

# *Jeffco Performing Arts Advocacy Coalition*

## **August 24, 2015 Beginning of the Year Newsletter**

Welcome back to school! We have had a busy summer for JPAAC setting goals for the upcoming year, building important relationships, working with Jeffco Public Schools on their new vision and strategy, finding more opportunities for grants for our students and programs, and refining our approaches to advocacy. Read on for more information!

### **Goals for the Upcoming Year**

Over the summer, we set what we believe are important goals for the upcoming school year:

- Encourage parents of Performing Arts students to join or at least attend Accountability Committee meetings in their respective schools. These committees have a very strong influence on budgeting and class offerings within a school. This is the single most critical avenue for advocating for Performing Arts and is the best way you can influence the future for your students.
- Build more awareness across the district. By growing the number of people who are signed up for our email and Facebook page, we can better disseminate important information across the school district. Help us by sending this newsletter out to your booster groups and to parents of new students joining a Performing Arts class or program of any type in your school.
- Increase web site resources. We will continue to add valuable resources to our website.

### **We Need More Help With Leadership**

Since the end of the last school year, we've had some of our parents "graduate". We need to backfill them. The job is easy. We meet roughly every other month for a few hours and the commitment is only a few hours a month outside of that. If you can help, please contact us at our email address below.

### **Jeffco Public Schools Vision & Strategy 2020 Project Update**

If you have been on our email list or following our Facebook account for long, you are aware of Jeffco's efforts to build a new vision and strategic plan. We have been very involved in that work and are pleased to announce that by the time you receive this, it should be complete. The week of August 17 was spent incorporating final revisions with the intent of publishing the final work products the week of August 24<sup>th</sup>. We will publish website and Facebook updates with the documentation or links to it. Implementation is already happening at a high level, and plans should be published in the future.

### **What is Student Based Budgeting?**

New for the 2015/16 school year for Jeffco is Student Based Budgeting. At a high level, SBB is the process of budgeting a school's expenses, including personnel, based on a dollar allocation per student. This gives each school much more discretion than in the past about how to allocate funds towards classes and activities. It is the reason why becoming involved in your school's Accountability Committee is so important. For Performing Arts classes and activities, SBB could be a boon... or a bane. For more information on SBB, see our white paper, "Advocating for Performing Arts in the Jeffco Student Based Budgeting Environment". It is the first item posted here <http://www.jeffcopaadvocacy.org/how-to-advocate.html> and contains many more details about this change to the approach from the past.

### **The Best Approaches for Advocating for Performing Arts Within Jeffco**

There are many ways to positively influence educational decisions around Performing Arts for the benefit of Jeffco students. Below are some of the easiest and most effective ways.

- Get on your school's Accountability Committee or at least attend every meeting you can and express your priorities. These committees directly influence school budgeting decisions, and with the advent of SBB this year and into the future, play an ever more important role in determining the availability of Performing Arts classes and activities in your school.
- Talk with your principal about the importance of maintaining and growing Performing Arts classes and activities in your school. We have an immense amount of research available on our web site that you can use as a part of your conversation. See: <http://www.jeffcopaadvocacy.org/research-and-data.html>
- Email the Jeffco Board of Education – individually. Don't use the general email, instead, send a message to each member, even if it is the same message. We have each person's contact information available here: <http://www.jeffcopaadvocacy.org/board-of-education-contact-information.html>
- Talk with you Performing Arts teachers. Understand their needs, and as a parent, bring those needs to your Accountability Committees and principals.
- The Jeffco budgeting process for 2016-2017 will be starting in the next couple of months. Now is the time to use the approaches above to get involved and to make your priorities known.

### **Send us Your Events**

We are a group of parents. We do not have access to information across the district about festivals, concerts, theater, or vocal performances. If your school has an event you would like the community to know about, send it to us ahead of time, along with a short write-up and any relevant site links and we will be happy to put it out on Facebook and/or our web page for you.

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### **Our Contact Information:**

Website: <http://www.jeffcopaadvocacy.org>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/jeffcopaadvocacy>

Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/jeffcopaadvocac> (no "y" at the end)

Email: [jeffcopaadvocacy@gmail.com](mailto:jeffcopaadvocacy@gmail.com)

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If you didn't receive this e-mail directly from us, go here to stay informed or to volunteer:

<http://www.jeffcopaadvocacy.org/stay-informed-or-volunteer.html>

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