



**JEFFCO**  
**PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

## LEADERSHIP PROFILE REPORT

**HYA** | HAZARD  
YOUNG  
ATTEA  
ASSOCIATES

## Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of the Leadership Profile Assessment conducted by Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates (HYA) in January 2021 for the new superintendent of the Jefferson County Public Schools (Jeffco). The data contained herein were obtained from input the HYA consultants received when they met with individuals and groups via Zoom in either individual interviews or focus group settings and from the results of the online survey completed by stakeholders. The surveys, interviews, and focus group meetings were structured to gather input to assist the Board in determining the primary characteristics desired in the new superintendent. Additionally the stakeholder interviews and focus groups collected information regarding the strengths of the District and some of the challenges that it will be facing in the coming years.

### Participation

The numbers of participants, by stakeholder group, in the two methods of data gathering are listed below:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Personal interviews or focus groups</b>	<b>Online Survey</b>
Community	27	94
Parents	81	707
Support Staff	16	110
Teachers	47	330
Administrators	53	111
<b>Total</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>1352</b>

The community survey report and a draft of the desired characteristics are provided under separate cover and are meant to be stand-alone complementary pieces to the Leadership Profile Report.

It should be emphasized that the data are not a scientific sampling, nor should they necessarily be viewed as representing the majority opinion of the respective groups to which they are attributed. Items are included if, in the consultants' judgment, they warranted the Board's attention.



## Introduction

The focus group sessions were conducted between January 13, 2021 and January 25, 2021. A total of sixty sessions were completed via Zoom. The discussions were respectful, insightful and helpful. The HYA associates conducting the sessions would like to thank the participants for giving so freely of their time and for the depth of the discussions regarding Jeffco during the sessions.

One word was often shared during stakeholder focus groups, and that word was “diversity.” Many saw diversity in the District as a significant strength, some saw the challenges associated with it, and others commented on how it is both a strength and a challenge. The reason that the term is mentioned here is the fact that diversity means many different things to the constituents in Jeffco. It was often referenced in regards to racial, ethnic, religious, geographic, and/or socio-economic terms. Occasionally, the term was used to reference differences in political perspectives or community interests. It was also used to reference variations between school communities and program alternatives. Some cited it in regards to school choice issues. Some referred to diversity among the academic needs of students. Some focused the term on staff demographics. Many cite the term by referring to DEI – Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

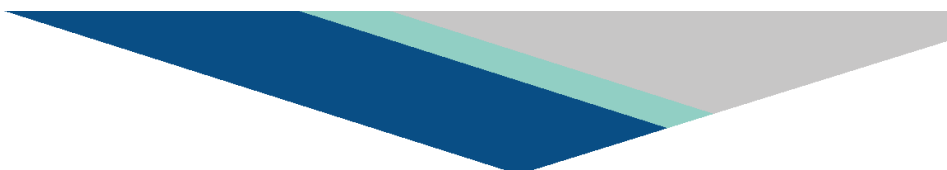
While “diversity” may have been a frequent term used during the focus meetings, it should be noted that there was no common definition or reference when it was being used; the implications were broad. While cited often, it was in reference to many of the themes listed below in different ways. Therefore, it is not called out as a separate theme. Instead, “diversity” as a concept is incorporated in several of the topic areas listed in the below text.

## Strengths of the District

While hundreds of comments were made regarding the strengths of the District, the following major themes surfaced often and across stakeholder groups.

### **Legacy, History, and Deep Level of Commitment in Jeffco**

The school district’s strategic plan is entitled “Jeffco Generations” for a reason. There is a long history and strong sentiment regarding the generations of families that have lived and worked in Jefferson County. Community members, parents, and all staff groups often referred to the fact that they grew up in Jefferson County and consciously chose to live and work in a community where the educational opportunities for their children and quality of



life are good. “Jeffco Pride” is a palpable sentiment; stakeholders feel strongly about their school district, their sense of community belonging, and their shared history, especially in rallying to overcome obstacles and/or tragedy. There is a deep sense of legacy amongst the residents and a desire to see the community thrive as it continues to change and grow.

There was also a phrase that was frequently cited during various sessions – “Jeffco is a big district that can get small very quickly.” Stakeholders explained the phrase to mean that when a need arises, Jeffco residents and district employees step up quickly and cooperatively to address the problem. Charitable, supportive, and collaborative examples were often shared to illustrate this commitment to each other and the community-at-large.

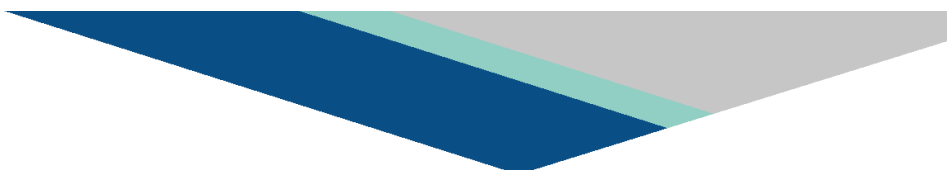
Numerous parents and community members expressed their appreciation of how well Jeffco has handled the COVID crisis and protected the health and well-being of the students. Stakeholders generally felt schools were safe, caring environments for children and look forward to the time when children are back in school full-time. Some parents, particularly in survey comments did not agree and expressed a strong desire to have children return to the classroom as soon as possible. Parents expressed the view that for the most part technology has worked well during the pandemic and attribute much of that success to a strong technology infrastructure in place prior to the COVID crisis. There were examples shared regarding limited access to technology for some families.

### **The People**

People were seen as one of Jeffco’s significant strengths. Parents praised the quality and commitment of the Jeffco staff. They shared examples of teacher, support staff, and administrators going above and beyond to meet the needs of their children. Staff members appreciated the work being done by their colleagues. They shared the belief that they stay in Jeffco, despite some of the challenges explained below, because of their commitment and loyalty to the District. All stakeholder groups expressed appreciation for the larger community’s commitment to Jeffco with the recent passage of the construction bond and mil override referendums. Principals were seen as doing a great job at the school level in creating cultures that build student character. Jeffco has the largest PTA in the state and their involvement provides financial and volunteer support for the schools.

### **Program Offerings, School Choice, and Building Autonomy**

Many constituents commented on the breadth and depth of programming alternatives offered to meet the wide diversity of student needs and parental preferences. Several constituent groups noted that individual schools, along with the District, have taken the initiative to develop specialized programs to meet student needs. Among the wide range of



programs that were mentioned, programs that serve gifted and talented students and students with special needs were most frequently referenced. Overall, the belief is that Jeffco offers students and parents with a vast of array of options when planning their educational experiences. Both external and internal stakeholders see strong benefits related to choice, but they also recognize that choice can create problems related to equity, school size, and consistency that will need to be addressed and monitored.

The size of the school district provides opportunities in regards to scale and influence. Having more than 160 school sites increases the options for choice. Building autonomy and having the flexibility to address the needs of various communities across the county is also seen as a positive. Stakeholders also saw autonomy as important in encouraging innovation at the school level. Being the second largest school district in the state means that Jeffco has significant influence in the State of Colorado with both the Legislature and the Department of Education.

### **Improved Communication**

Several stakeholder groups spoke about the improved communication with the larger Jeffco community, particularly with the 70% of residents who do not have children attending Jeffco's schools. With the recognition that the community is aging, communication with all residents is seen as essential for continued success in the school district. Communication with parents during COVID pandemic was also cited as a strength.

When considering the input from the online survey, the following were the top five strengths of Jeffco:

- Technology is integrated into the classroom. (Teaching and Learning)
- District schools are safe. (Teaching and Learning)
- The district employs effective teachers, administrators and support staff in its schools. (Management)
- The district has high standards for student performance. (Vision and Values)
- Employees are held accountable to high standards. (Management)

The first three strengths mentioned above are aligned with and reinforce some of the ideas shared during the focused group meetings. The last two bullets - “the district has high standards for student performance” and “holds employees accountable to high standards” were not frequently mentioned by focus group participants. They do appear to be significant strengths from the perspective of stakeholders who completed the online survey.



## Challenges and Issues Facing the District

A wide variety of thoughts regarding challenges facing the District were shared and individual ideas are listed in the comments section. Major challenge areas expressed across stakeholder groups include the following themes.

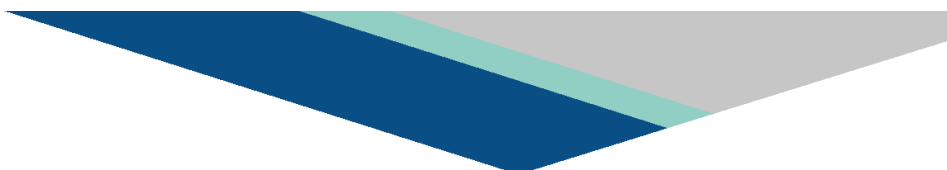
### **Student Achievement**

While “Jeffco Generations” focuses on increasing student engagement and enhancing high order thinking skills, numerous stakeholders commented on flat or declining student performance in literacy and math skills. Some people felt that there was too much emphasis placed on standardized test scores in regards to this issue. The majority of stakeholders who expressed comments about this issue were concerned that if students did not establish strong reading and math skills in the elementary grades, they would be ill prepared to continue at the secondary level. Parents and community members also expressed concern regarding growing achievement gaps, widening along socio-economic lines. It should be noted that other stakeholders commented that too much emphasis is placed on standardized test scores, taking away for more authentic learning experiences.

Many constituents, both internal and external, believe the District currently lacks focus on best practices in these areas and/or the District is too quick to embrace new educational initiatives, contributing to a decline in academic growth and proficiency levels. While many stakeholders appreciate the value of school level autonomy, they also expressed the need for a clearly defined, district effort to outline basic student outcomes, describe meaningful instructional practices, provide corresponding professional development, and dedicate the financial resources needed to drive those student achievement outcomes.

### **School Autonomy, District Direction, Accountability, and Systems Approach**

Constituents felt that the District has not achieved the right balance between school autonomy and District direction/focus/expectations. Most everyone stated that schools exercise a great deal of autonomy. Some individuals interpreted the current status as “too autonomous,” lacking continuity, direction and support from the District. In addition, there were some individuals who felt that the District lacks any kind of meaningful accountability system to monitor student-learning success at the school or district levels. The lack of a clearly defined, commonly agreed to set of parameters around what “should be tight” and “what can be loose” appears to be at the root of the flat or declining achievement measures.



At the school level, many appreciate flexibility to meet local needs, but examples of decisions not necessarily based on best instructional practices were shared. Additionally, no one shared how schools are held accountable for student performance measures. At the district levels, frequent references were made to a siloed center office in which departments were often working at odds with each other and giving conflicting, uncoordinated messages and direction to the schools. It appears that there is a desire to make significant progress on student performance. Many stakeholders asked that the District work to define student outcomes for all students, acceptable best instructional practices and material choices, and meaningful performance measures. The belief was that this District work should be done with a high level of school input. Additionally, some stakeholders saw the need for stronger accountability at the school and department levels aligned around student learning growth and improvement.

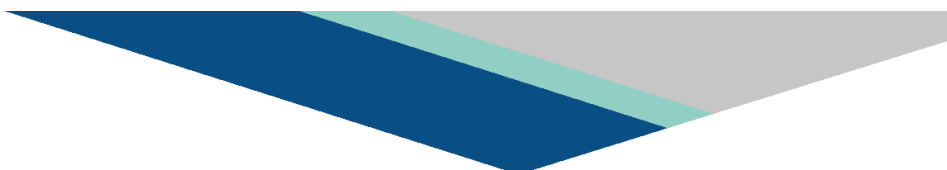
While not using the term, constituents expressed the view that there is a significant lack of a systems approach in the organization. The idea that autonomy at the school level can solve all problems is unrealistic. Organizational success will require clearly defined organizational outcomes, a strategic plan with timeline and measures, and an accountability system that will measure progress, along with human resources and operational procedures that build common vision, aligned practices, and collective accountability for results. Jeffco may well need to become tightly aligned around the science of learning while providing flexibility in the art of teaching.

### **Staff Morale**

While expressing a strong commitment to and belief in Jeffco, stakeholders in all employee groups expressed significant concerns about staff morale. Two key factors appear to be driving these feelings. Competitive pay is a significant factor in the current level of low staff morale. All stakeholder groups recognized that staff salaries are not competitive with surrounding districts. Examples of people leaving the district due to salary concerns were frequent. Equally frequent were comments that the District often asks for employee input but then disregards that input. COVID concerns were used as examples as some employees have felt that their safety concerns about returning to the classroom have not been taken seriously. They feel parental desire to have children return to school outweigh their concerns for safety. Comments from staff often expressed the feeling that staff members are not treated with respect when it comes to salaries and employee voice.

### **Finances**

District finances (a.k.a. Budget) was one of the more often cited concerns by all stakeholder groups. Many components of fiscal issues were discussed and shared. Comments generally



fell in to three categories: Adequacy, Prioritization, and Equity. An often-shared view was that the current level of state and local funding is not adequate to meet the needs and desires for the type of educational services that the community (particularly parents and staff) desires. Concerns that funding from the state is highly problematic and inadequate and that the community-at-large has a tradition of being hesitant to pass mil levies were expressed repeatedly. Secondly, questions were raised as to whether the District was spending the dollars it has on its priorities. Real or perceived, a widespread view exists that the District has added administrators while continuing to pay rank and file staff members poorly. Lastly, equity is a core topic related to district finances. All stakeholder groups perceived inequities among schools, communities, departments, programs, and school levels. This issue appears to be growing in both depth and breath within the organization.

A related issue to District finances is budgeting at the school level. There appears to be a lack of understanding of how school budgeting works and a concern as to whether or not the current practice is meeting the intended goals. Even the term SBB is not clearly understood. Some refer to School Based Budgeting, others Site Based Budgeting, and still others Student Based Budgeting. There is little understanding as to how the system actually works, concern over reallocation of funds mid-year, and major questions as to the fairness of the system.

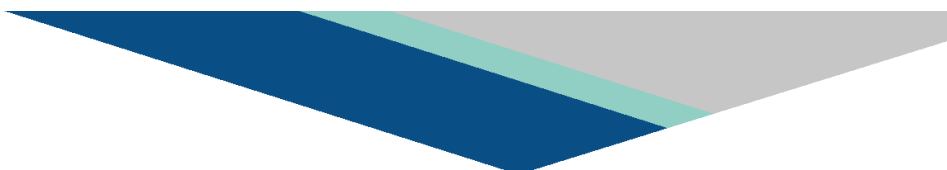
### **Equity**

Concerns about equity were expressed in relationship to many previously mentioned areas. In many ways this concept is similar to the term “diversity” discussed in the introductory section. People hold many different views regarding where they find the greatest inequities: access to resources, technological support, school budgets and funding formulas, extracurricular programs, staff salaries, student instruction, teacher professional development, PTA support, school choice, transportation, etc. Many attributed the inequities to socio-economic disparity and/or geographic differences. Overall, the clear message that came across in this area is the perception that there are significant inequities in the District and that there is a strong desire for addressing inequities and for developing a common understanding of what is being done to address these issues.

### **Leadership Longevity**

The turnover in leadership at the superintendent and board levels is causing angst and fear within the organization. Having three superintendents and several interim superintendents within the past eight years has created uncertainty and anxiety in the organization. District direction and organizational practices have changed significantly due to leadership changes. The feeling exists that just as Jeffco is getting started down a path, the leader changes and





things are thrown up for grabs. Additionally, some stakeholders describe significant changes at the board level as contributing to these feelings, sometimes going as far as describing it as causing organizational trauma. Deep divisions within the community regarding school funding and board elections contribute to the feelings of angst regarding District direction. The one common theme expressed across all stakeholder groups is a desire for leadership stability and longevity.

## Characteristics

Many of the areas defined in both strengths and challenges related to the skills desired in Jeffco's next superintendent. The major characteristics include the following:

### **Instructional Leadership**

Improved student learning outcomes is a clear need of the District. While academic growth is valued, the community also sees the importance of student mental health, particularly with all of the challenges associated with the current pandemic. The new superintendent will need to possess the knowledge and skills necessary to lead the organizational efforts to:

- Address learning loss that has occurred during the pandemic.
- Deploy the instructional initiatives in the District's strategic plan, Jeffco Generations.
- Improve student performance in literacy and math skills.
- Enhance services for English Language Learners.
- Expand college and career readiness.
- Provide a full range of educational programming to address the needs of all learners.

### **System Alignment**

The new superintendent needs to be a "systems thinker." While a vision may provide the direction for the coming years, the new superintendent needs to have deep understanding of internal organizational operations. He/she will need to bring clarity to the District's focus, realign and reorganize the District's support functions and personnel, align District resources (personnel, dollars, and time) around the District's priorities, and create accountability measures and a timeline to judge progress and readjust as necessary. This work will take significant internal focus on budgets, operations, and supervision.



### **Internal and External Relationships**

While system alignment will focus on process and procedures, the new superintendent needs to be an astute relationship builder. Trust is fragile within the organization and to accomplish meaningful realignment work, the superintendent will need to establish and nurture mutually respectful relationships with internal stakeholder groups and external partners. Transparent, two-way, meaningful communication will play a critical role in establishing these relationships. Honesty and integrity will be essential in moving forward. Sincere collaboration and engagement will be necessary. Most importantly, the superintendent will need to listen with a desire to understand, make decisions after gathering and considering input, and communicate effectively and with transparency regarding his/her rationale for the decisions that she/he makes.

### **Financial Knowledge and Stewardship**

Stakeholders describe Colorado school funding as complicated and unique. They see the need for a deep understanding of school finance - hopefully, from a Colorado perspective. A desire to be actively engaged at the state level with lobbying on behalf of Jeffco and a desire to engage the Jeffco community in conversation about funding will both be important. Prior experience with community engagement and state level leadership would be highly desirable. Experience with managing large budgets and innovative solutions to fiscal challenges would also be beneficial.

### **Equity Lens**

As noted previously, diversity, equity, and inclusion are key factors impacting Jeffco presently and will only grow in importance. Experience working in culturally, socio-economically and ethnically diverse communities would be a huge benefit. Having demonstrated experience in improving student outcomes for learners across the spectrum and in creating systems to allocate resources in an equitable and proactive manner would be highly desirable. A deep and sincere understanding of the personal struggles some marginalized children face would be a powerful asset to bring to Jeffco.

### **Longevity and Commitment**

While no one can foresee the future and predict decisions of others, the Jeffco community seeks stability and longevity in leadership. The foundational building blocks for creating an outstanding school district are all in place in Jeffco and stakeholders seek a leader who will commit to the long-term journey and help them get there.



## Survey Results: Characteristic Priorities

The top five characteristics identified from the online survey results include:

- Foster a positive, professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff, and administrators (Community Engagement)
- Recruit, employ, and retain effective personnel throughout the District and its schools (Management)
- Provide transparent communication (Community Engagement)
- Effectively plan and manage the long-term financial health of the District (Management)
- Understand and be sensitive to the needs of a diverse student population (Teaching and Learning)

These characteristics are closely aligned with the challenges and characteristics identified in the focus group sessions.

HYA intends to meet the challenge of finding a slate of candidates who possesses most of the skills and character traits required to meet the needs of the district. The search team will seek out superintendent candidates who can work with the Jeffco Board to provide the leadership needed to continue to raise academic standards and student performance, while meeting the unique needs of each of its schools and communities.

The search team would like to thank all the participants who attended focus groups meetings or completed the online survey and the Jeffco staff members who assisted with our meetings, particularly Darcy Thome, Jennifer Kimpson, Michael Boyer, Phil Bedford, and David Bell, who organized the search team's time in the district and their Zoom sessions. Special acknowledgement is also given to Joel Newton, of the Edgewater Collective, who helped to organize listening sessions with Spanish speaking Jeffco parents.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Lisa Flores and Hank Gmitro



## Summary of Comments from Focus Group Meetings

The structure of the focus groups was open, allowing for participants to build upon each other's comments. Participants were asked to respond to the following questions.

- What do stakeholders value regarding the schools? What strengths do they desire to retain and build upon?
- What are the issues this District currently faces, and, will face in the next three to five years?
- What personal and professional characteristics are expected in a new Superintendent?

The following represent the ideas shared at the focus group sessions.

### Community

27 Participants

#### Strengths:

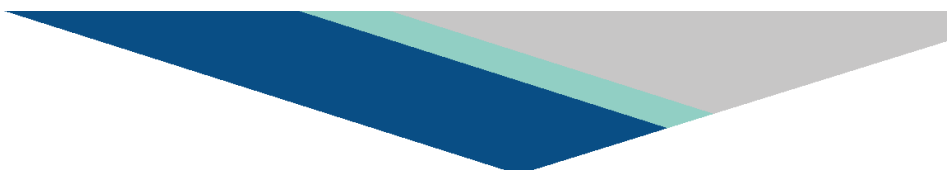
- Biggest PTA Council in the state
- Board is receptive to District Accountability Committee
- Charter schools are locally controlled
- Colorado Charter Schools are community based and locally organized
- Colorado is a well-educated state
- Communication from the District for the most part is good
- Communication to non-parent constituents has improved significantly in recent years
- Community college has nine articulated degrees with Warren Tech
- Community honoring teachers
- Community members believes in their schools and are connected to them
- Continuum of different types of schools
- Cooperative relationships where charter school students can attend Jeffco school activities – athletics, the arts, etc
- Deliver Ed Report - good report and but no follow-through on recommendations
- District provides monetary and strong spirit support for its athletic teams
- Diversity in the county
- Exceptional teachers
- Expanded career programming
- Focuses on relationships
- Getting rid of Gallagher Amendment
- Good schools in Evergreen are attractive to homebuyers
- Good staffing and leadership from the top management
- Great professionals in the district
- Great relationship between charter schools and Jeffco administrations – good communication

- Great work at local school level
- History of successful employee negotiation approach use for years - Employee Summit comprised of 10-12 people - 2 representatives of each group people in total – ended due to state laws prohibiting two board members from meeting to conduct district business
- Implementation of G/T centers
- Individual schools
- Jeffco and charter schools work really well together – campuses, finances,
- Jeffco has reputation for providing strong academic foundation for its students
- Jeffco service organization that provide support to students
- Jeffco’s relationship with Charters has improved and generally good
- Jeffco’s website, Facebook, etc are good communication tools
- Jefferson Center for Mental Health
- Jefferson County Education Association
- Large size of the district lends to geographic and socio-economic diversity
- Lots of district committee
- Lots of innovations in Jeffco schools
- Lots of parent engagement
- New south campus for career ed
- Parents with high expectations
- Partners with the community and government organizations
- Positive experiences for students
- Safety for students of color and sexual orientation
- Services for homeless families
- Solid board in place right now
- Strong history of local control
- Student engagement focus
- Student Support services
- Support for LGTB community
- Teachers are the bedrock of a community
- Teachers, principals and staff are hard-working and talented
- Technology support for families during COVID
- Very committed community to education
- Warren Tech Program – successful and plans for expansion
- Wide of types of schools and choice in Jeffco
- Work being on “Transforming the Task”

**Challenges/Concerns/Issues:**

- “One-size-fits-all” approach to meeting student needs does not match growing socio-economic diversity of the district
- \$700 million bond program is \$100 million over budget
- 2013 election was very disruptive and resulted in the loss of lots of good people
- 50 million spent on the Superintendent office pre-COVID

- A teacher was not treated well for being transgender – student policies are strong, but transgender staff members are not given the same protections
- Achievement gap is growing in the district
- Addressing competing interests of various stakeholder and constituency groups
- Administrative staff turnover has been hard to recover from
- AI investment
- Are suspensions tracked by ethnicity to follow up on implicit bias
- Assess special education practices to eliminate procedures missteps and reduce payouts
- Being sluggish for several years – little change or innovation
- Big diverse district and many competing interest – hard to look at all of needs exist
- Board is too focused on specific EC approaches and not fully embracing the Early Childhood Council – needs to work on a more comprehensive and coordinated approaches
- Budget
- Budget issues
- Choices and decisions that our leaders need to make will become tougher
- Committees are always utilized properly
- Community wants accountability for fiscal management
- Coordination between DAC and budgetary committees
- Cost of living in Jefferson County
- Could see more demand for choices regarding student attendance
- CTE options
- Curriculum department is very bloated and expensive
- Declining enrollment
- Decreasing enrollment
- Depression rates are skyrocketing during the pandemic
- Difference in PTA support
- Disparity and equity issues
- District has virtual school and has not tapped that program to guide other schools
- District leadership does not have good rapport with the non-parent community
- District mental health staff is poorly paid and inexperienced
- Diversity
- Dropping enrollment
- Dropping scores
- During the pandemic, Jeffco seems to have prioritized in-person sports over in-person academics learning
- Enrollment pressures
- Equipping teachers with training to meet the wide range of needs
- Equity – had some strength in this area and but it has weakened
- Equity questions around resources
- Establishing a shared frame of reference for all
- Facilities resources from the state are not adequate
- Fair representation of student body
- Fear about what schooling is going to look like when we all come back
- Financial needs in the District and lack of adequate state funding

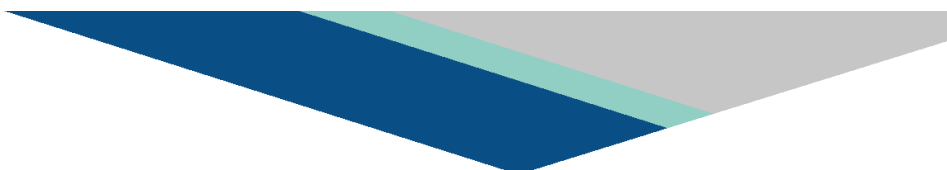
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- G/T centers at high school level need expansion
  - Getting kids back in school in a thoughtful and meaningful way
  - Growing population of low SES students (approx 33%) with huge needs
  - Having a better working relationship between Charters and Jeffco around security and safety issues
  - Having difficult conversation respectfully depends on the players
  - Having each school figuring how to address virtual learning is not working
  - High percentage of students not reading on grade level
  - Hiring a diverse staff
  - Importance of teaching science
  - In returning to in-school learning, the district should anticipate a strong need for remediation - students are zoning out on social media with at-home learning during the pandemic
  - Institutional barriers to supporting charter schools
  - Jeffco has post-traumatic stress syndrome since Columbine – too reactive to problem students and not enough attention paid to mental health of students
  - Jeffco is top heavy administratively – too many levels
  - K-12 is not producing the talent that is needed
  - Lack of understanding of how charter schools are funded
  - Large diverse district – wealth, types of schools
  - Latino students are struggling in county
  - Long tradition of inventing its own curriculum rather than looking at best practices
  - Lots of diversity among Jeffco schools
  - Meeting the moment in these challenging times
  - More consistency among gifted centers
  - More opportunities for career education
  - Mountain communities differ from “down the hill,” but decisions made en masse
  - Mountain communities typically ignore communications from the superintendent, because notices lack relevancy to their lives
  - Move towards one size fits one
  - Need for more support for PLCs
  - Need for staff to work on social emotional learning and mental health needs
  - Need for systems and structures that meet the needs of all kids
  - Need to get rid of Tabor Amendment
  - Need to improve reading performance
  - Need to review instructional materials to insure that they are respectful of religious perspectives
  - Need to unify the district
  - No superintendents have been able to improve academic performance in Jeffco
  - Not very effective at sharing best practices and success among schools
  - Open dialog about Race in the classroom
  - Overhead costs have increased while performance has declined
  - Pandemic has highlighted inequities among area in Jeffco
  - Parents and students are in a holding pattern, trying to get through the current pandemic, thinking that we’ll catch up later with academics
  - People are leaving the district and moving into home schooling

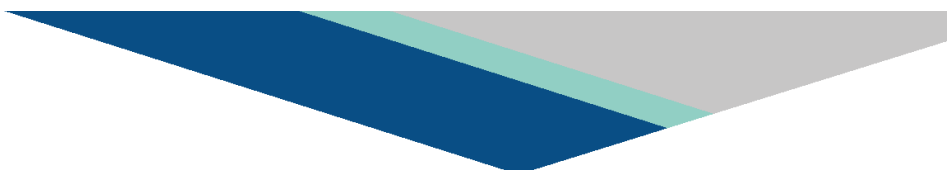
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- Preschool roll out was bumpy and Jeffco could have benefited from charter schools' experience
  - Pressure from within the district regarding charter schools
  - Resources officer are too trigger-happy with consequences
  - Salaries are not competitive
  - SES needs across the county
  - Significant challenges associate with school choice
  - Sliding academics
  - Staff does not feel that their voice is heard
  - State funding restrictions and challenges
  - State legislature pressures on state funding and charter school funding
  - Stress of COVID for single parent families
  - Student based budgeting and principal autonomy – has shown inconsistency and inequalities among schools
  - Students who are reading at levels that are years behind
  - Students who have to move from one school to another
  - Students worked to have menstrual hygiene products available in the school, and the issue needs to be addressed district wide
  - Superintendent hiring process with 2013 was problematic
  - Superintendent is not always receptive to District Accountability Committee
  - Superintendent has not always participated in PTA Council Leadership
  - Suspends too many students
  - Taking advantage of the opportunities to improve relationships with charter schools
  - Taping the potential of best practices in charter schools and deploying them in Jeffco
  - Tax dollars need to stay with public schools
  - Teachers have to juggle many different things
  - Teacher pay resulting in teacher loss
  - Teacher salaries
  - The budget
  - The community's understanding of the value of schools and teachers
  - Title 1 Schools
  - Top down leadership style does not provide enough opportunity for constituent feedback
  - Trauma from the pandemic
  - University training not preparing teachers in the area of reading instruction
  - Unmet opportunity to create internships for students, who are not college bound
  - Unmet opportunity to develop more partnership between local business and schools
  - Urgent to focus on inequities for staff and schools
  - Warren Tech a great option, but less accessible for students in rural communities

**Desired Characteristics:**

- Ability to navigate competing interests in numerous topics
- Able to make hard decisions
- Able to move forward and make decisions
- An educator who has come up through the ranks



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- Approachable for students
  - Articulates a clear vision about the importance of education to the larger community
  - Aware of struggles that students are facing from social media, current rise in depression and suicide rates, and experience in addressing these challenges
  - Awareness of church state separation incidents
  - Be a champion for teachers – pay them well and treat them respectfully
  - Being intentional at listening to voices that are not usually at the table
  - Believes in accountability to public
  - Believes in and supports public education
  - Believes in the current Jeffco Vision and able to help it move forward
  - Better balance between building autonomy and district direction and support for all students
  - Breaks down silos
  - Builds and bridges relationships
  - Classroom (hands-on) experience with students
  - Collaborative
  - Collaborative in their approach in working with school and community leaders
  - Comfortable with change
  - Communication skills - able to communicate with different stakeholders
  - Communication skills with a variety of groups
  - Communicator: well-spoken and good listener
  - Community-minded
  - Conducts outreach to marginalized families
  - Creates a team to implement the vision
  - Demonstrated strong community engagement skills
  - Diversity in candidate themselves (take a break from white male leadership)
  - Educational background
  - Encourages conversations about race and ethnicity
  - Experience in large district
  - Fights for technology infrastructure
  - Financial management skills
  - Forthcoming
  - From CO and knows about CO's school district accountability
  - Gets out into all areas of the district
  - Good at addressing challenges
  - Good communicator
  - Good listener
  - Has a proven track record
  - Helps people feel that they are heard
  - Helps students feel included
  - Honest, transparent
  - Innovator
  - Interested in partnering with local business
  - Investment in the community
  - Jeffco needs to be more creative and innovative

- 
- Keeps board informed
  - Knowledge of and experience with Title 1
  - Knowledgeable about school finance in CO
  - Knows Colorado public school system requirements and finances
  - Knows how to talk to business community
  - Knows the community
  - Listens to each group
  - Making things real
  - Needs to have worked as an administrator in a large school district
  - Needs to understand Tabor
  - Needs to value Early Childhood learning and understands the CO regulations
  - Online learning knowledge
  - Open dialog
  - Open to Courageous Conversations
  - Open to diverse educational models
  - Open-minded and willing to first listen
  - Openness to addressing issues of race
  - Out and about in the school district and community - actively listens
  - Peacemaker
  - Poise and grace during challenging times
  - Principal experience
  - Priorities diversity, equity, and inclusion work
  - Provides constructive criticism and holds people accountable
  - Puts children first
  - Reaches out to larger community
  - Relationship builder with educators in district
  - Respect for diversity
  - Respectful of and inclusive with faith communities
  - Respects and supports teachers
  - School level experience and district office experience
  - Seeks equity
  - Seeks out all voices
  - Sensitive to needs of Latino population
  - Sensitive to what kids are going through with the pandemic
  - Serves as a gatekeeper for controversies impacting staff and protects them
  - Sets high expectations of respect for community and school district
  - Shares what he/she learns from the community with the Board
  - Should be a traditional education candidate
  - Someone who has been a teacher
  - Strong finance management skills
  - Support for internal and CO candidates
  - Supportive of gifted education
  - Supportive of home schooling
  - Supports charters and believes in them

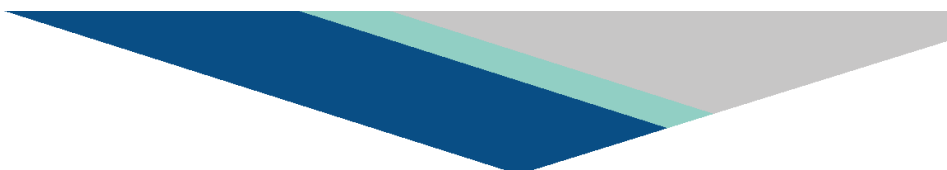
- Supports children no matter their path
- Supports Social/Emotional needs for student and staff
- Supports staff
- Supports staff with resources and training
- Teaching experience
- Track record of improving academic performance
- Transparency
- Truly engages with broad diverse groups
- Trust builder
- Understand and respond to growing ethnic and socio-economic diversity
- Understanding of and experience with diverse communities
- Understands CO charter regulations
- Understands Colorado Charter School law
- Understands what it is like to run a billion-dollar budget
- Unifier
- Unify the community
- Values all employees in all groups and sees their value to the organization
- Values high quality CTE programming
- Values PTA participation
- Values relationships but willing to move the district forward
- Values services organizations in the county
- Values the history of Jeffco and understanding the decision that have been made in the past
- Visit schools regularly (all schools including Charters)
- Wants good education for all children
- Willing to commit to longevity In Jeffco
- Willing to fire people
- Willing to make decisions and take a stand
- Willing to stay for long term
- Works with everyone

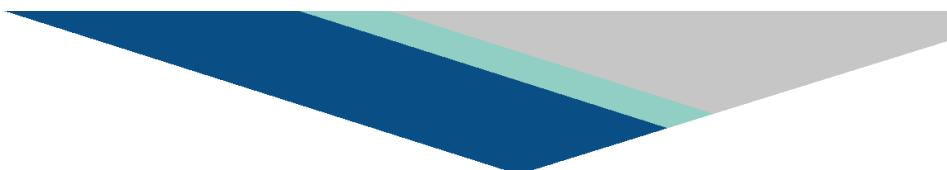
## Parents

### 70 Participants

#### **Strengths:**

- 2013-2015 hit rock bottom
- 2nd to none in COVID response for online learning
- Addresses differing learning styles
- An excellent variety of academic and elective programs are available to students, especially at the HS level
- At my school there are good parent/teacher relationships
- Choice and options
- Cindy Stevenson great superintendent

- 
- Classified employees at the school level are excellent at meeting student/family needs
  - Clear school goals for academic and other improvements
  - Communication have improved significantly over the few years
  - Community support strong within school's feeder pattern
  - COVID approach and handling – good communication
  - Despite finances declining, Jeffco has been still able to do a lot
  - District focuses on academic achievement
  - Diversity is Jeffco's biggest strength and weakness
  - Diversity, inclusion, equity division in central office
  - During the pandemic, Jeffco has maintained support for student families with food insecurities
  - Excellent support for families from the schools and the district in moving to online learning
  - Fantastic, crystal clear communication about transition to at home learning during pandemic
  - Flexibility – pivoted to different challenges
  - Forethought by leadership regarding potential problems
  - Former superintendent was very visible
  - Good leadership choices
  - Good, frequent communication from the district on upcoming topics and issues
  - Graduation rates are strong
  - Great COVID response in Spring 2020, especially when compared to other districts
  - Great parent communication via flyers, email, and phone
  - Great quality teachers
  - Highly sought after
  - How COVID has been handled with lots of options
  - In response to COVID, Jeffco made a solid commitment to remote learning and we made it happen - There could have been more planning, but we have adjusted
  - Interesting balance between building autonomy and district curriculum
  - Interim Superintendent Schuh knows the district well
  - Jeffco Generations – comprehensive and focused on holistic view of learning
  - Jeffco Generations Plan impressive and focused on deep student learning
  - Jeffco has a strong generational legacy in that Jeffco alumni return to the district to raise their own children and/or work for the district
  - Jeffco has begun to look at hiring practices that will attract and retain staff of color, esp. in schools that are serving more diverse populations
  - Jeffco has excellent teachers, who have a great level of dedication to their students
  - Jeffco has incredible legacy - many alumni return to teach in the district
  - Jeffco is well resourced and able to respond well with online learning during the pandemic
  - Jeffco students are the best
  - Jeffco's educational approach includes a focus on character development
  - Kids are doing well
  - Long traditions
  - Mentor program
  - Mission and vision for engaged learning
  - New CTE campus

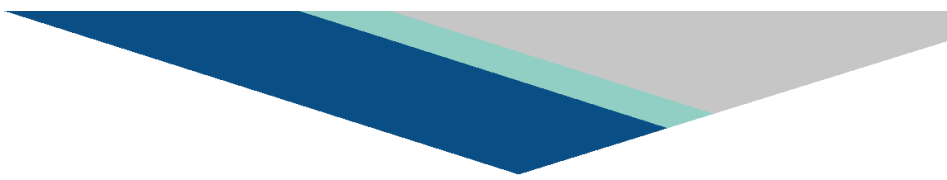
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- Offers student families choice in school enrollment
  - Open enrollment and choice
  - Outdoor lab
  - Passion and pride for the district
  - Politically and socially active community
  - Principal open to parent feedback
  - Principals do a good job of reaching out to and connecting with their school communities
  - Proud of Jeffco's quick and effective response to pandemic
  - Provides district support for charter schools
  - Providing mental health support
  - PTA involvement provides strong financial and volunteer support for school
  - Racism and equity conversations with students
  - Range of options of schools
  - Reflection of the county
  - Reputation as a quality school district til 2013 with school board change
  - Responsive staff
  - Responsiveness of district office
  - Safety is priority for Jeffco
  - Safety protocols for students
  - SBB budgeting is helpful to schools on the lower end of socio economic scale
  - Second largest in the state
  - Small neighborhood schools
  - Smaller school communities are appreciated and valued as part of the district
  - Staff training for new teachers and professional dev of experienced teachers
  - Strong community support and serve as a good advocate for needs of students
  - Strong partnerships between teachers and principals
  - Strong sense of community throughout the district
  - Students are learning and are being academically challenged
  - Students thriving during pandemic
  - Support of teachers in learning how to teach during COVID
  - Teachers and staff are unparalleled in excellence and dedication to students
  - Teachers are experimental in implementing new ideas
  - The COVID pandemic has provided an opportunity for parents and students to related more closely to their teachers, especially as troubleshoot learning environment challenges/deficiencies
  - The district has a culture of high academic expectations, which is tied to strong supports for students, staff, and families to ensure success
  - The district has great geographic and socio-economic diversity
  - Thinking about twenty-first century skills
  - Unlike Denver, Jeffco supports its school resource officers
  - Well-qualified and dedicated teaching staff
  - Wide variety of communities and schools and flexibility to meet needs



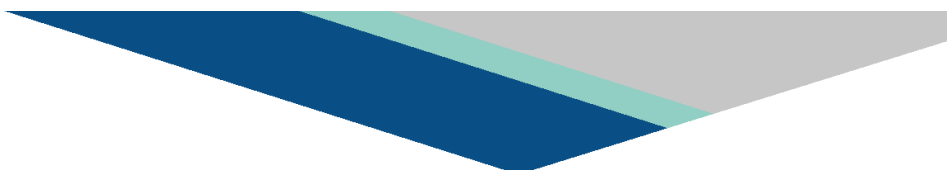
### **Challenges/Concerns/Issues:**

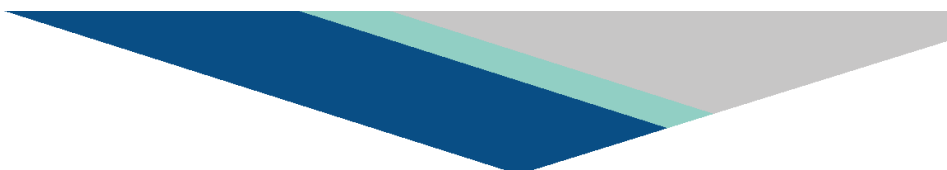
- \$54M deficit going into 2021/22 school year - ongoing budget constraints
- 30+ Title 1 schools all carry a socio-economic stigma, and do not have the same access to resources, nor are they able to offer the same quality of education as their more affluent counterparts
- A white family enrolled in a minority-majority school sees the inequities daily
- Access to technology is so important and has become a greater challenge during COVID
- Administration is more bottom up rather than top down
- Adoption and implementation of the Jeffco Generations strategic plan appears to be an optional school by school decision
- Age of facilities
- As parents, we understand how important internet access is, and even though we limit the number of internet users are home, our home internet is so slow and puts our children at a learning disadvantage
- As Spanish speaking parents, it is challenging to provide at-home support for our children during the pandemic: we are not up-to-date on the latest technology
- At my child's elementary school, most people speak Spanish and I am able to obtain the help and information I need The same is not true at my other child's junior high school
- Budget - Jeffco is losing teachers to competing districts that are able to provide more competitive salaries
- Budget - more resources need to be dedicated to closing the achievement gap, especially at Title 1 schools
- Budget - need to support teachers with higher pay
- Budget – fiscally and physically looking at budget
- Budget constraints may lead to closing schools
- Build upon the next layer of community of engagement
- Bulletins - translated via Google are incomprehensible
- Central Jeffco (of lower socio-economic standing) often struggles; the achievement gap between this area and other parts of Jeffco are not really addressed
- Changing plans
- Children cannot enroll in outside courses and earn District credit for the course and graduation requirements
- Children feel frustrated with online learning, because when their computer fails (with frequency), their student work and effort is too often lost
- Classes via Zoom remain a challenge, because our kids cannot connect to the internet and/or their computer technology is so old it is becoming obsolete
- Close-knit, thriving school community
- Committee/community engagement has dropped - More of a “sit and get” attitude among parents

- Communication in English is great; written translation in Spanish is usually good, but oral interpretation falls short - Translation is not consistently available and when it is, it is frequently incorrect
- Communications
- Communities have varied needs and district too often tries to provide one-size fits all response
- Community committees are in name only and not really heard
- Community is talked to, but not heard
- COVID - has left us with much to be desired - Nobody has or is planning a response
- COVID has exposed good and bad in the system
- Culturally and linguistically diverse people thrive in pockets throughout the district - not universal experience
- Current educational options are insufficient in serving all students, especially students with special needs (for example: GT & Special Ed)
- Current strategic plan does not have a set expectations regarding minimum level of engagement and adoption
- Declining enrollment
- DEI efforts are not always at the forefront
- DEI office and student re-engagement office are too much of a great kept secret
- DEI work in the district is not typically informed by lived experience
- Differing strong opinions about what education
- Disconnect between the school leadership and district leadership
- District as a whole needs to figure out what it wants to do about equity
- District communication not always followed by action and implementation
- District communications are too fluffy Need more substance over volume
- District conducted a survey regarding coming back to school in the fall but made the decision to come before the survey even closed
- District forms of communication are not necessarily the most effective, but methods are consistent and informative
- District has hired more central staff without sharing purpose or rationale behind increasing district staff size
- District lacks systems - There are too many pockets of excellence Not enough is universal
- District leadership sometimes lacks the backbone to make hard decisions - For example, a consultant was paid \$80K to evaluate school start times and yet the research already exists
- District needs to create more equitable access to programs and resources
- District student survey - 2011-20 data regarding “school connection” are consistency low – 33% of MS and HS students do not feel happy at school and 28 % do not feel connected
- District suffers from racism and cultural bias
- District tries to be responsive to a politically-mixed community, catering to all - Really, district needs to stand for its own values, tied to best serving students
- District unresponsive to science related to COVID
- Districts surveys are numerous, but poorly crafted
- Diverse pool of candidates

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- Diversity
  - Diversity inequities need to be addressed
  - Diversity should be reflected in the student curriculum and in staff composition
  - Doesn't switch course too quickly
  - During COVID pandemic, Jeffco provides inadequate and unsustainable services for students with IEPs, especially for younger students
  - Economic inequities impact resources available to schools
  - Educational resources, expectations, and protocols vary widely from school to school; the district is in need of "level setting" across the district, i.e. instructional minutes should not vary so widely among elementary schools
  - Educational resources, expectations, and protocols vary widely from school to school; the district is in need of "level setting" across the district, i.e. instructional minutes should not vary so widely among elementary schools
  - Emerging language learners and their families are valuable assets to a school community, but they are not always valued by their schools and the district
  - Emotions
  - Equity issues and kids being left behind
  - Equity needs to be addressed in the District
  - Feels like no one is steering the ship and making the decision
  - Financial resources to operate safely
  - Food distribution response left out certain conversation – communication via email not text
  - Fractured leadership; interim superintendent does not listen to board or parent community
  - Given history with school shootings, safety and security of our students is of utmost importance
  - Given volatility of current social-political climate, schools need to be able to facilitate conversations with students about tough issues, so those schools foster a safe and inclusive environment
  - Google translate has been a district crutch, but is often inaccurate
  - Great student re-engagement office (dropout prevention), excellent collaboration
  - Hard to tell what is coming from central district and what is coming from the school
  - Health and safety of teachers and students is paramount and should not be treated as a PR effort
  - Heightened level of arguing among community groups at this time due to COVID response tensions, and growing awareness of disparities throughout the district
  - Hope this period is an awakening for doing things differently
  - How the public perceives government
  - Huge issue about grade level performance by students – have not seen improvement over decades
  - I am an engaged parent, who would appreciate understanding school communications in my native tongue, which is not English
  - In current political climate, teachers bringing personal politics into classroom - Teachers need more and better training to remain politically agnostic when teaching students



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- In Jeffco, SBB has contributed to a vacuum of leadership In contrast, when Denver moved to SBB, DPS continued to provide schools direction, tools and resources
  - Issues with reading curriculum
  - IT department focused on security not teaching
  - It is a racist act that language translation is not offered consistently and/or is offered at the last minute
  - Jason Glass was not part of the community - Offensive that he did not join PTA
  - Jeffco Connect - my daughter has been only enrolled at Jeffco schools, and now the school says we are not registered on Jeffco Connect - I do not understand why this is the case
  - Jeffco has a history with in-school shootings, so safety is a big concern - However, there is great disparity in providing additional life-safety resources Some PTAs are able to pay for extra safety and security at their schools
  - Jeffco has community groups that have organized to oppose public education
  - Jeffco is losing some teachers to neighboring districts that can offer a higher wage
  - Jeffco needs more emphasis on diversity/anti-bias training for staff and students
  - Jeffco needs to develop anti-racist curriculum for students at all grade levels, equitable hiring practices for all qualified candidates, district-wide staff training in DEI work and practices, and consciously work to dismantle white supremacy culture within the system as a whole
  - Jeffco needs to ramp up its diversity training
  - Jeffco should phase out school resource officers and instead reallocate funds to SPED services
  - Jeffco's hiring practices have not always been equitable -Typically, internal hires
  - Lack of diversity in some schools
  - Lack of diversity in top district leadership has trickled down to all levels of Jeffco
  - Lack of faith in knowing we are headed in right directions
  - Lack of support for teachers – hybrid learning and distance learning needs work – need to help teachers learn to use technology tools
  - Large and growing academic gap between higher and lower income students
  - Large and growing number of homeless children enrolled in the district
  - Leadership is largely homogeneous in the district and they are overly confident that they are hearing for all groups when they are not
  - Leadership is practicing homogenous and incestuous hiring practices
  - Leadership is well intentioned, but intent doesn't always translate into action
  - Leadership that reflects the diversity of our community
  - Level of state funding
  - Local control at the state level makes it difficult
  - Loss of finances
  - Marginalized students need advocacy so that they can have equitable access to advanced placement classes and additional educational opportunities
  - Need a better system of resources and development regarding learning – approaches across the board are lagging
  - Need a livable wage for educators and paras
  - Need more restorative justice training

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- Need people in leadership that understand and value diversity
  - Need to develop more opportunities for parent volunteer support (not uniform across district)
  - Neighboring districts are more competitive with compensation and better able to retain staff
  - Not a lot of STEAM offerings in the District
  - Not enough is done to ensure that advanced kids remain challenged in the classroom
  - Not enough people in the district approach culturally and linguistically diverse populations with an asset-based mindset
  - Opportunities for input and information have diminished
  - Opportunities to inform, build understanding and trust, and foster advocacy are frequently missed in communicating with the community
  - Oral interpretation during IEP meetings is inadequate (inaccurate) - Fortunately, the district has been open to bringing in outside translators
  - Oral interpreters are not always available
  - Parental frustration
  - Place is too big
  - Principals do a great job of creating culture that builds student character
  - Principals who have never taught
  - PTA fills budget shortfalls in some areas, but PTA support not available in all parts of the district
  - Quality of curriculum delivered and education received varies widely and is zip code dependent
  - Quality of education is left too much to the luck of the draw, experienced principal making the difference
  - Reaching out to parents who may not be traditionally engaged
  - Recovering from 2013 board – created distance and ill will between board/adm and labor
  - Responding to COVID, district has not prioritized getting students back in the classroom
  - Restorative justice programs in schools
  - Salaries need to remain competitive with other districts in order to attract and retain teachers
  - SBB (Student-Based Budgeting) has broken district-wide systems that used to better support schools and students District now has 158 pockets of budgeting that has created winners and losers among District schools
  - Scarcity of resources: district needs to compensate and retain quality teachers and staff
  - School based budgeting seems to be a mess, which leaves all schools struggling to secure adequate resources
  - School finance and revenue will remain a challenge in the coming years
  - Second language learners are underserved
  - Slow to implement changes and solutions
  - So many different populations and schools – how do you focus
  - So many neighborhood schools at low enrollment
  - Social emotional needs
  - Social emotional needs of students
  - Socio-economic disparities have been highlighted during time of pandemic, especially when it comes to resources provided for at-home learning
  - Special education system during COVID is not manageable by teachers

- SPED students are 10% of Jeffco enrollment - SPED students are under-served because services are expensive and “not sexy” leading to huge learning gaps
- Staff and teachers are underpaid and opportunities for acknowledgement are few
- Strong communication systems broke down when SBB was introduced
- Stuck in educational rut - Emerging from COVID, there are opportunities for innovation
- Students have a great number of educational choices
- Teacher duties are endless and they merit higher pay
- Teacher/educator pay – Boulder, Adams, and Denver have higher pay scales -\$5000 pay increase in 10 years
- Teachers and staff are district’s greatest asset, representing the district in a million interactions
- Teachers are not respected
- Teachers are responsive to student needs
- Teachers do not have a voice in decisions
- Teachers expressing their political views to children and encouraging the students’ belief system
- Teachers have tuned out of Jeffco PD for years; because the pedagogy changes so frequently, teachers believe it’s not worth the time to fully invest
- Tension between local control and implementation of district-wide systems
- The district doesn’t seem to care about bullying that happens in the schools - need more program supports for children and staff in addressing this challenge
- The district is anchored in Anglo-dominant approach to communication
- The district needs to make a greater effort to include Spanish Speaking parents in its outreach efforts
- The district needs to provide more focus on marginalized segments of the community and be attentive to their basic needs
- The district needs to provide more information in both English and Spanish
- The district remains flexible in its response to COVID, but is still feels like there is a lack of planning: what about addressing learning loss? What about summer school?
- The district strengths are strengths for the Anglo community; there is not the same level of service or communication for diverse student family populations
- The schools need more Spanish speaking staff, who are able to help Spanish speaking parents and students
- Title 1 supports for schools are insufficient in meeting the needs of students
- Too much competition between schools, too much focus on marketing for student enrollment
- Too much is done “to” and not “with” students
- Too often neighborhood schools are forced to adopt a “gimmick” to remain competitive
- Tremendous mental health impact of the pandemic on students
- Turnover rate is too high – especially in ESP personnel
- Unfortunately, we feel ill prepared and lack the technical, computer-based knowledge needed to help our children with remote learning



### Desired Characteristics:

- Ability and desire to interact with students
- Ability to communicate with broader community to garner support for the district
- Ability to create strategy, a plan for implementation, and track record for follow-through/action
- Ability to deal with emotions – strong communication and objective data
- Ability to rebuild synergy that was a former hallmark of the district
- Able to bring polarities of thought together
- Able to champion a strongly vision, and allocate resources needed for implementation
- Able to connect with teacher’s union (Move away from a combative relationship)
- Able to create a community held and community embraced vision for the district
- Able to improve
- Able to listen to and at times stand up to the teacher’s union, i.e. leader needs to prioritize student needs above teacher needs
- Able to prioritize DEI efforts in the district
- Able to support whole-child, anti-gang, anti-bullying programming
- Adaptable and able to understand and respond to special student needs
- Admits mistakes and moves to correct them
- Approachable and will listen to constituents
- Assesses what is working
- Awareness of socio-economic and geographic diversity within the district
- Being forthright and honest about issues
- Being open
- Believes in language justice
- Believes in teaching to what students need to do rather than what they know for a test
- Bring an equity lens to distributing financial resources to schools
- Bring equity-lens
- Budget - hard to attract and retain staff with less competitive salaries
- Budget - state school funding formula remains an uphill battle
- Budget acumen to deal with cuts and advocacy for increased teacher pay
- Builds systems and structures for the work that is being done
- Business background / broad background (kind of goes hand in hand with operational skills, but ties to budget too, understands decisions consequences both positive and negative, not just narrow teacher experience)
- Can be neutral and bring people together
- Can unify everyone
- CEO mindset
- Champions culturally responsive learning district-wide - Gloria Ladson-Billings definition: "threefold approach (with)... focus on students’ learning, an attempt to develop their cultural competence, and to increase their sociopolitical or critical consciousness”
- Classroom experience
- Clear communicator, who values transparency and strength of relationships that comes with good lines of communication

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- Commitment to equity, move away from tracking
  - Committed to creating more diversity among staff
  - Committed to the district and willing to make their name public in search
  - Communication
  - Communication - input sought and then not utilized
  - Communication with principals and teachers to share decisions
  - Communicator - includes listening to the board and parent community
  - Communicator, who can provide clear, transparent, guidance to district constituents
  - Connected and involved with the community
  - Continuation of a shared vision
  - Decisive
  - Demonstrated skill and experience working with diverse populations and prioritizing DEI work - Committed to leadership consistency over time (no stepping stone moves)
  - Digitally savvy
  - Education experience – teacher, principal
  - Educational experience
  - Embraces transparency
  - Empathy for diversity of cultures
  - Entrepreneurial spirit and inspires that in the organization
  - Equity lens - geographic and socio-economic
  - Equity work needs to happen proactively at the district level
  - Experience dealing with diversity -
  - Experience leading in a more diverse district
  - Experience with diversity work
  - Experience working with diverse communities
  - Feels investment in Jeffco and makes a long-term commitment
  - Flexible
  - Focus on increasing diversity at the teacher and administrative level
  - Focuses on basic skills
  - Focuses on school safety and security
  - Focuses on student learning in reading and math
  - Focuses on the needs of the whole child
  - Focuses on wellness
  - Foster stability
  - Fresh set of eyes for the district
  - Good time for bold vision
  - High character
  - Implements the vision
  - Inclusive philosophy in leadership – wants to hear different opinions
  - Inspirational
  - Inspirational and courageous
  - Invested in staying for the long term

- Jeffco advances people, who have no experience or perspective of working with diverse populations and can't speak to why and how to prioritize work around equity
- Knows our needs, understands our language, and values our cultural experience
- Listen respectfully and then makes a decision
- Listens to various partners
- Lots of inequities and discrepancies between schools
- Makes the unpopular decisions
- Multicultural experience at a district leadership level
- Must understand the complexities of the district and its diversity
- New leader will need to be mindful of and able to adjust for time, growth, and learning lost during pandemic
- Open door policy
- Open-minded
- Out and about meeting people in the schools and community
- Pays close attention to equity issues and works to address them
- Person should be part of the community
- Possess financial acumen and be able to plan for anticipated budget reductions
- Preference: new leadership in some way reflects growing diversity of the district
- Preferred woman and/or person of color, who understands poverty and Title 1 schools
- Present and engaged with the community
- Prioritize visibility in the community
- Prioritized reading and math
- Prioritizes diversity, equity, and inclusion work at all levels
- Prioritizes equitable access to technology for all students
- Pro public education
- Public-private partners
- Really strong vision for the most vulnerable kids
- Responsive to community input
- Schools have a civic obligation to work towards dismantling white supremacy Not enough done
- Sees system problems
- Smart
- Social emotional learning focus
- Soft and executive function skills are important
- Someone who has a sense of belonging, and who is invested in the district
- Someone with operational strengths
- Strategy should be created with people, not handed down to them
- Strong and accountable leader
- Strong backbone required
- Strong community presence and engagement
- Support for marginalized groups from the top
- Take into account cognitive diversity of students
- Talks to teachers and kids
- Teacher, Principal, and school business experience

- Teaching and administrative background important
- Technologically forward thinker
- Trained in DEI: diversity, equity and inclusion work
- Transparent
- Transparent in decision-making
- Understand recent past history of the district
- Understands DEI - Diversity, equity, inclusivity
- Understands immigration issues and that these communities should be seen as a source of strength
- Understands Jeffco and has Jefferson County in their heart
- Understands the diversity of our community
- Value and prioritize diversity, equity and inclusion
- Value diversity among the staff
- Value mental health of students
- Values and prioritizes diversity
- Values culturally and linguistically diverse populations
- Values equity in education
- Values Healthy Kids Colorado survey – supports opt out approach
- Values perspectives and contributions of marginalized individual and groups, including students
- Values special ed
- Values what kids are capable of
- Visible
- Visionary
- Visits schools
- Wants to advocate for teachers
- Wants to be the best
- Willing to take on the really tough issues

## Support Staff

16 Participants

### Strengths:

- Balances COVID issues
- Buildings and infrastructure are well maintained and intact
- Diversity – student populations, schools, areas
- Do a good a job of educating children
- Employees feel valued
- Fantastic organization
- Good diversity
- Good overall reputation, attractive to parents looking for a good school for their children
- Jeffco is an influencer within the State of Colorado

- Leadership team hierarchy
- Lots of Jeffco's staff are also Jeffco graduates, leading to strong Jeffco pride.
- Love working for Jeffco
- Recent history with recall showed the community coming together to move past that ordeal.
- Strong geographic and socio-economic diversity
- Strong sense of community
- Two really strong unions - Structure of JESPA is unique

### **Challenges/Concerns/Issues:**

- Addressing COVID
- Budget cuts - staffing levels and resource allocations have become inadequate, but same level of expectation remains - Staff spread thin and morale is low
- COVID 19 - how are we going bring children back and support employees
- Demographics challenges with struggling students
- Diversity – hard to meet specific needs in schools
- Employees need to be treated well, so that they are in a good place to give students their best
- Equity - ESP staff are lowest paid workers in the district
- ESP's are the most ethnically and linguistically diverse among Jeffco staff, and are treated the most inequitably
- Example of understaffing: current standard is to clean half of the building each night i.e. bathrooms and trash get cleaned each night, but classrooms are vacuumed only every other night
- Hesitancy to include special needs students in the classroom
- Important for Jeffco to keep current and use up to date to be inclusive
- Inadequate staffing allocations for demands of work crew, i.e. custodial: full staffing used to be 10-12 and is now 7
- Issues such as snow days are challenged
- JESPA staff are responsible for meeting whole child needs and therefore need to be kept whole themselves
- Need more options
- Need to be more technology driven
- Need to for thoughtful curriculum choices
- Off-the-charts suicide record
- Retaining people is challenging, especially when given the competitive salaries of neighboring districts and other quasi-governmental organizations
- SBB is not a good model and creates inequities
- SBB need parameters about the dollars
- Second largest in CO and is large geographically
- Struggling schools do not get support
- Support staff often feels excluded from decision-making
- Unlivable wage for certain positions, i.e. transportation and food service



- Use of out dated language
- We cater to the principals too much
- We don't pay our staff well enough to avoid turnover Constant change is costly and is not what is best for kids, i.e. the district is 9th in the state for bus driver pay

**Desired Characteristics:**

- A woman/person of color
- Ability to develop a vision and the courage to implement that vision at every level
- Ability to monitor and evaluate the progress in achieving that vision
- Brave/courageous and willing to upset the status quo
- Change-maker
- Collaborative stance with unions
- Commitment to bringing more diverse stakeholders into shared decision-making
- Commitment to Jeffco and wants to be here for the long term
- Concern for the welfare of all employees
- Direct, clear and transparent communicator
- Diverse work background and experience - will more skill and greater perspective to the table
- Does not take oneself too seriously
- Educational background
- Ethnically and culturally responsive
- Has a background with diverse district, not wealthy/white district
- Has a vision (not in a cliché way), care and focus for the neediest of our kids
- Have served in multiple roles in education
- Helps support professional to feel included
- Invested in Jeffco and sticking around – Not a springboard position
- Knows best practices
- Knows poverty and associated needs
- Knows what it is like in the classroom
- Less political – willing to say the tough things that needs to be said
- Listener and is sensitive to the needs of schools, principals, teachers, staff
- Listens to all voices
- Make good decisions
- Make tough decisions
- Mindful of social equity issues for staff throughout the organization
- More innovative
- Need to make decision in the best interest in all
- Open door policy
- Problem Solver
- Respects and values all people, and actively listens and involves stakeholders (not just the loudest or those who show up)
- Shares the hard facts

- Takes criticism gracefully
- Understand all roles
- Understand cultural and geographic diversity of the district
- Understands and will work to address food insecurity of some of our students
- Understands CO and Jeffco history
- Understands Jeffco demographics
- Very well versed in education – history and current
- Visit schools
- Willing to come to the table, honor and respect collective bargaining rights
- Willingness to keep current but does not swing the pendulum too much

## Teachers

### 47 Participants

#### **Strengths:**

Able to meet needs of students at the school level

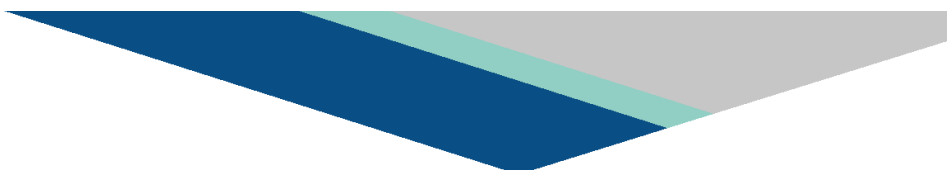
- Adult disagreements never impact our students
- Athletics have occurred this year
- Breath and depth of programming – IB, Career Ed, G/T
- Community schools
- Continuous improvement
- CTE programs and offerings
- Culture of excellence
- Data driven
- Dedicated teachers and staff
- Deep expertise among Jeffco staff
- Desire to work together
- Despite geographic diversity, people feel that they are all part of Jeffco
- District has fought to and been able to maintain specials (art, music and PE) at all levels of learning, and especially within elementary schools
- Diversity – SES and among schools
- DTL positions
- Good job of growing and adapting to different leadership
- Graduation requirements are differentiated to meet student needs
- High academic expectations for students
- History and sense of loyalty that are cherished
- Interim Superintendent Schuh knows the district well
- Jeffco Generations - clear vision and clarity of values
- Jeffco Generations articulates a vision for what we expect from students
- Jeffco Generations learning standards are good and should stay the same
- Jeffco has created district-wide opportunities to collect feedback from staff

- Jeffco has incredible legacy - many alumni return to teach in the district
- Jeffco parents and the larger community care deeply for our students
- Jeffco students are the best
- Kids always come first
- Kids are good people
- Long robust history of providing arts programs in the district - Every year, a Jeffco school gets acknowledged at the state and/or national level
- Longevity in Jeffco – generations
- Longevity of teachers... we come and we stay
- Loyalty among staff
- Many programs in place – IB, specialize schools
- New employees feel very welcomed and supported
- Openness in our community to talk about equity and culture
- Outdoor lab - is a crown jewel experience for Jeffco students
- People are committed to the district: here because they want to be here
- People love the community and are attached
- Pride in diversity as a district: we serve a broad spectrum of students
- Pride in Jeffco - students become teachers
- Principals do a good job of reaching out to and connecting with their school communities
- Professional development has gotten better, with learning labs and coaching programs
- Programs that are offered are incredible – during the day and extracurricular
- Proud of the services we provide, i.e. transportation and food services, to families in need
- Smaller school communities are appreciated and valued as part of the district
- Staff are focused on what’s best for kids
- Strength in continuity and commitment
- Strong Jeffco pride - several teachers graduated from the district
- Strong relationships across the board – student and staff, among staff
- Strong sense of community among educators
- Strong sense of community belonging within the district and among the larger community
- Strong sense of community throughout the district
- Strong sense of community: teachers “my students are my family”
- Strong staff and teachers
- Support staff
- Teacher core
- Teachers are involved in sharing best practices at the state level and are willing to bring that learning back to the district
- Technology availability and support
- The district has great geographic and socio-economic diversity
- Warren Tech programming

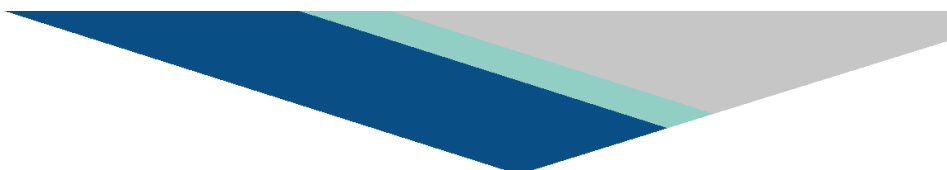


### Challenges/Concerns/Issues:

- A deep rift between the central office and schools
- A public perception has been rebranded but no core rebranded of the work
- Ability to fundraise very disparate depending on community
- Added \$37 million to reserves
- Adding administrative personnel to solve problems when things that are not working well rather than addressing the issue with the people responsible
- Administrators pass the buck on making decisions
- Allowing schools to purchase to reading programs not on the state approved list
- Anti-racism training is provided as an after-thought, with no follow-up
- Budget - continues to be a challenge in meeting school needs
- Budget - needs of kids living in poverty have sky-rocketed Schools struggle to ensure that families have wi-fi access, and that basic learning needs are met
- Building level autonomy and selection of curricula
- Bullying from people who want full-time in person learning
- Central office roles and personnel need to be carefully evaluated to determine if they are added value
- Challenge in responding to varied needs of different geographic areas
- Collaboration is viewed as a “swear word” in the District because it is only given lip service – there is no real collaboration between staff and administrators
- Communication - because we are large, sometimes communication is delayed and filtered through layers of management
- Communication - lack clear chain of command - Info is blasted out and schools are unprepared to respond to info sent out by district
- Communication has not been consistent this year during COVID
- Communication Struggles
- Community distrusts of finances are handled – over spending of the Ed Center
- Community is pretty divided
- Community support for teachers has waned
- Comprehensive Financial Report shows the District over budgeted by \$23 million in general instruction – where did that money go?
- Consistency and follow-through have been missing in the district Direction changes before implementation of a new initiative takes hold
- COVID has highlighted preexisting divisions and tension amongst various stakeholder groups within the district
- Current salary structure does not honor our more experienced teachers; if it did, this would help with teacher retention
- Curricula and resources differ radically from school to school – such as evidenced based practiced – kids get a smattering of different teaching
- Different report cards
- Disjointed planning and communication across educational disciplines; for example, right arm (math) doesn’t talk to the left arm (literacy) in academics
- District central staff has increased in number, independent of decreased student enrollment

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- District decision are made in the interests of affluent white children
  - District has changed priorities and hired more central office central rather than hiring teaching staff
  - District has lacked consistent leadership
  - District rollout of hybrid learning did not go well
  - District teacher training has decreased over the years
  - Diversity
  - Diversity and equity training is provided as lip service. Speakers are brought in and teacher-of-color groups are created, but this is only scratching the surface. Lots of room for improvement
  - Educators are not directly asked by central for their insight and expertise
  - Ended up with \$9 million more in revenue than anticipated
  - Equity and equal is not always the same thing
  - Equity is a huge problem
  - Equity issues are not just racial
  - Equity training is an afterthought
  - Fall PD, in response to pandemic, was a waste of time Teachers were not listened to when communicating their needs - needed more guidance on how to be a remote teacher
  - Flat growth in Literacy and Math
  - Gentrification is impacting Title I schools, displacing students and eroding diversity
  - Going back to school a week earlier than planned has damaged trust once again
  - Gross funding inequities based on the socio-economic status of the community served
  - High rate of families choicing out of some neighborhood schools
  - How coaches are used differ from building to building
  - How to best maximize learning technology
  - If a school is under-resourced, the district just throws it back on the school
  - In pandemic response there is a lack of collaboration and communication
  - Increased polarization: yelling past each other and increasingly less likely to collaborate From recall to pandemic response, polarization within the district is growing with each challenge
  - Inequities are prohibiting people from working together
  - Inequities exist throughout the district
  - Instructional coaches are underutilized and not supported enough as a resource to teachers
  - Jeffco Generations established pd expectations and promises, but the follow through wasn't there
  - Jeffco is a series of smaller communities with very different needs - one size does not fit all
  - Jeffco is losing teachers to neighboring districts that are able to offer more competitive salaries
  - Jeffco needs to better listen to and be more responsive to teachers' needs
  - Jeffco needs to get back to being an educational leader in the state, sought out by others
  - Jeffco salaries are not competitive in the area
  - Lack of adequate resources
  - Lack of clarity and communication during COVID pandemic: COVID safety guidelines for the classroom not distributed, instructional guidance not provided, student expectations unclear

- Lack of cohesion in Jeffco caused by growing tension/polarity between individual school autonomy and direction from district/central leadership
- Lack of ethnic diversity; at every level of staff employment, BOE included, Jeffco remains largely white
- Level of staffing for mental health support has declined
- Lots of turmoil and turnover in the district over the past 7 years
- Mid-level district staff, including community superintendents, have been neglected and not managed
- More affluent schools have strong PTA that provide significant supports and creates inequities among the schools
- Need flexibility to support schools and serve students as needed
- Need guard rails in Jeffco's SBB
- Need to better prioritize where financial resources should be allocated
- Negotiations have resulted in pay freezes
- No benefit or additional support for classroom teachers has been tied to increase of central district staff
- No efforts to recruit and retain diversity among staff
- Nobody has to use the resources provide
- Nonprofit support agencies seem few in number and not coordinated in meeting student needs
- Not all schools have equal access to professional development opportunities
- Not enough done at the school and district level to meet the needs of lower income students
- Not enough DTL support in some schools
- Numbers of ed center staff have increased exponentially, which has impacted morale and muddled communication
- Over the past the 6 years – students, teachers, and support staff numbers have all remaining constant while 200 position have been added to the central office
- Pay negotiations - Teachers do not feel valued or heard, and have therefore turned to the union for support and representation
- PD does not feel fresh, feels like recycled Jeffco ideas
- PD needs to be more differentiated and systemic
- PD varies in quality and access across the district
- Perception is the administrative staff has grown
- Principals are not trained to do fiscal management
- Principals used to be able to advocate and appeal to central for addition resources to meet special student/school needs
- Professional development used to be of more value and offered regularly - not so anymore
- Proficiency scale and Bridge to curriculum (K-12) standards and resource – rolled out without it being completed and created problems – how they work and how
- Programs and materials are hit and miss
- Racism and classism are prevalent throughout the district
- Reading
- Recent mill passed because the district promised teacher raises - funds swallowed by inflation and increases in surrounding districts

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- Resources are problematic because every school can make it own's decision re curricula and materials
  - SBB represents inequity in the district - The funding formula is based on number of students and not necessarily the need of the students
  - Scale issues
  - School Choice is going to drown the District
  - School staff are not given enough advance warning or opportunity to provide feedback in pandemic response rollout
  - Schools are really dependent on strength of leadership in each particular building, which leads to disparate levels of service and inequities across the district
  - Significant inequities
  - Size of schools need to be addressed
  - Small schools are getting supported at the expense of big schools
  - Social emotional needs of students - great gaps and diverse needs created during pandemic  
Multi-faceted gaps in meeting student needs have widened during pandemic
  - Some decrease in some areas
  - Staff does not feel valued by district administrators
  - Struggling with defining our identity: recent focus on neighborhood schools and continued battle over whether or not we want to pursue niche schools
  - Student Based Budgeting – may not working well regarding equity
  - Students are encouraged or discouraged to attend certain schools because of their race and/or based on their socio-economic standing, perpetuating the further segregation of Jeffco schools
  - Sub shortage and sub pay
  - Substitute teaching compensation has been stagnant and was recently raised from \$100-150
  - Superintendent needs to work with Board to make teacher salaries competitive
  - Teacher pay
  - Teacher recruitment and retainment has not been a priority - as is reflected in net pay
  - Teacher safety and health is not a priority
  - Teachers and staff do not feel heard
  - Teachers and teacher coaches need more training and guidance in addressing incidents of racism
  - Teachers are killing themselves to meet the needs of students
  - Teachers cannot rely on substitutes - lacking in numbers and reliability
  - Teachers do not feel valued by the district
  - Technology budget decision are not coordinated and left to the school
  - Temporary program instability (with enrollment) can have detrimental and long-lasting impact
  - Test scores are overrated – high stake corporate testing
  - The district has not had any courageous conversations on race
  - The district needs to conduct better outreach in connecting with a more diverse group of parents
  - The special needs of Alameda JR/Sr High often seem ignored based on socio-economic and ethnic bias

- There is great disparity between different schools Yet schools are expected to be the same and offer same quality of education with vastly different resources
- There is little commonality from site to site
- Title 1 funding is supposed to be the remedy, but is insufficient to meet school needs
- Too much variation in curriculum has contributed to academic inequities and a growing achievement gap
- Vision needs timeline, steps, and measures
- We have degraded in the last seven years
- When people leave it impacts students
- With growing homeless student population, district needs to be more responsive.

### **Desired Characteristics:**

- A leader who is able to take a stand based on their values
- Ability to balance the needs of secondary and elementary schools
- Able to advocate for district employees, who are serving students
- Able to ask for info, feedback, and help
- Able to commit to a 5-year superintendency term
- Able to create a strategic plan that moves toward more authentic learning
- Able to generate community buy-in for district initiatives
- Able to honor and utilize the expertise within the district
- Able to sell the district to voters, for increased bond and mill funds
- Believes in systematic practices
- Bilingual or Trilingual
- Brings an equity lens to district
- Calm assessment of what is working in the district before “throwing out the bath water”
- Celebrates diversity in people and in programs
- Clarity and focus in vision
- Clear unifying plan
- Clear, concise, direct and honest communicator
- Committed to Jeffco, and is not using Jeffco as a stepping stone to something else,
- Communicator
- Communicator – proactive, regular, two way, and transparent
- Creative
- Creative thinker for tackling District challenges
- Educator with classroom experience in the recent past
- Equity lens must be a priority
- Experience as a school manager
- Follow through
- Friendly and down to earth, resonates with the spirit of the Jeffco community
- Great collaborator with all stakeholders
- Honest



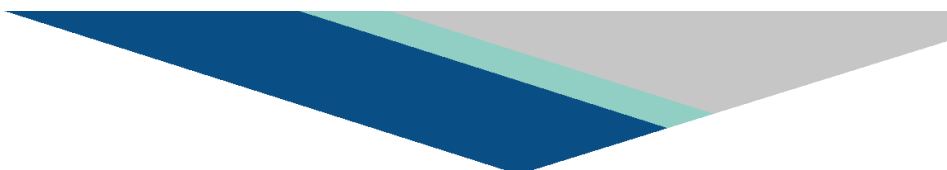
- Inspiring
- Invested in the community and not a career stepping stone
- Needs to be a visionary
- Partner
- Political and ability to help community pass mil levies
- Puts students first
- Rebuilder of trust
- Relationship builder
- Robust experience as a classroom teacher
- Solicits feedback first from teachers
- Someone who can provide leadership for ALL (marginalized groups included)
- Strong communicator
- Track record of bringing in foundation monies
- Transparency
- Transparency in communication
- Values collaboration
- Values employees
- Values staff
- Values the unions
- Wants to be there for the long-term and willing to tackle problems over the years
- Wants to work with unions as partners
- Willing to listen to teachers - does not view teachers as an enemy group.
- Works to improve and increase partnerships

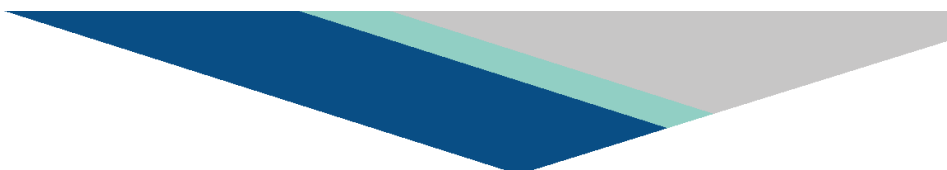
## Administrators

### 53 Participants

#### Strengths:

- “Generations” vision
- 14,000 employees in Jeffco, large majority live in county and are alumni
- Able to come together to best serve students in times of crisis
- Administration has adeptly responded to the corona virus pandemic
- Advocacy and momentum towards equity, actions, and initiatives
- Always someone to reach out to
- Autonomous school-based decisions
- Autonomy – large district – recognize that each community is its own community
- Autonomy at the school level
- Building on expertise of staff
- Central administration operates with respect, trust and a high level of commitment
- Changing the Task

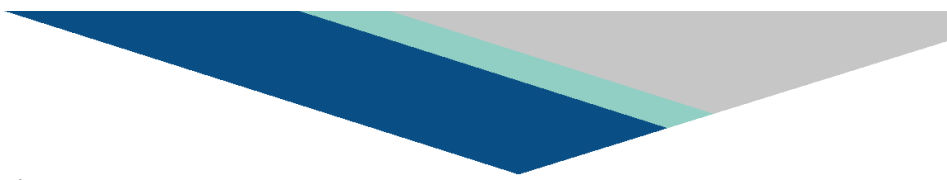
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- Common tools, resources, training
  - Community is incredibly strong and resilient
  - Community superintendent model – responsive to principals and direct link to central office departments
  - Curriculum supports
  - Dedicated employees, who work to support and bring out the best in their colleagues
  - Deep district pride
  - Desire to collaborate
  - Different people with different skills
  - District is responsive to diverse needs of students in varied geographic locations (i.e. foothills and more urban settings)
  - District is responsive to diverse needs of students in varied geographic locations (i.e. foothills and more urban settings)
  - District staff are accessible to a fault in serving anyone throughout the district
  - District things that we all work on but have autonomy at the school level
  - Diversity of district – SES, municipalities, instructional approaches, and innovation
  - Ed Center has a good code of conduct, which lends to healthy organizational culture
  - Employees are loyal to the district, invested in the success of their schools and committed to student success
  - Every school is very different – ability for school community to determine their way – autonomy mindset
  - Family feel in a big district
  - Feel highly value as a person and that input is valued
  - Generation work is the right work and needs to continue
  - Good job of communicating information to the community
  - Good relationships
  - Great amount of humility among leadership
  - Great team with varied skill sets
  - Has gotten away from one size
  - Healthy collaboration and cooperation among administrators and departments within the district
  - High quality and caliber of people in every discipline is what really sets the district apart
  - Induction support
  - Intentional efforts to show that employees are valued
  - Interim superintendent’s children are Jeffco students, deepening his investment in the district
  - Jeffco can get small pretty quick rising to occasion to help at times of need
  - Jeffco grows their own. Lots of success stories
  - Jeffco has strong opportunities for HS students to explore various future paths (CTE programming, Warren Tech, AP, IB, etc)
  - Jeffco has strong opportunities for HS students to explore various future paths (CTE programming, Warren Tech, AP, IB, etc)
  - Large district with lots of resources at our fingertips
  - Large district, but still able to access anyone you want within the district

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- Leadership in the schools
  - Less bureaucracy in getting the job done High level of efficiency for a large district
  - Less bureaucratic than other big school districts, i.e. fewer barriers in communication with central office staff
  - Looking at deeper learning – more authentic learning for students
  - Lots of experts in their field, who are willing to share their expertise
  - Loyalty
  - Making decisions based on the needs of children
  - Openness to calling anyone in the district office
  - Organizational values are focused on
  - People doing the best they can
  - People work harder, because it's not just a job - giving to the next generation
  - Personable leadership group
  - PITA schools – grant to support improvement efforts and clustered together to work together
  - PLCs
  - PLCs by choice
  - Pride in Jeffco
  - Progressive thinking school district
  - Provides diversity training
  - Recent bond and mill levy initiatives had broad community support
  - Schools are open to adopting district systems, esp. when designed to target more equitable outcomes for students
  - Schools seems appreciative of centralized direction & support
  - Sense of community
  - Staff truly rallies when needs exist
  - Structure of articulation areas
  - Student based budgeting
  - Student focus
  - Support of teachers and children
  - Support one another
  - Tight articulation areas that build vertical teams
  - Values diverse needs of students – thinks about the whole child
  - Values principals by empowering them
  - Very collaborative
  - Very personal and supportive of each other
  - With high caliber staff, Jeffco central administration is able to operate “lean and mean”, especially when compared to other districts
  - You are encouraged to reach out to your colleagues



### Challenges/Concerns/Issues:

- \$1.1B budget - currently need to make \$54-56M budget reduction
- 40 hours of early literacy training - 45 hours of ELL – we have to give people time to absorb what they are learning
- A majority of the board seats are up for re-election, contributing to a lack of stability
- Achievement status of student is flat even though teachers are working hard
- Aging community, 70% of households have no children, so hard to pass bonds and mills
- Autonomy creates challenges
- Autonomy is nice but is challenging in regards to strategic, systematic approaches
- Big district and vast inequities between schools – resources, big schools and little schools, building conditions, meeting basic needs, special education
- Big gap between schools and ed center - need to build better bridge between the two
- Board election in November, which is expected to be contentious
- BOE would claim to be a policy governing board, but frequently steps into management
- Breakdown between central office and schools
- Bringing Jeffco together with a common mission
- Bubble schools are most challenged
- Budget – Jeffco does not pass mil and bond issues at the rate as surrounding district
- Budget adjustments after the school year starts
- Budget cuts mean programs cuts, which means loss of staff, generating fear and loss of trust
- Budget dollars are supposed to be evenly allocated, but equal does not drive equity
- Budget dollars aren't always aligned to best meet needs of kids
- Cabinet is divided and there is an imbalance of power
- Cabinet lacks diversity - Few people of color within administration often feel isolated and unheard
- Challenge of a large district is that we sometimes work in silos
- Change takes time
- Choice enrollment process can cause inequities particularly when busing is provided for some but not all
- Collaboration efforts often feel very disconnected from the decisions
- Communication – partly related to COVID but also in general and results in a loss of trust – administrators sometimes feel in the dark
- Complicated purchasing diagram
- Continually expected to do more with less; at some point, you break the people who are doing the work
- Continued conversation to close some schools, tied to budget, under-enrollment, and poor performance, but reluctance to close or consolidate schools
- COVID
- Culture of finger pointing: siloed work effort, lack of collaboration, misses buy-in and effective implementation of new initiatives
- Decisions sometimes made to make adult lives easier; not necessarily what's best for students
- Demanding people in our community
- Departments can be siloed

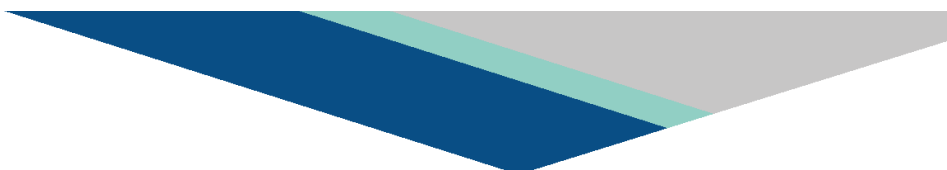
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- Discrepancy among school facilities
  - District demographics are changing rapidly and we need proactive leadership vs. reactive leadership to prepare our district to best serve families
  - District faces challenges in supporting under-resourced schools and cannot compensate for PTA booster events held at other schools
  - District needs to be able to pay a living wage to classified employees
  - District needs to provide principals with support and training that extends beyond instruction
  - Diverse population base (in every aspect) - challenging to meet the needs of all
  - Diversity - lack of representation in administrators - Leaders of color have been passed over and then leave the district
  - Does the central office serve the schools or do schools serve the central office?
  - During pandemic, teacher are tired, overwhelmed and livid with the district
  - Ed Center is made up of siloed departments that work in isolation
  - Ed Center launches universal initiatives that don't necessarily meet school needs, which perpetuates a disconnect between the two
  - Employees are burning out - More attention needs to be given to quality of life for staff
  - Equity - conversation has been going on for a long time, but it has not moved to action
  - Equity lens should extend to gender
  - Everything from ed central needs to shift in practice and theory to serve schools
  - Example of one-size does not fit all: Jeffco COVID restart plan does not respond to needs of nontraditional student family
  - Expansion of charter schools
  - Expertise and support is there, but challenging to know who to go to for help and support
  - Family school partnership surveys are not very helpful
  - Feels like the district is chasing too many tactics - Rudderless
  - Fluctuating enrollment
  - Former superintendent was not internally facing and did not address tougher systemic issues
  - Glass was brilliant, but internal relationships were missing
  - Good old boy network at the district office
  - Have a progressive vision but lacks implementation materials and guidance about how to do it
  - How community looks at taxes
  - How to help schools recruit kids
  - HS given two AP regardless of size, MS have two AP regardless of size, Elementary school have to buy the AP role
  - Inconsistent messaging regarding the importance of student achievement test scores
  - Inequities of PTA funding
  - JCEA - loudest members do not want to be back in school - They do not believe the superintendent is taking care of them
  - Jeffco community lacks political will to advocate for a school finance reprieve
  - Jeffco falling below the state average in academic growth and proficiency
  - Jeffco Generations has strong values, but the goals are too large, and lack resources for implementation, so the plan pulls away from core work

- Jeffco Generations needs leadership behind vision - Substance is there, but the leadership is not
- Jeffco Generations was a Glass initiative that has somewhat been left to the wayside
- Jeffco talks a lot about equity but little action
- JESPA is at fact-finding stage now Teacher Union negotiations start in February
- Kids had to have a device overnight due to COVID - K-4 challenges
- Labor relations - strained in Jeffco Largely because of lack of pay
- Lack of consistency in department responses, so people shop for the answer they want
- Lack of consistency in leadership at district level over the past years
- Lack of decision makers at Ed Center, because people are afraid to make and own any mistakes; as a consequence, principals forced to make a lot of decisions at the school level
- Lack of diversity in higher-level leadership position
- Lack of human support for technology at the school
- Lack of internet access across the community
- Lack of rigorous curricula and materials provided by district
- Lacks systematic direction and focus
- Language barriers must become of greater focus for principals, central, & superintendent
- Leadership lacking as we move out of a pandemic
- Less responsive to growing socio-economic and ethnic diversity in district
- Little attention paid to day-to-day operations
- Majority of accountability rests at school level Principals are responsible for hiring, professional development, creating a team, and making a plan for their school
- Mill passed in large part because funds were promised to enhance Jeffco teacher pay, but other pay in neighboring districts went up, too, lending to a drop in competitive advantage
- Multi-faceted
- Need for cohesion and routine
- Need more equitable student access to resources, i.e. not all students have access to ACT prep
- Need to be build systematic practices
- Need to break away from flat academic achievement levels
- Need to look at our district structure: should be built to deliver for students and in service of schools
- Need to manage the board of education that can often feel out of control
- Need to reduce the educational variability - services look widely different from school to school
- Not enough consistent supports are in place to support schools
- Not sufficient time for articulation
- Older voter community, largely without children, is not connected to local school needs
- Organizational trauma
- Pandemic response - lack trust in decision making process; not sure we are listening to the science; BOE and power-based constituents have too much influence on ultimate decision
- Pandemic response - too many surveys; seems like decision to return to school was made by popular sentiment in community, not science
- People are all well intended, but meeting needs of majority disproportionately influences outcome for all and feeds growing marginalization of some populations

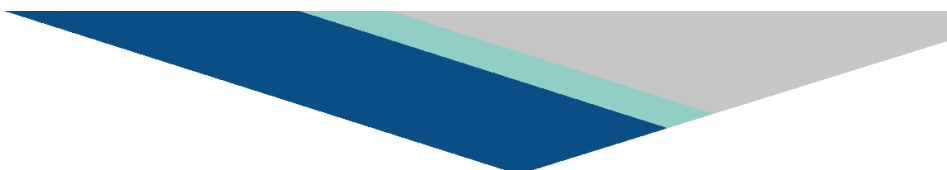
- Percentage of marginalized students is smaller, so district aims to serve “middle ground” - Marginalized students not weighted or seen
- Poor communication: not enough notice re- opening classrooms during pandemic
- Potential of administrators organizing
- Principals need coaching on how to give direct feedback to teachers and staff (should be modeled by superintendent)
- Proficiency scales
- Question is are we a school system? Or are we 165 schools within a system? What is that right balance?
- School based budgeting presents issues of equity in allocating resources
- Schools not having a Digital Teacher Librarian
- Secondary gets more resources than Elem schools
- Shifting back to have more district direction may causes problems
- Siloed central office
- Size and diversity
- Some cabinet members are more business minded, and to not always make decisions based on what is best for kids (example: heat turned off during pandemic to save money, buildings still serving kids)
- Some staff have outgrown the usefulness of their position - Personnel changes will need to be made, foremost in ed center
- Squeaky wheel gets too much attention and disproportionate response from district
- Staff salary and staff loss – across staff groups
- State school funding formulas provide insufficient funding for schools
- Survey our community to death, but not apparent that people are listened to
- Teachers don’t feel valued - Don’t feel heard
- The Ed Center is very much removed from schools
- Tough to bring the board along in making tough financial decisions
- Union relationships
- Us vs. them mentality
- Vision was developed by one person - Not enough shared leadership and ownership of plan
- Voice of principals is missing on cabinet - There used to be 2 JCAA members on the cabinet Principals can help teachers have a voice at the cabinet level
- We really have to work at collaborative efforts to breakdown barriers

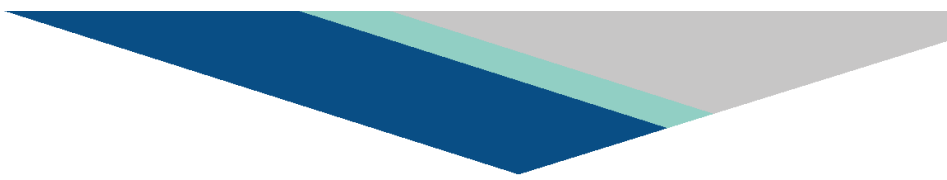
**Desired Characteristics:**

- A moderate
- A person who really wants to be in Jeffco, invested in Jeffco
- Ability to allocate and dedicate resources needed to implement a vision
- Ability to balance internal and external facing needs of the district
- Ability to create a strong action plan that district will embrace - Action needs to follows words
- Ability to empower others to execute vision is equally important

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- Ability to focus internally and tend to district structure and systems
  - Ability to garner information from and listen to all stakeholders
  - Able to build strong relationships with business and local communities, outwardly facing
  - Able to commit to a solid 5-year contract - No stepping-stone
  - Able to create a system that balances need for autonomies and controlled systems
  - Able to develop strong operational vision for the district
  - Able to expend some of their political capital on behalf of speaking truth for students
  - Able to manage the board of education, so that they remain focused on policy governance and not management
  - Able to model through their actions (not just a good communicator)
  - Able to rebuild trust among cabinet members
  - Able to repair and strengthen union relationships
  - Able to successfully manage (go beyond identifying) the district's challenges
  - Accessible
  - Adds diversity to top
  - Adept and experienced in managing the board of education
  - Already understands the tension between local and central control in a large district
  - Awareness of mental health needs for students and staff
  - Believes in the importance of first 100 day "listening and learning" tour
  - Blend of culture and trust building
  - Builds foundation for big changes
  - Business management skills
  - Classroom experience
  - Classroom experience with diverse populations
  - Clear vision and clear plan
  - Clear vision that is very progressive
  - Comfortable with innovative models
  - Communication
  - Communication skills and follow through on roll out of initiatives
  - Connected to employees
  - Consistency
  - Culture builder
  - Educational background
  - Educator
  - Equity focus - The best leaders bring people to the cause and lead it
  - Equity lens
  - Experience as a teacher, principal and district leader
  - Experience with Title funding
  - Explains decision making and rationale
  - Familiar with how Jeffco operates
  - Fearless
  - Feet to ground
  - Finds balance between district direction and autonomy by using data



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- Focuses 21-22 school year on getting back into routines
  - Forward thinking
  - Fully transparent in decision making
  - Good communicator, who does not surprise principals
  - Good communicator: well spoken and can handle the tough questions
  - Great strategic thinker
  - Has been a building principal
  - Human and admits mistakes
  - Inspirational
  - Integrity
  - Knows people
  - Leader who will bring us together as a district
  - Leadership experience in a large district
  - Leads by what is best for kids and holds people accountable to that same standard
  - Looks at who is at Ed Center and Cabinet – disconnect between what is needed and who is there
  - More proactive and less reactive leadership
  - Motivator
  - Need to create basic level of curricula and materials
  - Open to dialog
  - Open to feedback and disagreement
  - Partners in the work
  - People person
  - People person, who is in tune with our people and community
  - Perhaps someone with history in Jeffco
  - Possesses as well vetted theory and track record of accountability
  - Presence in the community
  - Recognizes what the state is doing and advocates with state for teacher needs
  - Sense of humor
  - Someone who shares some of the students' marginalized identities
  - Speak from facts and avoids the emotional arguments
  - Stability of leadership - able to commit on a long-term basis to long-term challenges
  - Strong communication skills
  - Strong proven experience at the school level
  - Strong, competent and confident in character
  - Supports teachers and leaders of color
  - Takes the approach of "Why would we not do this?"
  - Teacher and principal experience
  - Tough skin
  - Trusts qualified staff and leaders to do their job
  - Trusts the expertise of those doing the work in the classroom, on bus, in the cafeteria, etc
  - Understands equity and has a plan
  - Understands funding in Colorado – experience from within the state
  - Understands the diversity of parents and does not cave to loudest voices

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- Unifier
  - Values community schools
  - Values employees
  - Variety of experience
  - Wants to be there over long term
  - Wants to listen and learn
  - Will honor that past and the work that has been done on the strategic plan
  - Willing to listen
  - Willing to see initiatives through