

Jeffco Performing Arts Advocacy Coalition

September, 2016 “It’s Been a Long Time” Newsletter

Welcome back to school! Here at JPAAC HQ, we have been pretty busy behind the scenes. We’ve said goodbye to some of our volunteers who have been with us for years, brought in some new volunteers, and took a frank assessment of what has gone well and what has not. While we have been active in the district, on Facebook, and on Twitter, it’s been a long time since our last newsletter. So here goes...

Why Music Matters – 11 Facts About Music Education

Here is a short article on why music matters – 11 facts about how music impacts young people. We really liked it, so here is a [link to the original article online](#). Enjoy and use it in your advocacy!

Some Nostalgia and Some Community at the Yard Sale

By Beth Kelley

I have a soft spot for Arvada High School and their music department. Maybe it’s because I’m a retired teacher. Maybe it’s because my girls are involved in the music department in another Arvada high school. Maybe it’s because the Arvada High music department and drama team went slightly macabre and made me laugh at their spring musical “The Adams Family”. So when my friend invited me to the Arvada High Marching Band yard sale I went. I didn’t go to actually buy anything, just to show support. But that little red casserole dish matched my mom’s set from the 60’s and I hold memories of my childhood and my deceased parents close. It’s the unexpected finds at a yard sale that get to you the most. A little teary, I turned to talk to the moms who were running the sale. We talked about our kids, our music departments, and our support for each of our Arvada schools. The commonalities surfaced and we built community. They introduced me to their new instrumental director. I paid, we compared marching band calendars and we vowed to support each other’s bands. I came away richer from the yard sale. Not only did I have my little red casserole dish, I connected with parents who are equally as passionate about their kid’s music and performance opportunities in Jeffco schools. I opened the door to leave and we all said in unison, “See you at the Arvada Harvest Festival Parade!”



How the Arts Develop the Young Brain

[Here is a great article by David Sousa](#), former superintendent and now education consultant, on exactly how arts help develop kids' brains. It's a bit of a long read, so we've linked to it instead of embedding it, but if you ever needed a good reason to advocate, this gives you many!

Suggestions on Do's and Don'ts for Music Parents (from The Clarinet Corner)

As we head back to school and hundreds of Jeffco kids are getting their first instrument, parents are excited at the hope that their child will be successful in this endeavor. It will bring music into their home. It will help their child's brain develop. They'll have fun with the other kids. They'll do better in math. Hoping the financial and time investment of an instrument makes sense... Here' 10 "dos" and 6 "don'ts" for parents: Parental support is a crucial element in success, not only in band, but in all school activities.

What to do:

- Help your child to find a regular time and place to practice.
- Encourage your child to play for family and friends.
- Offer compliments and encouragement regularly.
- Expose your child to a wide variety of music, including concerts and recitals.
- Encourage your child to talk with you about his or her lessons.
- Make sure your child's instrument is always in good working condition.
- Allow your child to play many types of music, not just study pieces.
- Listen to your child practice and acknowledge improvement.
- Help your child build a personal music library.
- Try to get your child to make a minimum two-year commitment to his or her music studies.

What not to do:

- Don't use practice as punishment.
- Don't insist that your child play for others when he or she doesn't want to.
- Don't ridicule or make fun of mistakes or less than perfect playing.

- Don't apologize to others for your child's weak performance.
- Don't start your child on an instrument that's in poor working condition.
- Don't expect rapid progress and development in the beginning.

As a Reminder...

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. It is always best when it comes directly from parents in the community.

- 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.

Goals

About this time a year ago, we published the following three goals:

- Encourage parents of Performing Arts students to join or at least attend Accountability Committee meetings in their respective schools. (This is the best way you can advocate for Performing Arts opportunities in your school.)
- Build more awareness across the district. We continue to grow the number of people aware of the challenges facing Performing Arts in Jeffco. Help continue that by sending this newsletter 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 have and continue to add valuable resources to our website.

We are happy to report that each of these was achieved to one degree or another. Importantly, we continue to make positive progress on each of them.

Jeffco 2020 Update

If you have read our newsletter or seen many of our Facebook postings, you know that we were very involved in the creation of Jeffco's 2020 Vision and the strategic plan to implement that vision. In short, helping to create a complete person with a well-rounded education, including Performing Arts, is the goal of that vision. We are happy to report that it is progressing forward and we are still well represented in the effort. This is not a substitute for every parent getting involved in their school's accountability committee and advocating for Performing Arts Opportunities directly through that, but it is helping to set the general direction of the district.

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Our Contact Information:

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

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