



# Shaping Tomorrow Today

## Public Education

Volume 23/Issue #1

A Community Newsletter of the Jefferson County Education Association

October/2009

## Jeffco teachers recommend Johnson, Marinelli, and Noonan for Jeffco school board

There is no elected position that has more impact on the quality of the teaching and learning experience in Jeffco Public Schools than that of school board member.

JCEA's Small Donor Committee, a bi-partisan committee of teachers elected by their peers, has interviewed all candidates and makes the following recommendations: **Paula Noonan, Sue Marinelli, and Robin Johnson.**

Noonan, a long-time school/child advocate is seeking her first seat on the school board representing District # 5.

Marinelli, representing District #2, is the current school board president and is seeking re-election to her second term.

Johnson, who is also seeking her first seat on the board, is running unopposed from District #1.

School board candidates run from specific geographical districts but are elected at-large. **You may vote for all three recommended candidates.**

This is a mail ballot election. All ballots must be received by **November 3**. Please mail them early!



Paula Noonan



Sue Marinelli:



Robin Johnson

### **School board interests and priorities:**

- **Marinelli:** Reducing class size, meeting students' individual needs, technology, closing achievement gaps, preschool and full-day kindergarten, legislative relationships at the state and national level, public engagement.
- **Noonan:** Reducing the dropout rate and, at the same time, reducing the academic gap between minority groups and other students; introducing an environment of positive and creative problem solving; increasing opportunities for professional development for teachers; enhancing district-community relations to build a positive environment for future revenue sources.
- **Johnson:** I am very interested in Special Education and what programs we have to offer; also the current budget issues.

### **What are your thoughts on collaborative decision making [including parents and community members] at the building level and throughout the district?**

- **Marinelli:** Local decisions need to be done at the building level closest to the work. Some decisions that affect families and community need to be made systematically to communicate with the community. Having a menu of academic curricular choices gives choice while preserving academic excellence.
- **Noonan:** I support collaborative decision making to ensure that all people who want schools to succeed have a role in helping them succeed. At the school level, parents, teachers, administrators and staff, and interested community people should be included in helping schools make good decisions related to priorities, initiatives, and any money out there not already allocated.
- **Johnson:** I like the idea of collaborative decision making. I feel that principals and their teachers and staff have a good grasp on what is happening in their buildings.

## JCEA/JPS receive Rose Community Foundation Grant

The Jeffco strategic compensation steering committee has received a second Rose Community Foundation grant for \$102,500 which will enable the group to continue its work studying alternative compensation.

Since November 2007, JCEA has been working collaboratively with Jeffco administrators, school board members and community members to study and develop designs for alternative compensation.

The overarching goal of the group has been to envision ways JPS might utilize compensation strategies to improve teaching and learning and attract and retain quality educators.

To guide their work the study committee has three general goals:

- Focus resources on student learning,
- Create a plan that addresses compensation of teachers and administrators, and
- Fundamentally promote professional salaries for teachers through increased compensation.

In addition, the committee has also agreed to meet NEA General Policy Parameters for Pay for Performance.

A significant portion of the new grant will be used to hire a group facilitator from the Center for Teaching Quality. That person will also facilitate up to eight focus groups and four town hall forums.

Another major part of the Rose Community Foundation grant will go toward collecting feedback from Jeffco teachers. This data gathering will be provided by Harstad Strategic Research, Inc.

The steering committee has developed three specific design teams:

**Student Learning:** To delineate student learning and attitude components (i.e., how students feel about the rigor of their classes) for a strategic compensation system and define how they will be measured over what period of time, as well as how they will be connected to pay.

**Teacher Learning:** To identify valued skills for teacher learning, as well as how related development and coursework will be measured and compensated within a strategic compensation system.

**Teacher Leadership:** To define the changes that are necessary for schools to be structured for student success and develop models of shared leadership in which teachers have compensated opportunities to lead for a variety of audiences.



*JCEA President Kerrie Dallman and Secretary Scott Kieselbach worked for the Jeffco Action Center to distribute school supplies to families in need.*

### Jeffco teachers donate to charities that support students' success

JCEA members have always been active in their communities and with local charities. However, as a result of the deep recession and its impact on students and families, JCEA took on two new projects this year to support student success.

First, JCEA worked with the **Jeffco Action Center** to gather and distribute student school supplies critical to student learning.

Second, the Association worked with **Serving Kids from the Inside Out**, JPS's own employee charity, through the unique: "Show us your underwear!" campaign. This two-month long effort resulted in donations of well over a thousand undergarments that have been distributed to Jeffco students.

### JCEA welcomes new readers

JCEA is continually updating the mailing list for *Shaping Tomorrow Today*. If you are a new reader, welcome!

Obviously, this is a newsletter that reflects the thinking of the 5,000 teaching professionals in Jefferson County. We hope you find the information in this newsletter helpful and at times provocative. We want you to be able to trust the information you read in this newsletter and know that it reflects the integrity of our profession and JCEA.

# Strategic goals focus Association efforts to improve quality of education

Following a month long conversation with JCEA's 4,000 plus members, the 200 member JCEA Council adopted four strategic goals to set the Association's direction for the next three years.

The goals, based on extensive data collection, are geared toward helping JPS recruit, retain and motivate high quality teachers and making JPS more competitive. Why? Because research shows that the most important factor necessary to improve student learning is a high quality, motivated teacher in every classroom.

In order to recruit high quality teachers, JPS must provide competitive salaries and working conditions. And to retain and motivate those teachers, JPS must address workload issues and ensure that the professional voice of teachers is both valued and respected.

## JCEA's Strategic Goals

**Goal 1. By 2012 achieve a compacted salary schedule with a starting salary of \$45,000 and an ending salary of \$85,000.**

JPS salaries are losing their competitiveness, ranking 12 of 17 for beginning salaries in the Front Range districts; 10th for cumulative earnings; and 7th for lifetime earnings.

According to CDE data, the buying power of the average JPS teacher has actually *declined* 12.74% since 1995; statewide, the decline is only 5.9%.

These figures are not competitive today, and they

get worse with each passing year. Goal 1 is necessary for JPS to be competitive in the recruiting and retaining of high quality teachers.

**Goal 2. By 2012 ensure that all teachers can voice opinions and advocate for themselves and their students in safe environments, free of administrative threat and harassment.**

Research consistently stresses the relationship between school climate and student learning. It is essential that teachers work in safe environments where they are respected and treated professionally and which promote academic freedom.

This is not always the case in JPS as shown by recent grievance data and multiple JCEA's WorkLife surveys. Goal 2 is necessary to recruit, motivate and retain high quality teachers.

**Goal 3. By 2012 restructure the workday and work year to increase teacher-directed planning and instructional time.**

Because what students need to know and do is dramatically different today, what has worked for teachers' workloads, workdays and workweeks in the past has to change. While demands for testing, individualization and small group instruction have increased, planning time has not. JPS teachers are frustrated trying to meet 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching and learning expectations while still working with 20th century workloads, workdays and workweeks.

Goal 3 is necessary because job satisfaction is directly related to retaining and motivating teachers.

**Goal 4. Implement at every level a true collaborative decision making process that honors and respects the role of teachers as educational professionals.**

School/community-based decision making processes empower teachers, as well as the community, and increase accountability. While the CDM process has been in the JCEA/JPS contract for more than a decade, it is not being utilized with a growing number of building conflicts arising from how decisions are made.

Goal 4 is necessary because teachers have the necessary training, expertise and knowledge about their students and community to make informed instructional decisions and should be involved—along with community members—in collaborative decision making.



## Shaping Tomorrow Today

**Shaping Tomorrow Today** is the community newsletter of the Jefferson County Education Association (JCEA) and is published periodically throughout the year. Comments may be mailed to: JCEA, 1447 Nelson St., Lakewood, CO 80215. Our phone number is 303-232-6405; our FAX number is 303-238-2215. Visit our website: [jcea-cea.org](http://jcea-cea.org).

**President:** Kerrie Dallman

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## A personal message from JCEA President Kerrie Dallman



The TELL Colorado survey given in April provided the opportunity for educators in the state to TELL Colorado if they have positive teaching and learning conditions that research has shown to be important to student achievement and teacher retention.

The overall response rate for JPS reached 53% compared to 36% for the entire state. I believe these results are very gratifying for our first effort taking the TELL survey. JCEA worked very hard to get as many schools over the 50% participation rate as possible.



That's important because schools with 50% or more staff participation (and there were 102 in JPS) will be able to use this valuable data to work with the leadership and community to improve their schools.

Of importance to you is that statewide, district, and individual school results will be made public in early January. We invite you to take a look!

Finally, in this issue JCEA is sharing it's recommendations for school board. Many in our community rely on our recommendations, as they expect us to be well informed about this race. In fact we are! We have done

our homework and appreciate your consideration of our recommended candidates: **Robin Johnson, Sue Marinelli, and Paula Noonan.**



## Helping Kids Thrive holds 19th annual conference

The Jefferson Center for Mental Health (JCMH) is holding its 19th Annual Helping Kids Thrive conference on **Thursday, October 22 from 5:30 to 9 p.m. at Jefferson HS.** For more information visit: [jcmh.org](http://jcmh.org) or call 303-432-5144.

JCEA has been a proud underwriter of this conference since it's inception, and we thank JCMH for their continuing commitment to the mental health and wellbeing of Jeffco students.

Classes include: The Preschool Years: Creating a Blueprint for Success; The Elementary Years: Foundation for Healthy Growth; The Teen Years: Framing Boundaries and Expectations; Empowering Successful Kids: Raising Confident, Caring Young People; Stepping Back into the Parenting Role: Relatives Raising Children; Techno-savvy Parenting: Know the Lingo and Pitfalls of Kids Online; Take a Deep Breath: Taking Care of You and Your Family in Tough Times.

There is no charge with light refreshments and supervised children's activities on site (children must be potty-trained).

**Our Mission Statement:** *The Jefferson County Education Association exists to empower educators to advocate for professional rights, responsibilities and practices to achieve educational excellence within a changing society."*



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For school board, teachers recommend:



- Robin Johnson
- Sue Marinelli
- Paula Noonan