TECHNOLOGY & DATA PRIVACY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TDPAC)

Wednesday, September 24, 2025 - 6:00–7:30 pm

Ed Center – Conf. Room 4E

MINUTES

ATTENDEES:

~~Strikethrough~~ indicates NOT in attendance

Eliza Buhrer	~~Jason Cook~~	Alison Stafford
~~Adam Greer~~	~~Marc Long~~	Michael Wright
~~Jason Livingston~~	Erin Norton	Mary Parker
Phil Romig III	Keel Ross	~~Dan Rohner~~
Emily Sullivan	Byron Thornburgh	~~Floy Jaffares~~
Jill Ibeck	Sean McDermid	~~Brett Adams~~
Jeremy Felker	Scott Schafer	~~Carol Eaton~~
Hilary Young	Trace Faust	
~~Kevin Hahn~~	Kara Zucker	

Meeting Overview

- Purpose: To review the accomplishments of the 2024–25 TDPAC year, introduce the key focus areas for 2025–26, and discuss the implications of the district's Budget Reduction Blueprint (BRB).
- Acknowledgment: TDPAC members shared their backgrounds, highlighting their professional experience (e.g., cybersecurity, data science, product development, higher education) and their vested interest as Jeffco parents in topics like data privacy, AI, and screen usage.
- Next Steps: Gather feedback regarding budget priorities, particularly concerning technology, data privacy, and safety/security. Establish Microsoft Teams accounts for asynchronous collaboration.

Agenda Highlights

- Welcome/Introductions/Announcements.
- Overview of 2025/2026 Meeting Key Focus Areas (Student Data Privacy, Devices & Screen Time, Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Education).
- Cell Phone Policy TDPAC Meeting Representation.
- Budget Reduction Blueprint (BRB).

Introductions and Logistics

- Jill Ibeck – Chief Information Technology Officer. Starting 5th year in this role and with TDPAC as well.
- Chris Linton – Director of Information Security and 19th year with Jeffco. Back on TDPAC for a little over a year now.
- Hilary Young – Executive Director of Infrastructure Services. On TDPAC for 3 years.
- Sean McDermid – Director of Student Technology Services. Entering 4th year at Jeffco.
- Jeremy Felker – Executive Director Data Privacy and Reporting. Been at Jeffco for 19 years.
- Erin Norton – Chair of TDPAC. Second year. Worked in tech a long time, mostly consulting. Has a son that in 5th grade at Ralson. Has a stepdaughter who graduated a couple of years ago from Jeffco. Interested in data privacy, AI and screen usage. Also very passionate about public education.
- Scott Schafer – 1st year on the committee. Has a freshman son at Wheat Ridge High School. Youngest is in 4th grade at Maple Grove Elementary. Background mostly in psychology and neuroscience, but has been working at Comcast as a data scientist for about 10 years. Interested to help establish guardrails and screen time to the internet.
- Trace Faust – Works with The Keystone Policy Group. Here to support the folks at Jeffco.
- Mary Parker – President of the School Board. Has been on the school board for 4 years and finishing up her first term. Hoping to be elected for 2nd term. Been on TDPAC for 2 years now and thinks TDPAC committee rocks!
- Kara Zucker – Also on DAC. Been in tech for 11 years. Has worked in everything from mobile development platforms and blockchain proof but now works for a Denver based company and is the Director of Product Development. Has a Kindergartner at Foster Elementary and a 2-1/2 year old.
- Mike Wright – 3rd year on TDPAC. Has a first grader at Elk Creek Elementary and a 6th grader who attends West Jeff Elementary, Summit Academy South and then a little bit of homeschooling. Runs a cybersecurity consulting company owned by NELBET.
- Phil Romig – teaching professor at the School of Mines. Was the CISO for many years and has recently returned to teaching. Been on the committee for 11 years.
- Allison Stafford – Mother of twin boys in 3rd grade at Rooney Ranch. Second year on TDPAC. Lives the philosophy that if you have something to say, you should really move your feet and be involved or get off the sidelines. Owns a digital marketing company.
- Eliza Buhrer - History and Humanities professor at School of Mines. Has a 6 yr old that goes to Ralston Elementary and a 4 yr old who hopefully will be in school next year.
- Emily Sullivan – Has been on TDPAC for 4-5 years. I have a 2nd grader and 4th grader at Fairmount and technology has been a passion for her 20 year career. Does technology consulting.
- Bryon Thornburg – on TDPAC for 4-5 years. Has a 5th grader at Prospect Valley and 7th grader at the Manning School. Has been in technology for 20 years. The last 5 years as the Chief Operating Officer at the Denver Art Museum, where in addition to technology, he oversees day-to-day operations.
- Marc Long – Has a Dakota Ridge graduate. A daughter who is her third year at CU Boulder. Has 4 kids at Leawood Elementary. Role of Technology and education is important. Manages infinite campus for Denver Public Schools. 17th year with DPS
- Keel Ross 4th year on TDPAC. 30 years of military and federal civilian service. Currently the Director of IT for the US Geological Survey. Has a 7th grader at Summit Ridge and a sophomore at Dakota Ridge. Also a cross-country running coach for Dakota Ridge. Here because he hopes to be able to make a difference in the way we deploy technology within the District.

Microsoft Teams for Asynchronous Collaboration: Staff emphasized the plan to provision Jeffco accounts for non-employee TDPAC members via the Person of Interest (POI) form to allow full access to Teams. This is intended to facilitate collaboration and resource sharing between quarterly meetings.

Review of 2024–25 TDPAC Key Focus Areas

- AI in Education: Last year's focus was on teachers, but the new focus is on students. The district launched jeffco.ai, a Phase 1 public-facing site that provides guiding principles emphasizing responsible citizenship, accountability, and ethical use.
- Data Governance: Kevin Hahn established a data governance committee to take a closer look at software vetting and review vendor requests for student data.
- ERP Modernization (Project Horizon): The district is transitioning from the legacy PeopleSoft system to Workday, aligning with a cloud-first platform strategy. The POI form digitization is part of this modernization effort.
- Social Media and Personal Device Policies: A pilot program for blocking social media sites at high schools yielded mixed results, complicated by concurrent individual school personal device policy changes. Based on educator feedback, the district is working toward a model to block social media access on school networks bell-to-bell at high schools. The connection between social media policy and personal device policy was noted, as students may bypass network blocks using cell phone data.

Overview of 2025–26 Key Focus Areas

The committee discussed the three key focus areas established for the 2025–26 school year:

- Student Data Privacy:
  - Future discussions will focus on the tension between privacy and safety, specifically exploring the potential for real-time monitoring tools (like Securely Aware) to scan Google Workspace for alerts related to self-harm or violence.
  - This proactive approach represents a potential increase in service level beyond the current reactive monitoring (e.g., Google Vault searches).
  - Continued focus on strengthening cybersecurity posture, including tabletop exercises and securing a retainer with an incident response firm.

- Device Usage & Screen Time:
  - The TDPAC will continue conversations on appropriate use for Jeffco-provided devices/networks.
  - A key area of interest is the efficacy of screen time and EdTech usage, especially in elementary grades, ensuring technology enhances learning rather than just filling time or collecting data.

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Education:
  - The topic remains ongoing due to rapid change.
  - The district acknowledged that blocking Gemini last year created a safety gap, as it is the safest AI environment when run through the Jeffco domain.

Google Gemini has been made available for students in Grades 6–12.

This access ensures that student information remains contained within Jeffco and provides an audit trail for appropriate use monitoring.

- Major external AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Claude) are currently blocked on the network. The district plans to shift to a whitelisting model in January where only approved tools will be accessible.

Cell Phone Policy (Separate Initiative): State law (Colorado House Bill 25-1135) mandates that the Board of Education adopt a district-wide cell phone use policy by next summer. A separate work session involving multiple committees, including TDPAC representatives, is scheduled for late October to gather feedback on proposals.

Budget Reduction Blueprint (BRB) Discussion: Jill Ibeck provided an overview of the district's strategy to address a projected $60 million budget reduction target (seeking $45 million in cuts and $15 million in new revenue).

- Reduction Measures: Measures include cost avoidance (cutting duplicative software and legacy licenses, such as 2,000 voicemail licenses), and budget allocation reductions.
- Impact on Services: Cuts to central services are expected to lead to a decrease in service levels; for example, help desk response times for certain tickets may increase from one day to three days. The goal is to keep cuts away from the direct classroom as much as possible.
- Timeline: Cost saving measures were implemented in September 2025. Departmental staff will be notified of impacts in late 2025, and school-based staff in early 2026, with reductions effective in June 2026.
- Real Estate Portfolio: In response to a query, the district is looking into selling closed school properties to gain a one-time financial boost and save on recurring maintenance costs (e.g., security). The revenue from sales is not expected to be as high as initially hoped.

Committee Feedback and Priorities for BRB:

- Safety and Security: Members prioritized maintaining or improving service levels for items related to physical and digital safety, such as door monitors, camera systems, and the ability to rapidly respond to Safe2Tell reports. Feedback suggested segmenting service level agreements (SLAs) so safety-critical issues maintain current response times.
- Technology Efficacy and Cost Analysis: Members requested information on which tech licenses cost the most and questioned the duplication of instructional software (e.g., one course using six different vendors), suggesting streamlining could lead to both cost savings and improved user experience.
- Vendor Management: Staff confirmed being aggressive with vendors, negotiating flat or reduced costs and threatening to change vendors if necessary.
- Cloud First Strategy: Concerns were raised regarding the long-term cost sustainability of the cloud-first model, citing risks like vendor lock-in and the necessity of exit strategies written into contracts, ensuring data retrieval and system restoration should a vendor relationship end (e.g., Workday).
- Transparency and Communication: The need for the district to be forthcoming and honest about the reasons for budget shortages and the specific, calculated decisions being made was emphasized. Members cautioned against using semantics like "no impact to the classroom".

- Staff Impact: Deep concern was expressed regarding the impact of budget reductions on teacher and staff morale and pressure, acknowledging that job pressures have already led educators to leave the profession.

Next Steps

- Budget discussions will continue in future TDPAC meetings.
- Members were reminded of the rescheduled Cell Phone Policy meeting on October 29th.
- Members were encouraged to follow up via email to set up their Jeffco Teams accounts for continued collaboration.