**
- h. Approve the Purchase of Chromebook Computers **AGENDA ITEM TABLED**
- i. Approve the Purchase of Staff Laptop Computers **AGENDA ITEM TABLED**
- j. Approve the Edgenuity Renewal **APPROVED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$45,686.00 AS PRESENTED**
- k. Approve the CSDSIP 2025-2026 Renewal Proposal **APPROVED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$524,208.00 AS PRESENTED**

10. BOARD COMMENTS

- ✓ Director A. Ayala said she appreciated seeing all of the things happening at the Junior/Senior High School. The opportunities being provided at the secondary level are top notch (fishing, golf, etc.). She noticed football players are weightlifting. She said she appreciates the staff and their efforts.
- ✓ Director Hines commented that the summer lunch program is very busy. She said it is a good thing provided to the community. Director Hines recognized Mrs. Diana Remick for being a nominee for teacher of the year.
- ✓ Director S. Ayala said she had a good BOCES meeting last week and shared our BOCES is doing very well when compared statewide. The BOCES budget was passed and is good as well. There was a DAC meeting last week and it was a good meeting. She said she would like to see more parents attend.

11. ADJOURNMENT – MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:05 p.m.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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