



# Strategic Plan

2021-2024

Jefferson Academy Charter School



# Table of Contents

<b>Background and Context</b> .....	1
Where We Began.....	1
Mission and Vision.....	1
Our History.....	1-2
<b>Timeline</b> .....	2
<b>Who We Are: Our Core Strengths</b> .....	3
<b>Strategic Planning Process</b> .....	4
Approach.....	4
Analysis.....	4
Idea Reduction.....	4
<b>SWOT Analysis</b> .....	5-6
<b>Strategic Goals: Summary and Milestones</b> .....	6
Communications.....	7
Innovative Academic Environment.....	8
Healing from COVID.....	9
Multiple Pathways to Success.....	10
Character and Values.....	11
<b>Conclusion &amp; Looking to the Future</b> .....	12

# BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

## WHERE WE BEGAN

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



## OUR MISSION

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

## OUR VISION

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

## HISTORY

JA began with two half-day kindergarten classes and one round of grades first through sixth. In the following years the school grew by one class per grade as the first kindergarten class moved up. The membership of JA parents voted to expand the elementary in order to accommodate the waitlist, address financial challenges, and support the secondary campus.

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

## HISTORY, CONTINUED

In 2013, JA opened its new secondary campus in Broomfield and further expanded its elementary campus. JA also expanded to include a homeschool program called The Summit Academy (Summit), with locations in Westminster and Lakewood. That program now serves over 900 students and offers a full-time program for high school students that includes concurrent enrollment classes at Front Range Community College.

In 2019, the secondary campus expanded its facilities to include a new auxiliary gym and fine arts wing, and JA partnered with Hope House to provide resources for their high school program. Hope House is metro-Denver's only resource providing free self-sufficiency programs to parenting teen moms, including Residential, High School & GED and College & Career Programs.




TOTAL STUDENTS, 1994



TOTAL STUDENTS, 2002




TOTAL STUDENTS, 2021












# Jefferson Academy

# HISTORY

Learn more at [jajags.com](http://jajags.com)



<h2>1994</h2>	JA was approved by the Jefferson County Board of Education, making it one of the first charter schools in Colorado.	
<h2>1996</h2>	The Junior High was added.	
<h2>1999</h2>	The Senior High was added.	
<h2>2013</h2>	The new secondary building opened on Reed Way in Broomfield.	
	JA expanded to include The Summit Academy.	
<h2>2019</h2>	The secondary campus expanded its facilities to include a new auxiliary gym and fine arts wing.	
	JA partnered with Hope House to provide resources for their high school program.	
<h2>2021</h2>	The Summit Academy South will open a new location in Conifer.	
	The Summit Academy Westminster expanded its facilities to include new classrooms, offices, and meeting spaces.	



## WHO WE ARE

Currently, JA serves a student population of approximately 1,400 students in kindergarten through 12th grades and employs 275 full and part-time staff. In addition, JA serves approximately 900 home-schooled students through The Summit Academy.

27

years as a  
charter school

255

employees

900

homeschool  
students, K-12

1,400

Jefferson Academy  
students, K-12



## WHERE WE EXCEL

During the strategic planning process, we identified four key areas where we excel: school culture, programs with choices, strong community, and financial stability. These areas are detailed in the SWOT Analysis.



SCHOOL CULTURE



PROGRAMS WITH CHOICES



STRONG COMMUNITY



FINANCIAL STABILITY



# STRATEGIC PLANNING



## APPROACH

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



## ANALYSIS

Conducted every three years, a SWOT analysis (Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats) is an internal and external assessment of the school. From an internal perspective, the analysis considers the school’s achievements, capabilities, and gaps. From an external perspective, the analysis considers outside factors that help or hinder the school in fulfilling its mission, including funding, laws or regulations, and organizations with whom the school interacts.



## IDEA REDUCTION

The input to the SWOT analysis includes survey data, Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) and other test results, financial projections, faculty and staff perspectives, and best practices. In developing the SWOT analysis, the Board identifies and considers many valid strengths or weaknesses. Through an unbiased process called “idea reduction”, these areas are collectively reduced to a set that focuses the Board and the Administration on the factors that most impact fulfillment of the school’s Mission and Vision at that point in time.

# SWOT ANALYSIS

For a more in-depth look at each area, see Appendix A



## STRENGTHS

**School Culture:** JA is proud of its rich history within Colorado and the charter school community, and remains committed to its original mission and vision.

**Programs with Choices:** JA strives for excellence in its program offerings, and maintains a wide variety of choices while maintaining its commitment to academic rigor so that students can meet their highest potential.

**Strong Community:** We lean into our vision each year through the hard work and dedication of each person in the JA community.

**Financial Stability:** We have demonstrated strong fiscal responsibility and financial strength through thoughtful planning and prudent asset management.



## WEAKNESSES

**Strategic Fundraising:** JA does not have a long-term strategic fundraising plan that could be used to augment our campuses and expand our programs to meet the growing needs of our staff, students and community.

**Communications Plan:** JA does not have a comprehensive organizational communications plan that includes guiding principles, incorporation of mission and vision, and branding expectations for all family and community-facing communications.

**Board Succession:** The Board of Directors does not have a formal training plan to maintain institutional knowledge, recruit and train new members, and ensure a diverse and high-functioning board.

**Programs:** Some program offerings are still growing and are currently not as strong as they need to be including certain elective areas and expanded pathways to success.



## OPPORTUNITIES

**Financial Sustainability:** In order to create long-term financial sustainability, JA has the opportunity to develop and grow diverse revenue streams and partnerships that provide for the future families and students.

**Local Community:** JA has the opportunity to build new relationships and foster existing relationships within the community by continued positive exposure outside our walls.

**Leadership/Staff:** In order to create a sustainable climate and culture that helps us live into our mission and vision, JA has the opportunity to develop succession plans for administrative leadership roles within the organization.

**Collaboration Among Programs:** JA has the opportunity to improve all educational offerings across JA's K-12, homeschool, and teen mom support programs by appreciating, valuing, and growing through collaboration.

**School Culture:** By establishing a set of core values, JA has the opportunity to strengthen our commitment to character education for both students and staff by including core values education in our curriculum, staff development, and overall organizational culture.

## SWOT ANALYSIS, CONTINUED



### THREATS

**Safety & Retention of Students & Staff:** Physical limitations, lack of succession planning, increase in mass violence across the nation, and COVID-19 burnout pose a threat to our staff, students and programs.

**Competition:** Because the number of charter schools in Colorado is increasing, there is more competition among families seeking school choice.

**Legislative Changes:** The makeup of our own state legislature, as well as federal government, affects the support that charter schools receive in terms of initiatives and laws that can impact our operational status, including homeschool programs, charter renewals, and future funding.

**Communication:** There is a lack of knowledge about our school's mission, vision and goals among our own families and within our community.

## STRATEGIC GOALS

The five goals in the following pages represent the Strategic Goals for Jefferson Academy from August 2021 through June 2024:

- **Comprehensive Communications**
- **Innovative Academic Environment**
- **Healing from COVID**
- **Multiple Pathways to Success**
- **Character and Values**

### MILESTONES BY YEAR

In order to make measurable progress toward each strategic goal, milestones have been developed for each year as follows:



**2021-2022**

#### DESIGN

In the first year, plans for the goal are designed, teams are organized, and a clear road map to success is established. This year may also include identifying stakeholders, communicating the plan, and implementation.

**2022-2023**

#### BUILD

In the second year, systems are developed to support the plan, with a concentration on a secure foundation that ensures community support and sustainability.

**2023-2024**

#### EVALUATE

In the third year, there will be a combination of evaluation and assessment coupled with adjustments to fully integrate and sharpen the efficacy of our programs.



# COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNICATIONS

## STRATEGIC GOALS 2021-2024

### MILESTONES

#### 2021-2022 DESIGN

**At the end of year one,** all JA families, staff, faculty, and students will recognize the face of the JA brand and a clear communications framework will be complete.

#### 2022-2023 BUILD

**At the end of year two,** communications will meet the branding expectations, incorporate the mission, vision, and values of JA, and the JA brand will be fully rolled out into the community.

#### 2023-2024 EVALUATE

**By the end of year three,** communications strategies will be fully dialed in through feedback obtained from staff, faculty, parents, students, and community members and the JA brand will be easily recognizable in the community.

**Jefferson Academy will develop a comprehensive organizational communications plan that includes guiding principles; incorporation of mission, vision, and values; and branding expectations for internal and external communications.**

### PURPOSE

The transformation from a small K-12 charter school to a large organization with several campuses means a shift in communications culture. In order to provide the best educational experience for families, work experience for staff, and to create a sense of community among the entire organization, unified communications systems and processes need to be implemented.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS' APPROACH

The Board of Directors will review the communications plan for adherence to the mission, vision, and values of JA; provide strategic recommendations where needed; and incorporate the final plan into all internal and external communications coming from the Board. In addition, the Board will work to promote the JA brand within the community including when cultivating partnerships, developing community relationships, and serving as ambassadors for JA.

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S APPROACH

The Executive Director will work with the Community Engagement Specialist to reactivate the school's Communications Committee, recruit volunteer resources, develop consistent practices and procedures and deploy an easily recognizable and consistent brand/image. Through focused attention to communication and marketing plans, both internal and external communications will be more recognizable, consistent and effective.

# INNOVATIVE ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT

## STRATEGIC GOALS 2021-2024

### MILESTONES

#### 2021-2022 DESIGN

At the end of year one, JA will have identified challenges that hinder academic growth and develop pathways for students who need support to grow into their academic potential.

#### 2022-2023 BUILD

At the end of year two, JA will clearly define the different program and support options that are available to current students & families as well as those who apply for enrollment.

#### 2023-2024 EVALUATE

By the end of year three, support systems and academic practices will be systematically implemented that provide students varied pathways to success.

**Jefferson Academy will provide an innovative academic environment that honors the varied needs of our students. By clearly defining expectations, presenting intentional communication, and providing access to support programs, we can help ALL students achieve their highest academic potential.**

### PURPOSE

The mission of Jefferson Academy is to help students attain their highest academic and character potential. In order to facilitate success and achievement for all students, JA needs to ensure that family communications and parent expectations around programs and student support services are clear and accessible to all families.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS' APPROACH

The Board of Directors will regularly review data from campuses and programs that reflects the effectiveness of the innovative academic environment including parent surveys, student withdraw interviews, academic data, student support services offered and utilized, and communication strategies. The Board embraces the JA mission to help ALL students attain THEIR highest academic potential and will provide guidance and resources to the Executive Director to achieve this goal.

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S APPROACH

The Executive Director will work with building principals to identify systemic challenges that impact students' learning and growth along with support structures that are in place or could be added to more effectively assist student-learning. Multiple pathways will be used to accomplish this goal which could include expanding supports, creating new programs, more effectively implementing current programs and/or revising current educational practices. Consistent communication will help students and families identify potential options to assist in their student's success.

# HEALING FROM COVID

## STRATEGIC GOALS 2021-2024

### MILESTONES

#### 2021-2022 DESIGN

**At the end of year one,** JA will remain in full compliance with health orders and, depending on the pandemic situation, continue supporting students or begin processes to recover from the pandemic.

#### 2022-2023 BUILD

**At the end of year two,** assuming the pandemic is under control, JA will deploy resources to better understand and address the academic, social and emotional needs of our community.

#### 2023-2024 EVALUATE

**By the end of year three,** achievement gaps will have been addressed and students and staff will have begun their recovery process from the impacts of the pandemic.

**In order to ensure that our community is attaining its highest potential, Jefferson Academy will attend to the academic progress and overall wellness of its students and staff as they recover from a difficult time of isolation, economic hardships, and mental health challenges due to COVID-19.**

### PURPOSE

Navigating COVID-19 has shown us that our staff can pivot and adapt, that our students are resilient, and that community is important to all of us. At the same time, our community has suffered greatly throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and the academic, emotional, and financial scars will be long-lasting. JA will seek to provide support to its students, staff, and families through targeted interventions, helping to rebuild social circles and opportunities, developing community, and creating/maintaining programs and initiatives to promote mental and physical well-being.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS' APPROACH

The Board of Directors understands that the pandemic has deeply affected JA staff, students, and families. The Board will remain vigilant in its effort to provide a safe environment for students and staff by continuing to review and revise policies that follow changing requirements, take local health guidelines into consideration and support the learning environment. In addition, the Board will review applicable metrics including, but not limited to, academic data, staff retention, community offerings and student participation to provide strategic guidance to the Executive Director.

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S APPROACH

The Executive Director will work with building principals to understand the impact of COVID-19 on their students/families as well as identify the various needs in each of the significantly different communities within our five locations. Processes and protocols will be reviewed and revised as needed to ensure compliance with health regulations and the safety of students and staff. Current support systems will be used to address the social, emotional and academic needs of students and new resources will be secured to continue to help families who are struggling.

# MULTIPLE PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS

## STRATEGIC GOALS 2021-2024

### MILESTONES

#### 2021-2022 DESIGN

**At the end of year one,** Summit and Hope House programs will have successfully integrated their current expanded offerings and work toward further growth.

#### 2022-2023 BUILD

**At the end of year two,** additional pathways for our K-12 students will have been researched with appropriate offerings being implemented or coordinated between campuses.

#### 2023-2024 EVALUATE

**By the end of year three,** the JA Board will have reviewed additional educational choices, including continued expansion of current programs and/or the potential addition of new programs or schools.

**As an organization with multiple campuses and programs, we recognize that there are many pathways to success for our students. We seek to fully embrace and communicate these pathways with our current and potential families, and embrace them as a key strength at JA while continuing to grow and expand our offerings.**

### PURPOSE

This goal is two-fold: awareness and staking claim to that which already exists - our unique and diverse programs; and expanding offerings to ensure students' success. Just as there are many pathways to academic success, students can also choose clubs, sports, college classes, homeschool, and other extracurricular activities that meet their individual needs. The purpose of this goal is the development and expansion of pathways, the creation of more options for our future students, and communicating these pathways to all families.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS' APPROACH

The Board of Directors will provide strategic guidance and advice as programs are explored, developed, and embedded into JA's offerings. The Board will also ensure that programs align with the mission and vision of JA and provide for deeper and or greater opportunities for future students and families. The Board will continue to support multiple programs both philosophically and financially and provide governance while the Executive Director oversees and manages the tactical operations.

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S APPROACH

The Executive Director will work within current programs to ensure the continued success and possible expansion of our Core Knowledge, Coordinated Humanities, Home School and Pregnant Teen/Young Mom's programs. Expansion could be within programs, adding offerings and/or growing capacity within buildings. Additionally, the Executive Director will seek out potential new pathways and partnerships that could add diverse educational options under the JA umbrella with the focus remaining providing parents great educational choices for their children.

# CHARACTER AND VALUES

## STRATEGIC GOALS 2021-2024

### MILESTONES

#### 2021-2022 DESIGN

At the end of year one, the Core Values will be finalized and approved by the JA Board of directors.

#### 2022-2023 BUILD

At the end of year two, the Core Values will be integrated into learning structures and clearly disseminated to families for a unified message to students.

#### 2023-2024 EVALUATE

By the end of year three, the effectiveness of the Core Values project will be reviewed both internally and externally to determine the success of the program and adjusted as needed to positively impact students.

**Jefferson Academy will develop core values that speak to the ways we live out our mission and vision each day. These core values will be used to strengthen our commitment to character education for both students and staff through incorporation into our curriculum, staff development, and overall organizational culture.**

### PURPOSE

In order for our students to reach their highest character potential, we must ensure that we develop an inclusive environment that honors differing backgrounds, perspectives, and academic pathways. In addition, all members of the community should have an understanding of the mission of JA and its core values. The implementation and communication of the values, as well as a content-rich curriculum and an intentional culture of inclusivity, will help JA become more deeply aligned with its mission statement and truly live and lean into our values.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS' APPROACH

The Board of Directors will participate in the development process and review and approve the final set of core values to ensure they align with the mission and vision of JA. In addition, the Board will continue to model strong character traits and the core values at all board meetings, school events and when serving as ambassadors in the community. The Board will hold the Executive Director to this same high standard and expect that the Executive Director does the same with the JA faculty and staff. The Board will also stay abreast of the strategies used to incorporate the values into the curriculum, staff development and culture and provide strategic guidance where needed.

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S APPROACH

The Executive Director will support the work of the Core Values Committee by providing insight, reviewing information, seeking outside input when needed and ensuring alignment with JA's Mission and Vision. When the Core Values are finalized and approved by the JA board, the administrative teams will collaborate in designing and deploying the Core Values in a manner that is age appropriate. Through consistent communications across buildings, students and staff will fully understand JA's Core Values and will demonstrate those character traits on a regular basis.

# CONCLUSION

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Jefferson Academy looks toward the future with excitement and preparedness. The Jefferson Academy Board of Directors is committed to investing in the future and remaining agile as education trends continue to grow and evolve in a post-COVID era. The talented Executive Director, dedicated faculty and staff, committed families, and strong financial position of the school all serve to empower JA to pursue exciting opportunities and continue to be a thought-leader in charter school education in Colorado.

We remain committed to our founders' mission and vision, and have expanded options and programs that support school choice for families served by JA. We will continue this commitment to our parents and students, with plans to expand The Summit Academy into Conifer, develop new relationships with businesses that create sustainability for all our programs, seek new opportunities to expand parent choice in Colorado, and support the success of all students.

