

Dear JA & Summit staff and families,

With Spring Break behind us we are heading into one of the most exciting times of the school year. A time full of events, presentations and a plethora of other activities. A fundamental piece of what makes these events special are our parent volunteers who invest in our students.

The Vision Statement developed by our school founders perfectly captures what has made and will continue to make JA & Summit great.

“Jefferson Academy 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 and productive citizens.”

As we pull out of the pandemic and schools drift “toward normal”, we are experiencing a drop off in the number of volunteers supporting our programs. Our PTO, Boosters, K-12 Foundation, and Board of Directors are made up of volunteers and rely on your support to flourish. This time of year, each of our schools/programs are looking for volunteers to take over for the next year. There are lots of places where you can make a difference in students’ lives: 2 seats are opening up on the JA Board of Directors; the PTO, Boosters and K-12 Foundation have openings for board members or other project based positions. Whether you have a lot of time to offer, or are very limited in the time you have available, please consider contacting one of these organizations to see how you might be able to help. Candidate letters for the 2 seats on the JA Board must be received by April 18th, so act quickly if you are considering this.

I want to thank all our volunteers that have invested so much time into our students this year. I also want to encourage you to take the time to consider where you may be able to help in the coming year. Your involvement and insights are crucial to the success of JA & Summit.

Over the years you may have heard me say that schools really only have two primary jobs: ensure students receive a great education and remain safe at school. In light of the current National school security news, I want to step back and discuss school safety on our campuses. Jefferson Academy and Summit Academy spend a tremendous amount of time focusing on school safety. We maintain a balance between being transparent about our protocols and practices while also ensuring that not all details about our campuses are readily accessible to the general public. To help maintain this balance, JA’s Board of Directors held an Executive Session at the start of school; we dug into our

safety protocols and answered board members' questions to ensure that they were comfortable with the safety features and practices at each of our campuses.

Our buildings follow what is known as the Standard Response Protocol (SRP). This is the same training used by all schools in Jeffco. Why is this important? We partner with the Jeffco Sheriff, Westminster PD, Broomfield PD and Littleton PDA along with Jeffco Schools Department of School Safety. By using the SRP, we know what to expect from local law enforcement, and they know what to expect from our staff and students. In an emergency this cooperation makes it much easier to identify situations that are out of the norm. We hold 2 practice drills a year; one in the fall and one in the spring. During our fall Lockdown drills this year, between 4 & 11 police officers and Jeffco security officers were present to lead the drills and then debrief with each administrative team. We find it imperative that these officers get to know our buildings and staff. We take their suggestions seriously and work to implement changes they deem appropriate.

Additionally, we are continually working to make our buildings as secure as possible. As we mentioned before, our 3 permanent campuses now use key fobs instead of keys to enter buildings, reducing the risk created by lost keys. By the start of school next year, our elementary campus will have security cameras throughout the building. Our secondary and Summit Westminster campuses already have those in place. Since Summit South rents its building and we cannot install cameras, next year every staff member will be issued a district Motorola radio to ensure they have continual communication with each other and the district if needed, regardless of their location in the building. These and other measures are in place to provide a safe yet friendly learning environment for our students. If you have questions or any concerns about school safety, please feel free to reach out to me directly.

Thank you for being great partners as we all work to support our student learners. I hope you have a chance to enjoy the many spring activities and events in which your students will be involved.

Sincerely,
Tim Matlick
Executive Director