



The Jefferson Community Plan

August 2025

Developed by the Jefferson Steering Team made up of educators, parents, and students in partnership with Edgewater Collective

The Process

District-led Process

In the spring of 2025, Jeffco Public Schools invited educators, families, students, and the community to a series of community meetings to discuss ideas for the future of Jefferson Junior/Senior High School. The district presented two options for the future of Jefferson: a Career and Technical Education (CTE) campus like Warren Tech and a high school based on the Academy Model.

The community was not in favor of these two models because they would take away the distinctiveness of Jefferson. Jeffco Public Schools agreed to allow a community-led process to begin in April 2025 that continued throughout the summer.

Community-led Process

A Jefferson Steering Team of 18 community members (educators and staff, parents, and student leaders) was formed who would meet regularly from April through August to put together the plan for the future of Jefferson Junior/Senior High School.

During the summer, the Steering Team discussed the following topics:

- Budget and staffing
- 7th-12th grade bilingual program
- Career pathways
- Junior high programming
- Systems and structures (community schools and innovations schools)

This community plan proposal is the product of these conversations over the summer taking into consideration community feedback from the spring community meetings.

Focus of the Jefferson Community Plan

1. Increase student achievement in reaching college readiness and career pathways
2. Employ strategies that can be implemented in a timely and cost effective manner
3. Utilize strategies based on research and experiences connected to student learners in the Jefferson Area
4. Increase student enrollment at Jefferson Junior/Senior High School

What Do We Believe?

We believe that all students can learn at a high level. We have a moral imperative to significantly change the outcomes for our Jefferson Junior/Senior High School students.

The Big Idea

With declining enrollment and school funding, Jefferson Junior/Senior High School is not sustainable for the future. Instead of closing the school, or creating a technical school or academy that loses the Jefferson identity and what makes this place special, let's invest in what works at Jefferson and think creatively about how to redesign specific elements of the school. We believe there is a creative solution, with strategic investments, that can change the academic and enrollment trajectory at Jefferson.

Values of Our Community

- Expanding bilingualism and biculturalism
- Continuing the family atmosphere of connectedness at Jefferson
- Maintaining the Jefferson identity and uniqueness
- Continuing successful sports and out-of-school programming
- Creating and sustaining innovative career pathways

Positive Movement at Jefferson Junior/Senior High School

We believe there has been positive movement at Jefferson since the pandemic. Safety in classrooms and hallways has improved due to high quality discipline strategies utilized by school leaders, educators, and staff. Jefferson also saw an increase in the graduation rate for the Class of 2025. Even though school closure conversations took place during the spring of 2025, many students and staff are returning for the 2025-2026 school year.

Innovative, Locally Designed Model for Jefferson

The district has tried to change the academic and enrollment trajectory at Jefferson for years, but their efforts have not worked. It is time for our community, who knows our students, families, and community best, to have the power and autonomy to decide how to move forward. It is past time for our community to have the power to create the 7th-12th grade comprehensive school we want at Jefferson. This plan should also include strategic connections with Edgewater Elementary and Lumberg Elementary.

Key Elements

Dual Language

The Jefferson Articulation Area is the only area in Jeffco Public Schools that offers dual language programming from preschool to high school. This uniqueness needs to be valued, expanded, and embedded. Dual language programming goes beyond language to cultural education as well. One of the main goals of the PreK-12th grade pathway is that students have the opportunity to graduate bilingual and bicultural. Community surveys and conversations with families and students show that the value of bilingualism and biculturalism is high in east central Jefferson County. We believe that this emphasis will increase enrollment and increase student achievement.

Here are the key components of expanding dual language programming at Jefferson:

- **Three Core Classes in Spanish:** The goal over three years is to hire and retain qualified bilingual educators so that at least three core classes can be taught in Spanish at each grade level. It was also clear that Spanish Language Arts should be considered a core class instead of an elective.
- **Electives in Spanish:** It is also important to offer elective classes in Spanish beyond Latinos in Action. These elective classes should go beyond the typical elective classes to those which would celebrate different Latino cultures and heritages.
- **Spanish Resources:** Investments should be made in the Jefferson Library so that students can access grade level books and resources in Spanish.
- **Embedded Dual Language:** The emphasis on dual language should go beyond the classroom and embed itself in other activities and systems at Jefferson. Family events, celebrations, and student activities should be infused with bilingualism and biculturalism. Signage and announcements throughout the school should be in English and Spanish.

Our hope is that as these investments are made, Jefferson will become a fully integrated bilingual school. Jefferson would be the first junior/senior high dual language school with an English strand.

Career Pathways

Considerable work needs to be done to create well-designed career pathways at Jefferson. This work will be done through partnerships due to the lack of school funding and barriers to hiring highly qualified educators. There is also a commitment to decreasing replication of programs that are at area high schools close to Jefferson.



The goal of the career pathways at Jefferson is to create Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs that are aligned to industry demand and lead to high wage, high skill, in-demand employment. When possible, the hope is that students will graduate with an industry-recognized credential.

Electric Vehicle Maintenance Pathway

Thanks to a grant from the Colorado Department of Transportation, Jefferson now has the Switch Lab electric vehicle kit and curriculum. This will allow the Jefferson Auto Shop to offer classes in electric vehicle maintenance and repair for senior high students. Further industry partnerships will be created so that students start a fully developed automotive pathway program in 10th grade. The goal is that students will graduate the program with experience from an internship and ASE certifications.

Development of a Second Pathway

The Steering Team discussed adding a second career pathway based on the interests of students and industry leaders as well as the logistics to make a second pathway successful. One of the conversations was focusing on sustainability or clean energy so that the second pathway and the electric vehicle pathway could share staff. A program related to culinary arts and hydroponic gardening could connect with desires from families and the community to create healthier school meals.

Career-Connected Electives

Career pathways are a structured set of classes that take two to three years to complete in high school. There is also an opportunity to offer career-connected electives based on student interests and staff availability. These electives wouldn't necessarily be connected to a certification, but would provide learning opportunities connected to future careers.

Here are some of the electives that were discussed:

- Interpretation and translation (dual language connection)
- Early childhood education
- Culinary arts (sustainability connection)
- IT repair
- Cosmetology/barbering/nail tech/aesthetician
- Tattoo artist, fine arts, etc.
- Graphic design
- Bilingual medical terminology
- Clinical nurse assistant and health careers
- Business entrepreneurship

Unique Programming for Junior High Students

When district leaders proposed that Jefferson become a 7th-12th grade school over ten years ago, there were commitments made about how the experience of 7th and 8th grade students would be separate from high school students, including a separate entrance at the school. These commitments were never met. Since Jefferson became a junior and senior high school, the development needs and learning opportunities of 7th and 8th grade students have been lost in the flow of the high school.

We are proposing strategic investments and programming changes so that junior high students can have a unique learning experience at Jefferson. A transformation learning and social experience in junior high should set students up for success in high school at Jefferson.

Here are some of the recommendations from the Steering Team to consider as we fully develop the junior high experience at Jefferson:

- Develop separate teaching teams for junior high and senior high with incentives for teachers to teach at the junior high level
- Hire administrative leaders that solely focus on junior high students and educators
- Create a junior high entrance on the north side of the school with administrative offices and student lounges near the entrance
- Divide the hallways so that there is a junior high hallway or wing where students take a majority of their core classes
- Develop a separate Positive Behavior Improvement System (PBIS) for junior high students
- Organize unique electives, after school programs, leadership classes, and events for junior high students

Freedom and Creativity in Systems and Structures

Jefferson Junior/Senior High School has unique needs from other district schools and requires specialized supports and resources. To fully realize these strategies and plans for the future of Jefferson Junior/Senior High School, school leaders and educators will need to have the freedom, autonomy, and creativity necessary to meet the needs of students and the Jefferson community.

As plans are more fully developed, and implementation begins, it will be necessary for Jefferson leaders and educators to work with Jefferson County Education Association (JCEA) and Jefferson Education Support Professionals Association (JESPA) to discover which waivers might be needed so that Jefferson leadership and educators can implement the plans that are developed together.

Increasing Enrollment

Increasing enrollment is essential to maintain and grow the funding necessary to expand dual language and career programming at Jefferson Junior/Senior High School. Based on the challenges and learning hurdles for students, it is hard for school leadership and educators to devote the time needed to brainstorm, plan, and implement ideas to increase enrollment.

Moving forward, it is important to develop a team of school leaders, educators, and family leaders to focus on plans to increase enrollment at Jefferson. This team would also invite school leaders and educators from Edgewater Elementary and Lumberg Elementary as cross-school collaboration is important to these plans.

Here are some of the ideas for increasing enrollment that were discussed:

- School Accountability Committees (SAC) meet together during the school year
- Principals telling the story of Jefferson to community groups (West Colfax Community Association, etc.)
- Community events for all three schools at Jefferson
- Youth sports camps
- Mentoring between Jefferson and feeder elementary schools (Latinos in Action and other student groups)
- School marketing in community spaces
- Parent leadership opportunities at Jefferson outside the work day
- 6th grade preview day in November

Jefferson Community Plan Input and Implementation

1. Gather Input and Additional Ideas

During the fall of 2025, the Jefferson Steering Team will present the Jefferson Community Plan to various groups to gather additional feedback and ideas.

- School Accountability Committees
- Educators and school staff
- Families
- Students
- Area principals
- Community leaders

- Alumni
- District leadership

2. Develop a Detailed Plan

In the fall of 2025, a Jefferson Implementation Team will be formed to further develop the ideas and strategies in the Jefferson Community Plan. The Implementation Plan will work directly with Jefferson leadership and district leadership on the details of the plan. Funding and program partners will begin to be identified.

3. Initiate and Implement

In the fall of 2026, the Jefferson Plan will be initiated and implementation will begin. The goal is that the full Jefferson Plan programming and strategies will begin in the fall of 2027.

Jefferson Asks of Jeffco Public Schools

Partnership with Jeffco Public Schools leadership is essential for the success of the planning and implementation of the Jefferson Community Plan.

Ask 1: The district is represented on the Implementation Team

Two or more district leaders are represented on the Implementation Team. Other district leaders could be requested by the Implementation Team based on the topics being discussed at specific meetings.

Ask 2: Transparency of data and communication

It is important that the Implementation Team is looking at the same Jefferson data that district leaders are reviewing. It is also important that the district is transparent with the Jefferson community about their plans for Jefferson as well as transparent in their communication.

Ask 3: Five year commitment (starting in the fall of 2026) for Jefferson to implement the plan

Because these plans and strategies need time to be fully implemented and realized, it will be necessary for Jefferson leadership and educators, JCEA, and JESPA, to work together with the district to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) governing the Jefferson



Plan. This MOU would give Jefferson leadership and educators five years to implement the Jefferson Plan without the district intervening to stop the implementation. This MOU would begin with the 2026-2027 school year and end with the 2030-2031 school year with the option to renew for another five years.

Ask 4: Communication and outreach to the community to maintain and grow enrollment

Due to earlier communication in the spring of 2025 about a potential closure of Jefferson as a 7th-12th grade school, it is essential that district communication staff commit to communicate and outreach to the Jefferson community about the exciting future of Jefferson Junior/Senior High School in an effort to maintain and grow enrollment.

Ask 5: District support to start implementing flexible dual language qualifications for educators

The commitment to expanding the dual language programming at Jefferson is essential for these plans to move forward. A key hurdle to this growth is the dual language qualifications for educators. We are asking the district to work with Jefferson leadership to implement more flexible dual language qualifications for educators.

Jefferson's Best Days are Ahead

We firmly believe that Jefferson's best days are ahead. Together we can develop and implement plans that build on the strengths of the Jefferson community and better prepare our Saints for college or career when they graduate!