

Strategic Plan

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BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Our History

Jefferson Academy began as an idea in April 1993 by a group of parents wishing to become proactive in their children's education. E.D. Hirsch's Core Knowledge Curriculum was chosen to be the guiding force to this back-to-basics, highly rigorous approach to learning. This grassroots organization began with word of mouth discussions. The group then distributed flyers within the community to recruit other parents who wished to participate in the founding of a Core Knowledge Charter School. In May 1994, Jefferson Academy was approved by the

Mission

The mission of Jefferson Academy is to help students attain their highest academic and character potential through an academically rigorous, content-rich educational program.

Vision

Jefferson Academy Charter School envisions a community of parents, teachers, students and educational and business leaders working together to create a learning environment that engenders academic achievement, growth in character, and the love of learning, resulting in responsible, productive citizens.

Jefferson County Board of Education. Jefferson Academy began with two half-day kindergarten classes and one round of grades first through sixth. In the following years the school grew by one class per grade as the first kindergarten class moved up. In the spring of 2012, the membership of Jefferson Academy parents voted to expand the elementary over the course of the next several years in an effort to meet the needs of our lengthy waiting list and to assist with budgetary issues. As a result, in 2012-13, JA added one half-day and one full-day kindergarten section, along with one class per grade level making three rounds of first through sixth grade. From 2013 to 2018, JA successfully expanded to four rounds of each grade level through sixth grade.

In 1996, a junior high was added, and a senior high in 1999. The first graduation from JAHS was held on June 1, 2002. Since then, Jefferson Academy has grown in population and prestige. JA is consistently rated among the best kindergarten through twelfth grade schools in the state of Colorado due to a dedicated Board of Directors, a talented and highly qualified administration and faculty, and an invested family base.

Our Future

Jefferson Academy looks toward the future with excitement and preparedness. The Jefferson Academy Board of Directors is committed to investing in the future of Jefferson Academy through a concerted effort toward a united K-12 community, the hiring of Jefferson Academy's first Executive Director, and the full build-out of both the elementary and secondary campuses to create facilities for the future.

WHO WE ARE

Our Core Strengths

Currently JA serves a student population of approximately 1,400 students in kindergarten through 12th grades. In addition, JA serves approximately 700 home-schooled students through Summit Academy.



Academic Rigor: JA uses the Core Knowledge sequence in grades kindergarten through eight. The senior high uses a complementary educational program, a coordinated humanities / college prep model. The entire school focuses on a rigorous academic program in a disciplined environment. Our goal is to provide a rich and balanced educational opportunity for all of our students while maximizing their learning potential. In addition to the Core Knowledge Sequence, specials and electives are offered for full-day kindergarten through 6th grade in the areas of art, library, music, physical education, Spanish and technology.

Academic Performance: Jefferson Academy has consistently out-performed its neighborhood district schools as well as competing charter schools. The elementary, middle and high school have all been awarded the John Irwin Award for multiple years (the highest honor awarded by the Colorado Department of Education). The secondary school has been named in the Newsweek top 500 schools in America for the past two years. Finally, it is a point of pride that JA continues to receive *Meets* and *Exceeds* ratings school wide every year on standardized tests.

Fiscal Responsibility: JA continues to be fiscally sound. Our financial strength has allowed us to continue to work to improve our facilities, programs, and staff compensation over the last five years. JA has been able to provide a great education to students, hire and retain exceptional staff while focusing on a strategy of building financial reserves in order to help fund a building expansion. Additionally, in November 2018, voters approved the Jeffco 5A and 5B mill levy and bond. Heading into the election JA took a very conservative approach and developed budgets and construction plans that did not include 5A, 5B or increased PPR funds. JA is currently developing long and short term plans for these funds.

Our Campuses

Elementary

With a certified teacher and Educational Assistant (EA) in each classroom, the kindergarten classrooms each have a student to staff ratio of 11:1. First through sixth grade classroom ratios are 14:1. Homework is



assigned on a regular basis with the goal of strengthening and/or enriching daily work. In addition, Jefferson Academy provides a before and after school childcare program (Jag Care). Additional after school activities are also provided to students including intramural sports, Destination Imagination, Art Club, Drama Club, and many others.

Parent volunteerism has remained high since the school's opening and is an integral part of our school's success. Our Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) is an active part of everyday life at JA Elementary,

managing fundraisers, events, coordinating volunteers and a variety of committees, all striving to enhance JA's volunteer-based community. Volunteers typically contribute 10,000 hours of service. JA uses the Raptor system for volunteer and visitor check in. Raptor not only helps track volunteer hours, but it also checks sex offender status and criminal backgrounds prior to visitors entering the classroom area.

Secondary

The instructional goals for the Junior High School, grades seven and eight, build upon the elementary objectives through the Core Knowledge Sequence involving Academics, Physical Education, Artistic Expression and Character. In Junior High, students begin to incorporate the Senior High instructional



goals and receive opportunities to excel through rigorous academics and challenging electives. Students with excellent grades are acknowledged each semester by Platinum (4.0 or above GPA,) Gold (3.5-3.99 GPA,) and Silver (3.0-3.49 GPA) Honor Rolls.

Building upon the solid foundation of the Core Knowledge Sequence, the High School program continues the content-rich, academically aggressive approach to education with an intention to prepare students for the rigors of college. At the center of this curriculum is an approach to liberal arts education called the Coordinated Humanities in which the faculty correlates and integrates the students' studies in history and geography with the English language and literature. The administration fulfills the mission and vision for JAHS by implementing a modified 4x4 block schedule that takes into consideration and accommodates the fulfillment of graduation requirements and meets specific student needs. In addition, the schedule enables numerous students to take advantage of the Front Range Community College concurrent enrollment program and graduate high school with college credit (60 college credits are available on the campus). Finally, the majority of students at the High School participate in after-school sports teams, clubs, music programs, drama productions and numerous other offerings at the secondary campus.

The Jefferson Academy Secondary School Booster Club is a visible support to the junior and senior high school communities, providing volunteer and financial support to student government leaders, athletic teams, teaching staff, dances, social events, class trips, a fully operational concessions and the Boosters Scholarship program. The Boosters Program was able to raise funds to purchase a school bus to use for our student needs. Parents log thousands of hours through a wide variety of volunteering needs. Through volunteering in Boosters, parents are able to enjoy the activities of the school and give back to the JA community to continue the successful traditions of the school's programs and people. JAHS also uses the Raptor system for visitors and volunteers on campus.

Home School – Summit Academy

The Summit Academy started in Jefferson County in 2004 with 16 students. From 2006 to 2013 Summit was part of the Aurora Public Schools Options program; however, because of location issues, in 2013 Summit joined, once again, with Jeffco Public Schools, partnering with Jefferson Academy. The home school program has grown to approximately 700 students, has an independent building, and has added a

full time program for 9th-12th grade students. In 2018, Summit opened a second location in Lakewood.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Approach

The Board of Directors at Jefferson Academy uses a strategic planning framework that begins with the Vision, Mission & Values of Jefferson Academy. While these three components of the framework may adapt or shift in their emphasis over time, they are intended to be largely static.



Conducted annually, a SWOT analysis (Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats) is an internal (Strengths & Weaknesses) and external (Opportunities & Threats) assessment of the school. From an internal perspective, the analysis considers the school's achievements, capabilities, and gaps. From an external perspective, the analysis considers outside factors that help or hinder the school in fulfilling its mission, including funding, laws or regulations, and organizations with whom the school interacts. The input to the SWOT analysis includes survey data, TCAP and other test results, financial projections, and best practices. In developing the SWOT analysis, the Board identifies and considers many valid strengths or weaknesses. Through an unbiased process called "idea reduction", these areas are collectively reduced to a set that focuses the Board and the Administration on the factors that most impact fulfillment of the school's Mission at that point in time.



- Defines what we value.
- Defines our purpose & primary objectives.
- *Principles that guide decisions and actions.*
- What goals help maintain our Strengths, address our Weaknesses, capture Opportunities, and limit Threats.
- What measures do we want to achieve to satisfy the goals?
- Detailed plans or steps to achieve our objectives.

SWOTA nalysis

For 2018 - 2020, the Board and Administration developed the following focused SWOT analysis:

Strengths	Weaknesses	
 Highly qualified and accomplished administrators Strong fiscal responsibility and financial strength The students demonstrate strong character traits and positive values 	1. Current communication plans (internal & external) are ineffective in engaging all stakeholders	
4. The school has a dedicated staff 5. Teachers & parents have high expectations	2. Reduced volunteerism across the program	
6. New and updated facilities	3. Lack of a Board succession plan to preserve	
7. Athletic programs that provide excellent opportunities in a variety of sports	institutional knowledge 4. Challenge in maintaining	
8. Opportunity for college credits for secondary students (Front Range location)	three campuses under K-12 vision	
Aggressive pursuit of technology for instructional delivery and student use	5. Long term fundraising plan	
10. Highly regarded school of choice in the community	6. Low numbers of	
11. Broomfield IGA provides positive exposure to potential students and stakeholders	IEP and 504 students relative to district levels	
12. Strong administrative team including 2 past Jeffco Achievement Directors/Community Superintendents and a long-term, high performing high school principal		
13. An environment where students feel safe and are free to learn		
14. Strong Executive Director to unite K-12 community, programs and facilities.		

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Opportunities	Threats
1. Refocused opportunity for fundraising (school-based & local businesses)	1. Potentially changing landscape of state testing requirements
2. Continued interaction and positive exposure in local community	2. Impact of changing demographics on programs
3. Grow and develop partnership with City and County of Broomfield	3. Fluid climate/perspective of the value of charter schools
4. Develop outside business partnerships for educational opportunities and purposes	4. Increasing number of charter schools creating more competition.
5. Continued improvement of academic achievement	5. Current limitation on size of JagCare program
6. Additional elementary clubs, networking with other local charter schools	6. Potential volatility at local and national level of charter
7. Appropriation of Jeffco bond and mill levy	political landscape
funding and increased PPR	7. Highly dependent on local and state funding
	8. Absence of diversified funding stream

Strategic Goals

Jefferson Academy has identified strategic goals for the following nine areas of focus:

- Management: Recruiting, retaining, and incentivizing exceptional staff
- **Development:** Creating and implementing an effective development and fundraising strategy
- Facilities: Updating and expanding facilities to support both current and future programming
- Community: Improving the K-12 community across all campuses
- Education: Continuing to achieve academic excellence
- Financial: Maintaining strong financial health
- Safety: Developing and implementing comprehensive safety plans at all campuses
- **Character and Values:** Fostering the development of strong character in all Jefferson Academy students and communicating the Jefferson Academy values clearly throughout our community
- **Home School Program:** Supporting a sustainable partnership that benefits the needs of all students.

Each of the above areas of focus is supported by a measurable goal as listed in the following tables. These tables serves as a high level "road map" for the Executive Director, Board members and other interested stakeholders to understand the direction Jefferson Academy is taking and how the organization intends to get there. These goals are intended to be dynamic and will be reviewed regularly by the Board and updated as required.

FOCUS AREA: MANAGEMENT

Strategic Goal: Ensure the processes used by the school develop a culture that attracts and retains highly qualified, highly motivated, effective educators and professionals.

Purpose of the Goal

Jefferson Academy is only as good as the staff and teachers that walk our halls and interact daily with our students. It is imperative that we attract and retain the best and brightest faculty members and create an environment that supports career growth for these talented individuals. It is vital that Jefferson Academy address any areas of concern to ensure that the most effective educators are serving our students on a daily basis.

Board of Directors' Strategic Approach to this Goal

The Board of Directors serves as a governance body and does not function as a management board – the Board of Directors expects effective management of the staff through strong leadership from the Executive Director. The Board will continue to provide strategic guidance to the Executive Director as Jefferson Academy matures and adapts to a changing environment, economy and community. The Board of Directors will provide clear goals and objectives to the Executive Director, provide various resources to the Executive Director in the pursuit of the Board-determined goals and objectives, and work with the Executive Director to ensure that the Executive Director has the appropriate skill-set and professional development in order to excel.

Administration's Strategic Approach to this Goal

The Executive Director will review and revise the organizational chart, where appropriate, to ensure the most effective and efficient structure needed to serve the Jefferson Academy community. By securing, developing, and maintaining a leadership team that inspires staff, instructional goals and practices will be established that help students attain their highest academic and character potential. Student success will be achieved through a culture that allows staff members to collaborate openly with parents, students and partner teachers.

FOCUS AREA: DEVELOPMENT

Strategic Goal: Develop a fundraising plan for K-12 community that includes elementary, secondary and home-school programs. Propose a structure that encompasses the JA Foundation, Boosters, PTO and/or other organizations in an effective way. Develop partnerships with businesses and other agencies to provide opportunities for sponsorship and collaboration.

Purpose of the Goal

Jefferson Academy has had a long history of relying almost solely on the Per-Pupil Revenue (PPR) received from the State of Colorado. The current Jefferson Academy fundraising efforts are distributed throughout PTO, Boosters and other small projects. The Jefferson Academy Foundation brings in very few donations each year. It is imperative that a focused fundraising and development plan be created and implemented to develop partnerships with businesses, other organizations, community members, and our base of parents to diversify the revenue stream of Jefferson Academy.

Board of Directors' Strategic Approach to this Goal

From fundraising and "friend-raising", to program development and expansion, to outreach and community building, all Directors embrace the vision and values of Jefferson Academy and will strive to advance the mission of Jefferson Academy. The Board of Directors will remain a key leader in the Jefferson Academy Foundation, continue to provide liaisons to the PTO and Boosters club, and will work hand-in-hand with the Executive Director to develop an effective fundraising plan. The Board of Directors will also provide strategic advice to the Executive Director in pursuit of partnerships within the community. 100% of the Board of Directors contribute monetarily to Jefferson Academy through the donation of unrestricted cash.

Administration's Strategic Approach to this Goal

The Executive Director will develop a coordinate approach to provide focus and direction as to the needs and outreach plans for the school. By collaborating with stakeholders, JA will begin to implement a giving culture within the organization. This will be accomplished by creating understanding of needs and collaboration of fundraising efforts across the various entities designed to maximize fundraising while reducing overlapping giving opportunities. By developing a cooperative and supportive partnership with outside organizations and businesses, JA will support local businesses through internships, use of facilities and/or by other means while also providing local businesses and organizations giving opportunities to support the work of the school.

FOCUS AREA: FACILITIES

Strategic Goal: Provide facilities that serve students and staff in a manner that is safe, secure and is aligned with JA's Mission and Vision. Provide students with a well-rounded educational experience including the sharing of facilities in order to maximize learning opportunities.

Purpose of the Goal

The facilities at Jefferson Academy have been developed over numerous years and are in various conditions. JA must maintain excellent facilities that support not only the current programs, but the programs of the future that will shepherd our students into an ever-expanding world. Facilities must support academic excellence, curriculum (e.g. Core Knowledge and coordinated humanities/college prep), and character development in support of the JA mission and vision statements.

Board of Directors' Strategic Approach to this Goal

The Board of Directors envisions clean, safe facilities with long-term viability to support the current and future needs of the students. To guide and drive decision making, the Board of Directors has adopted the following "why" statement in support of our strategic approach to facilities: "To provide innovative facilities for academic excellence through expanded spaces for hands on learning, presentation / performance, and technology driven programs. To supply resources and adequate spaces to exceed local standards differentiating JA as a unique school of excellence." The Board of Directors also guides the facilities & finance committees and will continue to support the construction projects at both the elementary and secondary campuses through Board representation throughout the design and construction processes.

Administration's Strategic Approach to this Goal

The Executive Director will ensure all facilities serve students and staff in a manner that is safe, secure and is aligned with JA's Mission and Vision including sharing facilities between campuses. By coordinating and collaborating with construction crews and facility teams to ensure the most efficient and least disruptive process possible, facilities will be clean, neat and safe for students and staff every day. Construction based plans will be implemented for retaining blueprints, "as-builts", warranties, plans and other key documents produced during construction. A long-term facility plan will be developed to define maintenance and funding schedules needed to ensure the on-going viability of facility equipment and upkeep.

FOCUS AREA: COMMUNITY

Strategic Goal: Improve the K-12 community culture and interactions across all three campuses throughout staff, students and parents with academic, extracurricular and social projects/events.

Purpose of the Goal

Jefferson Academy is a K-12 school. It is important that all parents, students, teachers, and staff feel supported and welcomed throughout our community. Our parents need to see a clear and intentional path to graduation and our seniors need to be able to look back and see the pillars of support that have guided them from a very young age. We need the K-12 culture to more define who we are and what we stand for so that we can better support students at every level.

Board of Directors' Strategic Approach to this Goal

The Board of Directors will continue to actively promote the K-12 culture by attending major events at all three campuses, seek out opportunities to promote and/or expand awareness of Jefferson Academy, and guide the communications committee to promote a positive K-12 community. The Board will encourage activities and programs that provide for contact across campuses by students, staff, and parents.

Administration's Strategic Approach to this Goal

The K-12 vision for Jefferson Academy will be rejuvenated in such a way as to provide clarity to staff, parents and the broader community as to why JA is so successful in serving students at all levels of academic growth. This will be accomplished by reviewing academic goals and practices, facility use and needs, defining cross-campus cultural norms all resulting in the establishment of clearly articulated processes based on a global understanding of the purpose for each individual part of the program.

FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION

Strategic Goal: Leverage Jefferson Academy's status as a School of Academic Excellence in order to serve as a thought-leader and innovator throughout Colorado while continuing to improve on the educational outcomes of JA students.

Purpose of the Goal

Looking forward, Jefferson Academy must focus on improving student growth across all grade levels and eliminating the few subgroup gaps at both the elementary and junior high levels. The school must continue to focus on a rigorous academic program supported by high parental involvement but must also look to enhance the learning/teaching process by the use of hands-on, relevant, student based tasks. For the high school, based on a trend of declining academic growth, our performance challenge is to ensure that students continue to grow when compared with their counterparts.

Board of Directors' Strategic Approach to this Goal

The Board of Directors will provide oversight on educational decisions to ensure that the mission and vision of the school are being upheld. The Board of Directors will regularly review data from all three campuses that reflects the effectiveness of academic programs and provide guidance as needed.

Administration's Strategic Approach to this Goal

The Executive Director with work with building principals to review data, educational programing, teacher practices and goals in order to ensure student performance and growth outcomes meet or exceed expectations. Through a coordinated and clearly articulated K-12 academic program, parents, students and staff members will be able to partner together to ensure desired student outcomes are realized. Internal and/or external professional development programs designed to improve practice will support the realization of these goals.

FOCUS AREA: FINANCIAL

Strategic Goal: Maintain Jefferson Academy's strong financial position by continuing to work with administration to balance budgets, develop 3-year financial plan and redesign budgeting / tracking process to reflect K-12 community. In partnership with facilities' goal, develop financial plan for repair / replacement / maintenance of facility assets.

Purpose of the Goal

As we look to the future there are a lot of positives that will impact our future financial projections. JA must remain financially sound to plan for future salary needs, capital improvements and other needs we see at all four of our campuses. The JA Board must continue to budget conservatively and the Executive Director must maintain this strong position.

Board of Directors' Strategic Approach to this Goal

The Board of Directors will provide financial oversight and the Board treasurer will lead the Finance Committee. Board members will regularly review financial statements, audit reports, budgets and all other applicable financial documents to ensure that Jefferson Academy maintains its strong financial position. The Board of Directors will continue to maintain strict guidelines for Days Cash on Hand as a measure of our reserves as well as strict policy requirements on spending limits and required approvals. The Board of Directors will also continue to maintain positive relationships with lenders and partners to bolster our financial position.

Administration's Strategic Approach to this Goal

The Executive Director, building principals and business managers will collaborate with the Finance Committee to develop annual and multi-year budgets designed to meet the needs of the school and students while following Board policies and goals. As a publicly funded organization, Jefferson Academy is committed to ensuring full transparency, effective controls, accountability and detailed oversight of financial activities. Budgets will be developed that embody a conservative approach to income/revenue projections, expenditures focused on student needs and long-term allocations to ensure appropriate funds are reserved to meet state and federal mandates, Board policies, bond requirements and fund balances are built to meet future facility and equipment repair and replacement costs.

FOCUS AREA: SAFETY

Strategic Goal: Maintain a comprehensive safety plan for all JA campuses that includes the development of a financial element (for facilities) to upgrade / improve safety on an ongoing basis. Continue to partner with Jeffco School's School Safety department and local law enforcement to prioritize student safety and security.

Purpose of the Goal

Student safety is of primary concern in every school across the district and nation. At Jefferson Academy, 96 - 100% of parents at both the elementary and secondary campuses indicated that their children feel safe at school (through a parent survey). This result has remained very high and very consistent throughout the history of JA. Though the results are extremely positive, staff and administration will continue to work to ensure that 100% of students feel safe and cared for at Jefferson Academy.

Board of Directors' Strategic Approach to this Goal

The Board of Directors is committed to ensuring a safe learning environment while continuing to present a warm and welcoming facility for all students, staff, families and visitors. The board will review safety practices and when possible will participate in safety drills including Fire Drills, Lock Down, Lock Out or Evacuation drills in order to understand the impact on students and the school. General review of these practices will occur in open board sessions while detailed discussions will occur in Executive Session as needed to ensure student safety.

Administration's Strategic Approach to this Goal

The Executive Director will meet with building principals, facility and business managers to review safety practices, identify areas of concern and develop plans, including financial allocations, needed to ensure safe environment. In collaboration with district staff and law enforcement personnel, post-safety drill-debriefing sessions will be used identify areas of strength and challenges in safety practices and facility needs. Each building will address identified areas of concern, if any, while continuing to invest in safety training or facility upgrades as identified and prioritized.

FOCUS AREA: CHARACTER

Strategic Goal: Continue to foster the development of strong character values in all JA students, resulting in responsible, productive citizens. Clearly identify and message the JA values through impactful "branding" statements.

Purpose of the Goal

Character is essential to long-term success. Jefferson Academy believes that if students want to experience true success, they must develop a strong character. Jefferson Academy also believes that character is established by conscientious and consistent adherence to moral values. As stated in Jefferson Academy's mission, JA seeks to help all students attain their highest character potential.

Board of Directors' Strategic Approach to this Goal

The Board of Directors will continue to model strong character traits and the Jefferson Academy values at all board meetings, school events and when serving as ambassadors in the community. Board members will hold the Executive Director to this same high standard and will expect that the Executive Director does the same with the Jefferson Academy faculty and staff.

Administration's Strategic Approach to this Goal

The Executive Director will partner with building principals to develop a culture in which students and staff will flourish socially, emotionally and academically. Every adult in the building will be viewed and present themselves as an educator focused on helping students develop positive character traits and habits. Through accountability and interventions, students will understand the value of making great choices that advance their needs while being considerate of their fellow students.

FOCUS AREA: HOME SCHOOL PROGRAM

Strategic Goal: Continue to foster a home-school partnership with Summit Academy that benefits all student needs, benefits both parties involved, and supports the JA mission and vision.

Purpose of the Goal

The Home School/Concurrent Enrollment program at Summit Academy is an excellent partnership program for Jefferson Academy that not only seeks to meet the needs of all students, but also provides a financially beneficial relationship. The key to this relationship is strong management of the home school program by the home school principal / founder and a clear understanding and support of the relationship by the Executive Director and the Board.

Board of Directors' Strategic Approach to this Goal

The Board of Directors will stay abreast of the activities, programs and any changes occurring at the home school program. The Board of Directors will evaluate the home school program on an annual basis to ensure the program is in-line with the mission and vision of Jefferson Academy and is financially beneficial to both parties involved.

Administration's Strategic Approach to this Goal

The Executive Director will meet with and support the home school principal. By balancing the requirements of Colorado Statute regarding home school programs including funding practices and being sensitivity to the needs and desires of families that choose to home school their children, the Executive Director will provide guidance, insight and oversight of The Summit Academy. This partnership will be based on an open and collaborative approach designed to ensure the program remains relevant, financially viable and true to its mission and vision while accessing the supports provided by Jefferson Academy.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Jefferson Academy is excited about the future of all three JA campuses and looks toward the future with a committed Executive Director, dedicated Board of Directors, exceptional staff, and talented students. The Jefferson Academy Board of Directors will revisit this Strategic Plan on a quarterly basis to ensure the document is "front and center" for the Executive Director. In addition, Jefferson Academy looks forward to sharing this Strategic Plan with partners in our community in an effort to collaboratively provide a better school, community, and environment for all involved.