

# Jefferson Academy Charter School

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## Board Manual

Revised June 20, 2000

## Vision Statement

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*Jefferson Academy Charter School envisions a community of parents, teachers, students, and educational and business leaders, working together to create a learning environment that engenders growth in character, academic achievement, and the love of learning, resulting in responsible, productive citizens.*

## Mission Statement

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*The mission of Jefferson Academy is to establish an environment where students attain their highest academic and character potential. This mission will be accomplished through an academically rigorous, content-rich educational program, in the context of discipline and respect, and a high degree of parental involvement.*

## Policy Statement on Decision Making

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The Jefferson Academy charter belongs to the parents of the school. All decisions by the Board of Directors and the Principal need to be made within the parameters of the vision and mission statements. Decisions shall be made first considering the vision and mission statements, and then the members (parents), always keeping in mind that parents should have a meaningful voice in their child's education.

## ***Board Member Profile Agreement***

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Jefferson Academy Board of Directors shall have a firm belief in the fundamental, traditional format and be committed to using the Core Knowledge and Coordinated Humanities curriculums. Directors shall be fully committed to the charter school concept.

The purpose of the Board of Directors is to set the general direction and policy of the school, not manage it on a daily basis. Board members shall be able to direct, carry out the Jefferson Academy vision, foster relationships with staff, the school community and community at large, and oversee the budget.

### **Qualifications**

- Read Professor E.D. Hirsch's book "Cultural Literacy" and "The Schools We Need and Why We Don't Have Them" and agree with the principle that our society has a foundation of knowledge upon which subsequent learning is built.
- Be familiar with the Core Knowledge Scope and Sequence and the Coordinated Humanities curriculum.
- Understand the supplemental curriculum used by our school.
- Be in agreement with the educational philosophy, discipline policy and administrative structure of our school.
- Read and sign the board policy manual.

All board members should attend school events to show support and encouragement for our school. JA board members will not serve on PTO or Booster Club boards. Board members may chair and serve on committees of the PTO.

Prior board experience is helpful. A high value for professionalism and the success of the school is mandatory. Motivation for serving on the board shall be to help facilitate the educational success of students.

All board members are required to attend a yearly board conference where the goals of the board are defined through a strategic plan, a board self-evaluation critiqued, outside speakers present information on effective board leadership and other pertinent topics are discussed.

The board will annually attend a Board Visit Day. During this time, directors will visit classrooms, talk with the staff and become familiar with current school concerns.

The board will perform an annual self-evaluation. Goals for the next year will also be determined at that time.

Directors shall fulfill their responsibilities on the board, board committees or subcommittees to their fullest capability.

All board members should remember that public relations representatives is one of their roles as a director.

### **Behavioral Expectations**

Board members shall abide by the open meetings law [C.R.S. § 24-6-401]. The open meetings law states that anyone discussing board business, policy, actions, resolutions, etc. with anyone else on the board, except at regularly scheduled meetings, is illegal. "Meeting" with another board member is defined as communication through person, telephone, or any other means. Confidentiality law is also outlined in the section of the statute. Personnel matters, individual students, and negotiations are confidential by law.

Expectations include a professional demeanor at all board meetings. Issues being discussed shall not be personalized and directed toward any other board member, staff member, parent or anyone else. Discernment should be used in interpersonal relationships and communications.

Board members shall respect and listen to ideas being presented by other board members. Board members fulfilling their responsibilities to their fullest potential shall be encouraged by each of the directors.

When receiving criticisms from parents or other interested parties about staff or other board members, the board member shall direct the speaker to the board member/staff member, which the situation involves. Board members will never speak negatively about staff or other board members to the school community, or parties outside the school community.

Conflicts shall be resolved with the people with which it was created. Board members will commit to resolving conflict directly with each other or with the appropriate staff member and not share the conflict with anyone outside of the conflict, including, but not limited to other parents, other staff members or the media.

Board members shall exemplify integrity, honesty and respect. A dedication and commitment to the vision of Jefferson Academy and the charter school movement shall be top priority for any board member. Any board members finding themselves involved in an unresolvable conflict shall put the vision of the school first.

A board member missing more than two consecutive board meetings without prior approval for their absence from at least two other board members, shall receive a notice of probation. Missing a third meeting without prior approval is considered a resignation by that board member.

All board meetings shall be governed according to appropriate parliamentary procedure.

## ***Governance of Jefferson Academy***

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JA Schools shall be governed by a Board of Directors. The School Superintendent shall answer directly to the board and serve at the pleasure of the board. The School Superintendent shall make decisions on a day-to-day basis and fulfill all administrative duties for the school. The board will maintain the vision and steer the school's direction as it carries out the Vision and Mission Statements.

As with all charter schools, Jefferson Academy is an entity separate from the school district in the area of governance. Each board member shall guard this unique characteristic of charters.

Board members should remember that derogatory statements concerning matters regarding Jefferson Academy in a public format tend to bring disrepute on the school as a whole and could be counter productive to not only Jefferson Academy, but also the Colorado charter school movement. If a director questions a decision, he or she shall immediately take that concern or disagreement to the administrator in a confidential and diplomatic format. Likewise, administrators shall agree to the same commitment. In agreement with the elementary school's School Rule #1, all communications shall be honoring to one another.

While at the school, board members shall be mindful of the different roles they play: parent, volunteer, board member, etc. A board member will not use their position of authority while acting in their parent or volunteer roles. Directors shall foster good relationships with the administrator and staff on a personal level. With humility, each board member will serve the best interests of the school.

Board members shall remember that stepping out of their advisory/board capacity and attempting to run the school as an administrator, will always cause problems.

The vision and mission statement of Jefferson Academy, a Core Knowledge and Coordinated Humanities charter school, will serve to guide and direct the board of directors. The goal to continually improve, maintain integrity, serve Jefferson Academy families and ensure academic success for our students shall take precedence in all situations.

I have read and understood the statements and qualifications in this document. I further agree to uphold the ideals and requirements listed above.

Signed, this 15th day of May, 2001.

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Board Member, Jefferson Academy

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Board Member, Jefferson Academy

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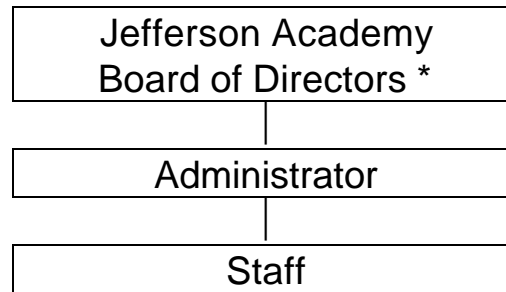
Board Member, Jefferson Academy

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Board Member, Jefferson Academy

## GOVERNANCE

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\* Parents of Jefferson Academy are stakeholders and have thus elected a Board of Directors.

\*\* The Jefferson County R-1 School District has granted the charter to Jefferson Academy.

## RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES OF DIRECTORS

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The board is responsible for:

1. Implementing the vision and mission statements as well as the school's philosophy and objectives. This philosophy should be read on a regular basis and taken into consideration whenever possible changes of policy are under discussion.
2. Establishing policies for operation of Jefferson Academy Charter School, ensuring that the provisions of the corporation's Articles of Incorporation, By-laws and the contracts with the Jefferson County R-1 School Board are being followed.
3. Establishing fiscal policy and boundaries, with budgets and financial controls for the schools.
4. Selecting a new Principal when needed.
5. Establishing the policies under which the School Superintendent will administer the school.
6. Establishing necessary working committees and being sure that all members are actively involved in appropriate committee assignments.
7. Periodic evaluations of the school, taking into consideration the school's stated philosophy and goals.
8. Conducting a written annual evaluation of the performance of the Principals and establishing goals for the following year.
9. Conducting a written annual self-evaluation, including consideration of whether the board and its committees are independently knowledgeable concerning school matters or are relying too heavily upon the Principal and other staff for guidance.
10. Keeping full and accurate minutes of its meetings and those of its committees.
11. Maintaining a policy book so that governing decisions made over a period of years may be readily available to subsequent leadership and administrators.
12. Developing and maintaining a communication link to the community.
13. Serving on one board committee or ad hoc committee.

Remember that each director has no individual authority; it is only as a collective board that there is authority.

Each director should regularly attend board meetings.



## STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD

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### Elementary Teacher Review Committee

The Teacher Review Committee (TRC) will be responsible for reviewing the classroom performance of all elementary school classroom instructors (full and part-time.) Established policy for each school dictates the number of evaluations required each year. The Teacher Review Committee works collaboratively with the Principal in making hiring decisions.

### Secondary Teacher Review Committee

The Teacher Review Committee (TRC) will be responsible for reviewing the classroom performance of all secondary school classroom instructors (full and part-time.) Established policy for each school dictates the number of evaluations required each year. The Teacher Review Committee works collaboratively with the Principal in making hiring decisions.

### Elementary Subcommittee

The elementary Subcommittee will be responsible for advising the board in fulfilling designated portions of the strategic plan. The Subcommittee will be comprised of two board members, the principal, two parents, two staff members and two students. The parents and students will be appointed by majority consent of the Jefferson Academy board with recommendation from the Subcommittee's board members and principal. Meetings will be chaired by a parent on the committee. Terms shall be one year, with a goal of involving a variety of individuals over time.

### Secondary Subcommittee

The Secondary Subcommittee will be responsible for advising the board in fulfilling designated portions of the strategic plan. The Subcommittee will be comprised of two board members, the junior and senior high principals, two parents from the junior high and two parents from the senior high, one staff member from the junior high and one staff member from the senior high, and two students from the junior high and two students from the senior high. The parents and students will be appointed by majority consent of the Jefferson Academy board with recommendation from the Subcommittee's board members and principal's. Meetings will be chaired by a parent on the committee. Terms shall be one year, with a goal of involving a variety of individuals over time.

### Academic Planning Committee

The Academic Planning Committee is responsible to periodically review components of the educational program at Jefferson Academy, primarily the core curriculum. The Jefferson Academy board will designate a core subject to review each year in its strategic plan. The goal is to ensure continuity for the educational program in grades Kindergarten through twelfth. The committee may be charged with other tasks from time to time as deemed necessary by the Jefferson Academy board.

The Academic Planning Committee will be comprised of administrators, teaching staff, parents and board members. Administrators and board members on the committee will make recommendation to the Jefferson Academy Board on individuals to be involved with this committee.

## AD HOC BOARD COMMITTEES

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### *Building Committee*

### *Contract Committee*

The contract committee has been given authority to negotiate a new contract with the Jefferson County R-1 School District for the 2000-2001 school year.

## APPENDIX

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The following documents may be reviewed in the Jefferson Academy office:

1. Articles of Incorporation
2. By-laws
3. Previous meeting minutes with board packet supplements