

DAC Agenda


April 15, 2025, 5:30-8:30 pm

Jeffco Public Schools Ed. Center, Room 4E

(take elevators to the 4th floor, exit left)

1829 Denver West Drive, Bldg. 27, Golden, CO 80401

<i>Information/ Action</i>	<p>Welcome and Approval of Agenda and Minutes (5:30-5:40)</p> <p>Therese Rednor will welcome members and guests and determine quorum.</p> <p>**A quorum of at least half of the current membership and at least one DAC officer must be present to conduct DAC business that requires a vote.**</p> <p>Members will approve the agenda for the evening and minutes from the prior month.</p> <p>Materials: April agenda and March meeting minutes</p>	10 min	Therese Rednor, DAC Chair
<i>Information</i>	<p>DAC Membership Reminders (5:40-5:50)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Intent to Return 2. 2nd term process 3. Recruitment updates 	10 min	Therese Rednor
<i>Information/ Action</i>	<p>Free Horizon Montessori Charter School (5:50-6:10)</p> <p>Information/Vote</p>	20 min	Jeff Baucum, DAC Charter Subcommittee Chair
<i>Information</i>	<p>Chronic Absenteeism (6:10-6:45)</p>	35 min	Trace Faust, District Facilitator
	BREAK (6:45-6:55)	10 min	
<i>Information</i>	<p>District Safety Efforts - Updates (6:55-7:40)</p> <p>Safe Student Summit Key Safety Initiative More..</p>	45 min	Tara Peña, Chief of Family & Community Partnerships

Information	Closure discussion & Adjournment (7:40) Board member comments (if present) Submit your questions here (or scan this QR Code)  Remember you always have a resource through the DAC website .	5 min	Therese Rednor

THE 2025-2026 DAC EXECUTIVE POSITIONS APPLICATIONS ARE OPEN UNTIL **MONDAY, MAY 7.**
 MEMBERS SHOULD SUBMIT AN APPLICATION IF INTERESTED IN SERVING IN THIS CAPACITY.

2025-2026 DAC Executive Applications

[DAC AAR Coordinator Application](#)

[DAC Chair/Vice Chair Application](#)

[DAC Secretary Application](#)

[DAC Subcommittee Chair Application](#)

JEFFCO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DISTRICT ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES – MARCH, 2025

Attendees: ~~Strikethrough~~ means did not attend.

At Large Member - VACANT	Cheryl Secorski	Eric Keoh	Jeff Baucum	Chatfield AAR - VACANT	Rob Applegate
Amanda Bryan	Gorky Guy	Erin Norton	Jessica Gregg	Laura Grims	Shannon Ryan
Amanda Gomez	Standley Lake AAR - VACANT	Evie Hudak	Julia Morgan	Bear Creek AAR - VACANT	Sara Kuntzler
Amy Ward-Bailey - resigned - VACANT	Crystal Marine	Giselle Arroyo	Conifer AAR - VACANT	Leslie Dennis	Columbine AAR - VACANT
Annie Contractor	David Alex	Greg Aigner	Karena Hamm	Option School AAR - VACANT	Therese Redner
Aubrey Allmond	Dawn Fritz	Hannah Hoong	Kate Otto	Mark Kirkemier	Charter School AAR - VACANT
Austin Long - At Large Member - VACANT	JCEA HS Rep - VACANT	Jaclyn Uttley	Katie Koivisto	Matthew Noll	
Jefferson AAR - VACANT	Diego Rodriguez	Jeanine Baird	Option Schools AAR - VACANT	Michele DeAndrea-Austin	
Gaitlin Fitzpatrick	Elizabeth Armstong	Jennifer Sweezey	Kaylie Weese	Michelle Kuenzler - resigned - Dakota Ridge AAR - VACANT	
Garsten Engebretsen	Emily Lubkert	Jennifer Wilson	Kim Bierbrauer	Monica Keegan	

Minutes By Agenda Topic:

1. **Topic: Welcome and Approval of Agenda (5:30-5:35)**

Materials:

- [February Minutes](#)
- [March Agenda](#)

Outputs/Outcomes

- Feb minutes and March agenda approved

2. **Topic: Charter Subcommittee Update(5:35-5:40)**

Contacts: Jeff Baucum, Charter Subcommittee Chair

Materials: None

Outputs/Outcomes

- Update:
 - Free Horizon Montessori Charter School Application - district recommended conversion to charter because option school wasn't working ideally for the district OR the school, invited application
 - DAC vote in April 2025
- Question: what's the difference between a charter and an option school?
 - Charters are governed by a board, admin stuff, like facilities, run by district
 - Option schools can have a quasi-board entity
 - For option schools, budgeting
- There WILL be an opportunity for the subcommittee to participate



3. Topic: SAC Support Action Planning Follow Up (5:40-6:00)

Contact: Trace Faust, District Facilitator

Structure:

- What have you been able to put into motion?
 - Working across committees - very constructive conversation, could be turned into a model (Crystal Marine)
 - Templates with a calendar, working with Budget, DUIP, FSCP - plan to share at SAC kickoff
- What barriers are you facing?
 - Sending presentations from DAC to SAC chairs - who should do it? When does it happen?
 - Not getting input from key players in the articulation area through the SAC survey
 - Innovations for survey input
 - Drive through line - SAC could collect, spend time creating an average of the input.
 - This means it's not one person's input, it's more representative of the school community
 - Helps people see their feedback in motion, closing the feedback loop a bit
 - Gamifying what SACs do to encourage participation
 - We ask a lot of schools and they don't get a lot out of it
 - CHILD CARE
 - David Alex - the PTA pays a teacher, \$75 for 90 minutes so that the parents/caregiver can participate
 - Reach out to the area HS and - reach out to National Honors Society students - they need community service hours anyway!
 - INTERPRETATION - AVAILABLE FOR FREE FROM SCHOOL!
 - MOVE TO VIRTUAL
 - In a middle schools community, people join from the soccer field!
 - Can reduce frequency to remove
- How can you revise your plan for the remainder of the school year?

Materials:

-  DAC Action Planning Worksheet.pdf
-  SAC Feedback Summary.pdf

Outputs/Outcomes

- Sister school pairing idea - to improve SAC effectiveness (Katie Koivisto)

4. Chronic Absenteeism (6:00-6:45)

- Previously requested data:
 - Requested data:
 - 1. 2 years of pre-COVID data
 - 2. Truancy data
 - ★ Demographic data breakouts for each
- Additional requested data/info/clarifications from the district:
 - What more information do you need to make good decisions?
 - Looking at the start of the rise in absenteeism, in 2013
 - Colorado academic standards had to align with Common Core standards - old curriculum didn't meet the standards
 - Can we look at the timing of discipline policy changes and if that correlates to absenteeism data?
 - Can we quantify discipline data to compare to chronic absenteeism?
 - Can we see relationships between the introduction of restorative processes have to do with absenteeism?
 - ★ Can you present the correlation of belonging data against chronic absenteeism data? Do we see lower attendance where belonging and safety scores are lower?
 - Has the calculation for chronic absenteeism stayed the same? In other words, have definitions changed the data output, or is it a true change in behavior?
 - What efforts are already underway, and which of these are district-wide and which are needing to be socialized/shared with other schools - Data on what current efforts work - how to expand

- Wrap-around services - access to transportation, counseling/mental health help
 - How do bus cancellation rates affect absenteeism? Link this to the demographics in that school community with highest absenteeism rates
 - Can we break out refugee families?
 - Does High School Reimagined/ Warren Tech/CTE have better attendance? Is it related to student confidence and self-esteem?
 - - Dakota, Chatfield, Columbine & Bear Creek are working to reimagine schools
 - - Align schedules to share classes to increase student choice
 - - Career Technical Education
 - - Increase student engagement and motivation, and confidence; but every kid is different
 - Share any data that they have, even if it's "directional" data (not pure data) about causes of absenteeism
 - Info on why kiddos are absent
 - What schools are doing the best post-COVID that we can look to as models? What is working that can be replicated?
 - Is there a correlation between teacher absenteeism and student absenteeism? (related to belonging)
 - School closures - are we seeing that the people who were at a closing school have higher rates of absenteeism (perhaps farther distance or another variable)
 - ★ Look at the data by articulation area
 - - What are we losing in the process of this "traveling" and "experience" tendency?
 - - Do all schools offer before and after school care?
 - - How do we create a before and after care system that is consistent throughout the district? Offer options at middle/high too for kids that can't safely make it home by themselves.
 - - What kind of culture are we creating when we create these structures that are unworkable for families?
 - - What is the chronic absenteeism rates in the closing school areas?
 - - What is the absenteeism ratios broken down by type of school (I.e. elementary, middle, high and charter schools)
 - Trends - demographics, seasonal trends, grade level trends
 - Pre-change in start time tardiness
 - Who are the high flights who need additional resources?
 - Correlation between infinite campus - does the report of this on infinite campus and parents use it, does this lead to less absenteeism?
 - School factors - bullying, threats
 - Cross reference grades with absenteeism
 - What is district policy with dealing with absence? (excused v. unexcused)
 - ★ How is the Alameda pilot going?
 - Stop sending home materials that enable absenteeism without penalty - chromebooks
 - # of days at school (compare with other states)
- Comments
 - "Experience" value in our communities - parents don't understand the impact of being out optionally
 - Context matters
 - Problem is individual, so there isn't a one-size-fits all solution
 - Jeffco PTA and local PTA units would be glad to work collaboratively with the district
 - Anxiety has increased - this relates to truancy - School can be a trigger to anxiety; academics, social, bullying
 - Families have different perspectives on school since Covid
 - Immediacy of everything; less long term impact, kids aren't being failed anymore
 - By the time Chronic Absenteeism is an issue, it is too late. Need to identify the students early and find a program that may support their needs
 - Graduation Rates from state, district and school can make schools
- Ideas and recommendations
 - Campaign with community partners, specifically health and therapeutic partners, around modifying their scheduling to help kids be in school more and not miss school for needed appointments
 - Can we please break out the highly-mobile (who move placements and schools a lot) kids to consider targeted interventions?
 - Target interventions to different groups

- Stop giving perfect attendance awards! It's a shame-based approach, and isn't motivating, rewards something outside younger kids' control (not full agreement in the group about this)
 - Find other ways to incentivize attendance
- Best way to get information is through focus groups - every kid has their own issue
- Legal system doesn't work for this, doesn't help with truancy - **must intervene early** ★
 - Families and Students seem to be aware that nothing can stop them from absenteeism
- Expand before and after school care - make it less sporadic, more uniformly available
- Find innovative ways to collect data about causes - not through traditional methods like surveys and focus groups - these kids/families are already under-engaged, need to be met where they are
- ★ Have a "mental health day" policy, similar to snow day policy
- ★ Need a more dynamic formula than "butts in seats" (if academics are fine, could we evaluate engagement differently?) a 5-day flu can turn you into a chronically absent student
 - Measure success differently. We care about learning, absenteeism isn't the end we are needing
- Can we use tech to help bridge gaps to complete academics even if you aren't at school?
- Identify the barriers that families are facing in getting their children to school
- Look beyond the # of days, the # alone isn't data.
- Can they do a virtual homework and count as not absent? Are there other ways to "make up" missed days to reduce absenteeism once it has happened?
 - Credit recovery - even midterm - would help! (kids need a way to believe they can make up time missed without failing_
- More FELs - not just for Title I schools
- Funds that FELs can use to help families
- Better communication to Latino families that their kids will be safe from ICE to the extent possible
- More advocacy for education funding
- More funding for DEI
- PTA can facilitate the sharing of information that the district can't
- Transportation - emergency transport fund
- Focus on the why -> making school engagement
- High School attendance incentives

Educators feedback -

- Outcome - how do we talk to community about this as a whole
- seeing more long term vacations from students than ever before
- we have 185 days in school so we have more days not in school than in school
- absences hold back from the teachers ability to do all the things that they need to do in the classroom (curriculum, leaving on time on Fridays)
- Parents don't realize the impact of absences especially when you consider the amount of students in the classroom

General Feedback -

- I still don't know what the goal/ outcome is of this project
- Schools got rid of attendance rewards because of COVID - there should be some kind of a middle ground
- Mindset about the lowering grades not having a huge impact so what does it matter if they miss as opposed to a middle school student
- School closures happen in non affluent areas which has Impacted families' abilities to get their kids to school at all let alone on time.

1. Absenteeism from teachers - does this have an impact on the student?
 - a. Engagement with students can be impacted by lack of teacher engagement (i.e., missing, movies, CMAs, week before xmas, etc)

Materials: None

Outputs/Outcomes

- This was a dream conversation for Director Kenworthy to get this ideation from DAC!

5. Topic: DAC Recruitment (6:55-7:10)

Contacts:

- Therese Rednor, DAC Chair
- Evie Hudak, FSCP Subcommittee Chair

Structure:

- Share out & ideas
 - Think about your own motivation for being on the DAC, how you were invited
 - Found out from Jeffco Alliance meetings, they framed DAC as the “next step”
 - Got an email with an invitation.
 - A friend was an AAR and recruited someone
 - Being voluntold!
 - Looking for a volunteer thing
 - Charter school consortium sent invite by emails
 - Wants to have charter schools fairly portrayed
 - Want to advocate for charters
 - Board email advertisements
 - Was involved in Golden Schools Foundation, wanted to be involved at a policy level
 - Friends recruited
 - PTA needed a rep
 - Wanted to be involved in schools
 - SAC asked me to do it
- DAC Elections for 25-26
 - Email coming in the next couple of weeks
 - Elections will be held in May
- Intent Form for current members
 - If your term is ending, you’ll be prompted to re-apply
 - If your term is not ending, you’ll be asked to indicate whether or not you intend to come back via a survey
- Save the dates
 - July 29, 2025 - AAR kickoff
 - Aug 12, 2025 - DAC retreat
 - Aug 26, 2025 - SAC kickoff
 - TBD - 1st DAC meeting of 2025-26 school year - NOT THE THIRD TUESDAY, BECAUSE IT’S THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

Materials: none

Outputs/Outcomes

6. Topic: Open Discussion & Adjournment (7:10-7:15)

Contacts:

- Elizabeth Armstrong, DAC Vice Chair

Structure:

- Board member comments (if present)
- Submit your questions by scanning the QR Code .
- Remember you always have a resource through the DAC
- website.



- DAC and Subcommittee meeting schedules can be found on
- the DAC Website.

Topics:

- Role required of DAC by statute and CDE: provide feedback on principal performance
 - Exec Committee has looked into how to do this
 - Now: have a draft evaluation form
 - Input: what do you think about this?
 - Hasn't been done before
- Questions:
 - What would the task be, exactly?
 - Get SAC feedback on the community component of principal performance rubric
 - Has it been done before?
 - Not in this district
 - Any other models we can look at?
 - We've searched for some but haven't found them.
 - CDE feedback: it's usually a survey that gets sent out
- Feedback:
 - We need to know what kinds of questions we would need to ask
 - Can this just be pulled from the panorama survey?
 - We don't speak for the whole school, even if we try to, aspirationally
 - We'd be better served with a discussion of these things, rather than another survey.
 - CHarter school: we have an accountability committee just like your SACs, but the board of directors sends a family survey every year. 6 questions specifically pertain to the principal
 - Effective?
 - Communication?
 - Visibility?
 - Working with students?
 - Hold people accountable?
 - mission/vision

THEN: board uses this for their evaluation. This informs their salary increase, etc. this could be incorporated into a survey very easily.

 - Families came in to hear about the results of the survey
 - As a parent, I don't like getting surveys from the district. BUT, at this charter, families are more likely to do something that feels like it pertains to them.
 - Families will respond better if you use our principal's name
 - If we've never done it before, it needs to be clear what will happen with the data.
 - Concern: so many SACs are so focused on building participation and engagement - building trust. It doesn't feel like quite the right moment, if parents don't fully trust the school, have a tenuous relationship - to ask the SAC to evaluate this.
 - Wonder if it's a conversation in the articulation area meetings?
 - This could be really uncomfortable for parents without the structure
 - For it to be useful, need superintendent buy-in to take the input into account
 - Community superintendents are the supervisors - need their input on this process

Materials: DAC responsibilities, statute language:

From C.R.S. 22-9-106 (1)(e):
to consider input and recommendations from the school accountability committee of each school of the school district to facilitate the evaluation of the performance of the school's principal for the purposes of article 9 of this title;

Outputs/Outcomes

- Want to make sure we have the right language to make sure we are responding to the requirement clearly

7. Topic: AAR Post Meeting Time(7:15-8:00)

Contacts:

- Carsten Engebretsen, AAR Chair

Comments:

- Feedback loop - more report outs
- What do SAC folks want from DAC?
 - What to know what you talked about that we need to know
 - Budget info - like the presentations we get to see
- Share poster - AARs can share with SAC chairs
- District created a 2-pager
- What if we had a monthly DAC newsletter with an update for each subcommittee and links to presentations
 - Greg Aigner volunteered to help
 - Greece volunteered to send it out
 - ? How do SAC chairs get this if their DAC rep isn't at the meeting, or if they aren't represented?
 - Perhaps, could test the template via an end of year newsletter, tailor it over the summer
- SACs have requested guidance and resources
 - Could someone record and share a video about how school finance works - i.e., how tax dollars work, before the budget work begins
 - It could come from Tracy Dorland - she has explained it well in the past
- Accessible resource bank
- What are realistic learning opportunities we can provide to our SACs?
 - Asking for some trauma-informed outreach training for SAC members and DAC members to consider how we speak to people
 - Education presentations that are currently directed toward the DAC should be targeted toward the SACs, then they'll be more able to provide input into four DAC to discuss

Materials: None

Outputs/Outcomes

- We need to repeatedly let them know where to find resources

April 15, 2025

Board of Education Jeffco Public Schools
1829 Denver West Drive
Golden, CO 80401

Dear Members of the Jeffco Board of Education:

The Jefferson County District Accountability Committee (DAC) is writing to submit our community-focused recommendation in favor of allowing Free Horizon Montessori to convert to a charter school. After careful review of the school's application, supporting documentation, related discussion from subcommittee meetings, and an interview with the applicants, we believe the conversion will be a positive addition to the Jeffco Public School System.

Our recommendation is offered under the following critical criteria:

Academics/Curriculum

Free Horizon Montessori demonstrates a commitment to maintaining the integrity of Montessori methods while integrating contemporary, evidence-based resources. The school's academic program—utilizing supplemental materials such as Wonders, Saxon Math, Lexia, Zearn, and digital tools in a dynamic classroom environment—has produced steady improvements in assessments and growth rates. In addition, the School Accountability Committee (SAC) is actively engaged in monitoring academic performance, including addressing FRL gaps and targeted interventions in areas where belonging scores are low. FHM currently maintains a 'Performance' SPF rating, although there is some concern regarding lower overall belonging scores for middle school students. The school has developed thoughtful strategies (e.g., conflict resolution, peer mentorship, and project-based learning) to enhance student engagement. During the interview, the subcommittee learned that the school assigns classroom assistants to enhance one-on-one support for struggling students and improve teacher retention.

Governance

The application provides a robust and stable governance structure. The Board of Directors, with staggered three-year terms and a thoughtful onboarding process, provides consistent oversight, continuity, and strategic direction to the school. The school's board has been in place since 2002 and is responsible for operations and nearly all fiscal budgeting and oversight. With appropriate review of Jeffco charter-specific governance guidelines and updates to board policies (where necessary), the transition would continue a proven record

of responsible decision-making and effective oversight that is essential for the continued success of the institution and provides the community assurance of continuity.

Community Impact

Free Horizon Montessori has built a valued community presence and provides an educational option that resonates with Jeffco families as evidenced by their strong enrollment wait list. It is important, however, that the school simultaneously implement effective outreach and inclusion initiatives to serve disadvantaged populations (e.g., low-income, Hispanic, and multilingual learners), ensuring a balanced, diverse enrollment reflective of the broader district. The application acknowledges current concerns regarding representation and does propose strategies to address these imbalances. Having an established BoD and operating model provides the community a strong confidence level that FHM will continue their mission of supporting Jeffco students into the future.

Financial

A primary motivator for conversion to a charter school is gaining greater fiscal autonomy. The application outlines a financial plan that relies on public funding sources—including Mill Levy Override (MLO) and Per Pupil Revenue. Over the next six years, FHM has fiscally modeled a very slight FTE increase (17 students) focusing on retention and supported by their wait list which presents a reasonable forecast and demonstrates financial stability. Challenges are noted, particularly regarding teacher retention driven by noncompetitive salaries. While financial autonomy coupled with increased public funding offers opportunities for sophisticated budget management and reserve building, it will be essential to mitigate adverse impacts on teacher retention and to recalibrate educator contracts to remain competitive. Their narrow annual operating margins should be monitored closely but their Days Cash on Hand (>90) and reserves of \$1.4M provide contingency opportunities for emergent issues.

In conclusion, we believe that the proven strengths in curriculum design, governance, and community engagement provide a robust foundation for Free Horizon Montessori's return to charter status. We recommend that the school strengthen its outreach strategy to better engage low-income, Hispanic, and multilingual learners, and that the Board of Education review the committee's comments regarding low fiscal margins and teacher retention. Provided that the district collaborates with the school to resolve the outlined financial, enrollment, and equity-related issues, we support approving this transition to ensure the Montessori educational mission remains accessible to Jeffco families.

Sincerely,

District Accountability Committee of Jeffco Public Schools

Student Safety, Our Shared Responsibility

Student Safety Enhancement Project Update

February 13, 2025



Purpose Today

Update the DAC on the district's work to further enhance student safety.



In this presentation:

- Overview of the ***Student Safety, Our Shared Responsibility*** project
- Planned work for near, mid and long-term
- Collaboration with child safety experts
- Presentation from Ralston House

Student Safety, Our Shared Responsibility is:

A shared mission of staff, students, families and the community to enhance student safety within Jeffco.

Collaborating with **local child safety experts** to evaluate current safety practices and implement revisions or new initiatives to **create a safer and more supportive learning environment for all students.**



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A shared mission of staff, students, families and the community to enhance student safety within Jeffco.

Collaborating with **local child safety experts** to evaluate current safety practices and implement revisions or new initiatives to **create a safer and more supportive learning environment for all students.**



Deliverable Actions and Timeline: Fortifying Safety in Jeffco



Review Existing Safety Practices

In partnership with child safety experts in our community, Jeffco is reviewing relevant safety practices.

Identify Safety Enhancement Projects

Student Safety, Our Shared Responsibility internal work groups are leading intentional projects with advice from child safety experts

Implement Enhancements

Student Safety, Our Shared Responsibility internal work groups will operationalize enhancement efforts in the short (0-3 months), mid (4-6 months) and long term (7-12 months).

Safety Work Groups: Near Term 0-3 month deliverables

- **Child Safety Advisors:** Consult with child safety experts from the community to review processes and systems.
- **Background and Reference Checks:** A review of current background check processes and expert evaluation will be conducted. A standardized reference check format will also be developed for new and existing employees who change positions.
- **Audit of Student and Staff Reporting Systems:** [Safe2Tell](#), [Title IX](#), [Mandatory Reporting](#) and [Handle with Care](#).

Safety Work Groups: Near Term 0-3 month deliverables

- **Expand Staff Sexual Misconduct Trainings:** In partnership with the Colorado School Safety Resource Center and Ralston House, expand training for staff on adult sexual misconduct (ASM), how to recognize ASM and how to report suspected ASM.
- **Expand Mandatory Reporter Training and Grooming Prevention Training:** We will also work with Ralston House to improve our mandatory reporter and grooming prevention trainings, including developing a specialized training for Athletic Directors, School Resource Officers, Principals, School Secretaries, Campus Supervisors and Coaches.

Safety Work Groups: Near Term 0-3 month deliverables

- **Evaluate Protocols and Procedures for Non-Employees Regularly in Buildings** including construction crews and building use/lease tenants.
- **Audit Student Safety Procedures of Overnight Athletic and Activities Trips:** Documentation and expert evaluation of, current practices.
- **Safe Student Summit:** This April 9 summit at Wheat Ridge High School will bring together child safety experts to guide families through a variety of interactive workshops.

Safety Work Groups: Mid-to-Long Term

4-12 month deliverables

- **Districtwide Visitor and Volunteer Management System:** Implement a robust and proven ID-based system to screen, track and monitor visitors and volunteers through identify verification, criminal record screening and access authorization for all visitors, volunteers, adult sponsors, and chaperones for student field trips and travel.
- **Technology Tool:** Explore additional technology tools that may help us improve student safety
- **Expanded Student Curriculum:** Review resources provided through our partners in law enforcement to determine the content for student curriculum.

Student Safety, Our Shared Responsibility



Looking to child safety experts in our community to guide us in making sure our schools are places of **safety, belonging and respect.**

Strong **partnerships between families, school and community** are vital to supporting a **safer and more supportive learning environment for all students.**

Taking every step possible to **fortify safety for all Jeffco students** is foundational and essential to delivering a world class education.



Child Safety Experts



By consulting with child safety experts in our community and continuing to collaborate with law enforcement agencies, we will ensure that Jeffco is following best practices.

- Ralston House
- CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates)
- Children's Hospital Colorado
- Jefferson Center for Mental Health
- U.S. Center for Safe Sport
- Colorado School Safety Center
- Colorado Department of Public Safety
- Child Sex Offender Internet Investigations Unit (Cheezo)
- Colorado Department of Human Services
- And more...



Deliverable Actions and Timeline: Fortifying Safety in Jeffco



Review Existing Safety Practices

In partnership with child safety experts in our community, Jeffco is reviewing relevant safety practices.

Identify Safety Enhancement Projects

Student Safety, Our Shared Responsibility internal work groups are leading intentional projects with advice from child safety experts

Implement Enhancements

Student Safety, Our Shared Responsibility internal work groups will operationalize enhancement efforts in the short (0-3 months), mid (4-6 months) and long term (7-12 months).

Current Safety Practice Highlights



- Every employee must **pass a fingerprint-based CBI/FBI background check** before hiring.
- All employees must **complete annual training on identifying and reporting** child abuse and recognizing indicators of grooming behavior.
- All Jeffco principals and central leaders are required to **complete training on adult sexual misconduct**.
- Our schools and facilities follow **visitor management protocols**.



Current Safety Practice Highlights

- **Over 145 safety and security team members** work 24 hours a day to protect Jeffco students, staff, and families.
- Jeffco Public Schools **partners with area law enforcement agencies**, including through the School Resource Officer (SRO) program.
- Jeffco Public Schools provides **Safe2Tell** and an online **Title IX reporting system**.
- Each school designates an administrator to serve as a **Title IX lead** – more than half of our schools have this in place today with the rest scheduled for later this year.



Current Safety Practice Highlights

- Jeffco's internet network firewalls **block access to inappropriate or harmful content** and prevent unauthorized access.
- **Policy GBEB/GBEB-R**, updated in consultation with the Colorado School Safety Resource Center, sets expectations for safe and healthy boundaries between staff and students.

Current Practice: Background Checks

All Jeffco employees are required by state law to have a fingerprint-based background check.

Licensed employees must be fingerprinted as part of the licensing application process with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). CDE reviews the background check from the Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to determine if the applicant's criminal history meets the standards of licensure in accordance with Colorado law.

- CBI flags the individual with CDE and subsequent arrest notifications are shared with all school districts in the state via their online tracking portal that Jeffco Human Resources checks daily.

Non-Licensed employees are fingerprinted through Colorado Fingerprinting, a 3rd-party vendor, and Human Resources reviews the CBI/FBI records to determine suitability for employment.

- CBI flags the individual as a Jeffco employee and Jeffco Human Resources receives any subsequent arrest notifications

Current Practice: Background Checks

The Colorado Educator Licensing Act requires Colorado Department of Education to deny or revoke a teacher or administrator license when the applicant or license-holder has been convicted of:

- Felony child abuse;
- A crime of violence as defined in C.R.S. 18-1.3-406;
- A felony involving unlawful sexual behavior;
- Felony domestic violence;
- A felony drug offense; and
- Indecent exposure.

These same **minimum thresholds** are also applied to applicants seeking non-licensed positions in Jeffco. The district applies a higher standard than the CDE licensing minimums to determine eligibility for employment.

Current Practice: Background Checks

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)

provides guidance for considerations in determining when criminal history should be used in evaluating a candidate for employment:

- The nature of the conviction and its relatedness to the job;
- Any information regarding rehabilitation;
- The time that has elapsed since the conviction.

Current Practice: Background Checks

Handling Employee Arrests

- If an employee is arrested, the Colorado Bureau of Investigation promptly notifies Jeffco as the employer of record for the fingerprinted employee.
- Human Resources, Legal Services and Senior Leadership consider the nature and severity of the offense and its job-relatedness to evaluate what options are appropriate for the arrested employee (i.e. termination, administrative leave, corrective action, transfer, demotion, etc).

Safety Work Groups: Near Term 0-3 month deliverables

- **Child Safety Advisors:** Consult with child safety experts from the community to review processes and systems.
- **Background and Reference Checks:** A review of current background check processes and expert evaluation will be conducted. A standardized reference check format will also be developed for new and existing employees who change positions.
- **Audit of Student and Staff Reporting Systems:** [Safe2Tell](#), [Title IX](#), [Mandatory Reporting](#) and [Handle with Care](#).

Safety Work Groups: Near Term 0-3 month deliverables

- **Expand Staff Sexual Misconduct Trainings:** In partnership with the Colorado School Safety Resource Center and Ralston House, expand training for staff on adult sexual misconduct (ASM), how to recognize ASM and how to report suspected ASM.
- **Expand Mandatory Reporter Training and Grooming Prevention Training:** We will also work with Ralston House to improve our mandatory reporter and grooming prevention trainings, including developing a specialized training for Athletic Directors, School Resource Officers, Principals, School Secretaries, Campus Supervisors and Coaches.

Safety Work Groups: Near Term 0-3 month deliverables

- **Evaluate Protocols and Procedures for Non-Employees Regularly in Buildings** including construction crews and building use/lease tenants.
- **Audit Student Safety Procedures of Overnight Athletic and Activities Trips:** Documentation and expert evaluation of, current practices.
- **Safe Student Summit:** This April 9 summit at Wheat Ridge High School will bring together child safety experts to guide families through a variety of interactive workshops.

Safety Work Groups: Mid-to-Long Term

4-12 month deliverables

- **Districtwide Visitor and Volunteer Management System:** Implement a robust and proven ID-based system to screen, track and monitor visitors and volunteers through identify verification, criminal record screening and access authorization for all visitors, volunteers, adult sponsors, and chaperones for student field trips and travel.
- **Technology Tool:** Explore additional technology tools that may help us improve student safety
- **Expanded Student Curriculum:** Review resources provided through our partners in law enforcement to determine the content for student curriculum.

Student Safety, Our Shared Responsibility



Looking to child safety experts in our community to guide us in making sure our schools are places of **safety, belonging and respect.**

Strong **partnerships between families, school and community** are vital to supporting a **safer and more supportive learning environment for all students.**

Taking every step possible to **fortify safety for all Jeffco students** is foundational and essential to delivering a world class education.



Establishing Partnerships with Child Safety Experts

- Ralston House
- CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates)
- Children's Hospital Colorado
- Jefferson Center for Mental Health
- U.S. Center for Safe Sport
- Colorado School Safety Center
- Colorado Department of Public Safety
- Child Sex Offender Internet Investigations Unit (Cheezo)
- And more...



We are reaching out to child safety experts in our community to serve as advisors and who can help educate our community at our Safe Student Summit.

Introducing Ralston House

Ralston House Child Advocacy Center

works with law enforcement, child protective services, district attorney's offices in the 1st and 17th Judicial Districts (Jefferson, Adams, Gilpin and Broomfield counties) and the community to provide a safe place to investigate child abuse and ensure victim services for children who have been physically or sexually abused or witnessed violence.



Appendix

- **CO4Kids** is the Colorado Department of Human Services' statewide initiative to provide awareness about Colorado's child welfare system.
- It focuses on **educating the public about the signs of child abuse and neglect, while raising awareness about the Hotline (844-264-5437)** to report concerns related to a child or youth.
- CO4Kids also strives to **strengthen families as a means of preventing abuse and neglect** from happening in the first place, helping all Colorado kids have a safe environment.
- Finally, the campaign is committed to **recruiting and retaining foster and adoptive parents**, so that when an out of home placement is unavoidable, a child has a safe place to thrive.

