



# JEFFERSON COUNTY ASSOCIATION FOR GIFTED CHILDREN

November 10, 2009

(This letter is altered from JAGC's Nov 6<sup>th</sup> letter only to correct enrollment data for Westridge ES – see page 2)

TO: Jeffco's Facilities Usage Committee  
FROM: JAGC Board of Directors  
RE: JAGC Position on Proposed Relocation of GT Centers –  
Public Comment Process for Options 7B-2, 10A, 12, 15, and 16B,  
and various options shifting middle school populations (see detail at end)

The Jefferson County Association for Gifted Children (JAGC) is a local, non-profit advocacy group that for 20 years has served Jeffco as the voice of GT students. Hundreds of parents and educators in all corners of the district support JAGC's leadership efforts on behalf of these gifted and talented young people.

**The JAGC Board of Directors must strongly objects to all of the above options proposed for moving GT Center programs**, including those at Coronado, Westridge, Kyffin, and Devanny elementary schools as well as changes at Ken Caryl, West Jeff, and Evergreen middle schools. Such relocations would disrupt over half the students in GT Center programs across the district. General options to move middle school enrollments and/or move 6<sup>th</sup> graders into middle school pile on even more disruption.

## **JAGC OBJECTIONS**

The JAGC Board has 4 main objections to these relocation options:

- GT relocation does not resolve major capacity problems
- GT relocation offers little cost savings
- GT relocation damages school communities
- GT relocation puts the future of GT program success at risk

### 1) GT Relocation DOES NOT RESOLVE MAJOR CAPACITY PROBLEMS

Information taken from the Committee's statistics demonstrates that many schools without GT Center programs draw *far* more extra students but are not targeted for redistribution efforts. We respectfully recommend that the Committee rethink its approach regarding high capacity utilization as it relates to relocation of GT programs.

JAGC offers as Addendum #1 to this letter a summary list of the district's schools that are near full or overfull. The list starkly illustrates that the schools hosting GT Centers fall well below the rankings of numerous other schools that have much larger numbers of extra students. Many of the 36 schools with over 100% capacity utilization have options proposed for shrinking their excesses. However, 15 schools have NO OPTIONS proposing remedies (other than the blanket #26: eliminate ALL temps district-wide).

These 15 schools with over 100% capacity utilization and NO OPTIONS proposed are shown below in the descending order of number of extra students:

*Normandy ES	157 extra students	128% of capacity	12 temps
West Woods ES	154 extra students	131% of capacity	5 temps
*Lakewood HS	134 extra students	107% of capacity	0 temps
*Dennison ES	122 extra students	124% of capacity	7 temps
*D'Evelyn Jr/Sr HS	97 extra students	110% of capacity	0 temps
*McClain HS	95 extra students	118% of capacity	0 temps
Mitchell ES	92 extra students	119% of capacity	2 temps
*Red Rocks ES	74 extra students	131% of capacity	6 temps
*Ryan ES	65 extra students	113% of capacity	3 temps
Fletcher Miller Spec.	63 extra students	143% of capacity	4 temps
*South Lakewood ES	58 extra students	112% of capacity	1 temp
*Van Arsdale ES	31 extra students	106% of capacity	3 temps
*Campbell ES	25 extra students	112% of capacity	1 temp
*Jeffco Open PK-12	13 extra students	102% of capacity	6 temps (?)
Bergen Valley ES	10 extra students	103% of capacity	0 temps

(\* these schools also have Net Choice In %)

Additionally, 7 of the district's 13 charter schools are operating in excess of 100% capacity utilization, some with quite large numbers of extra students.

In contrast, all schools hosting GT Center Programs look like this:

*Westridge ES	78 extra students	116% of capacity	6 temps
Coronado ES	37 extra students	108% of capacity	4 temps
*Kyffin ES	34 extra students	106% of capacity	5 temps
*Devinny ES	32 extra students	106% of capacity	7 temps
*Hackberry Hill ES	room for 7 more	93% of capacity	0 temps
Parmalee ES	room for 16 more	99% of capacity	5 temps
Kendrick Lakes ES	room for 36 more	92% of capacity	4 temps
Evergreen MS	room for 35 more	95% of capacity	2 temps
Ken Caryl MS	room for 85 more	88% of capacity	5 temps
West Jefferson MS	room for 148 more	80% of capacity	2 temps
Wheat Ridge HS	room for 214 more	86% of capacity	2 temps
Creighton MS	room for 261 more	72% of capacity	0 temps
North Arvada MS	room for 382 more	55% of capacity	0 temps

(\* these schools also have Net Choice In %)

No other single district program is targeted in the same magnitude as GT Centers, yet relocating these does little to resolve major high capacity utilization problems.

## 2) GT Relocation OFFERS LITTLE COST SAVINGS

The indirect cost savings of moving GT Center programs seem to be derived from the removal of temps needed to accommodate the high capacity utilization demands of the school hosting the GT Center program. As shown in the previous section, not all the GT Center schools proposed for relocation have high capacity utilization. Others are only marginally high, in contrast with numerous other schools with no redistribution options proposed. There are no direct savings resulting from simply moving the programs. If a primary goal of the Committee is to find major cost savings in order to have money to retain district teachers, then relocating GT Center programs is a very poor solution.

### 3) GT Relocation DAMAGES SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

Having shown that relocation of GT Center programs has few benefits to capacity utilization or cost savings, the JAGC Board asks the Committee, staff, and School Board to please recognize that only damage results from such moves. Jeffco's GT Centers are not stand-alone entities, but function as integral, symbiotic parts of the 'school within a school' model. GT Center parents strongly support this model as a healthy balance, blending academic acceleration and peer grouping with solid social interactions among a variety of children.

This vibrant integration in school communities is the hard-won outcome of sustained and strenuous efforts by parents, students, teachers, and principals. GT Center families have made difficult decisions when faced with moving their students from neighborhood schools to address their special needs. Only with painful, negative impacts to both the social fabric of the host school and to GT children and their families can these programs be plucked to relocate to another building. This crucial point cannot be overstated.

### 4) GT Relocation PUTS THE FUTURE OF GT PROGRAM SUCCESS AT RISK

The GT Center programs are thriving in their present locations, operating efficiently and effectively to meet the special needs of this student population. Disruption negatively impacts the programs and the school communities they serve. Discussions with GT parents in schools slated for relocation reveal that a significant number will simply stay put rather than relocate. Thus GT Center relocation will not solve the high capacity utilization issues that the moves are intended to help alleviate. Historic data supports the fact that enrollment drops after a program is moved, that it takes years to rebuild and once again become stable situation. About 100 students were enrolled in Moore Middle School's GT Center before the program was moved to North Arvada Middle School. Now, four years later, enrollment at North Arvada Middle' GT Center has rebuilt to 65 students.

Additionally, JAGC fears that proposed moves may put the viability of the GT Center programs as a whole at risk. Reduced enrollment levels affect each site's ability to support teaching staff. Particularly at the middle school level, as the number in the team of teachers is threatened, the integrity of the program itself is threatened. The goals of interdisciplinary team teaching and knowledge of the individual students get lost as the attention of GT teachers is diverted away from GT. These centers also play a vital role in providing a continuum of services for all GT students. Relocating GT Center programs puts the future of GT program success at risk.

## **GT OPPORTUNITIES**

Right now, GT Centers are highly successful and share in that success with their host school communities. We believe that a successful school results from the vigilant efforts of excellent leadership and staff within a building. This success compounds itself, leading to near full or overfull situations by drawing in students from areas beyond the box on the map. Many of the tenets of great education for GT students work well for all students, including the flexibility to work at one's own pace and with one's own learning style in each subject area without regard to age or grade. Instead of damaging these successful school communities, the Committee, staff, and School Board need to ask how to replicate such successful leadership & programs.

Some changes will occur whether we like them or not. And honestly, some changes need to happen for the benefit of all students to soften the financial blows coming to classroom instruction. We believe there will be opportunities for GT during this time of change. Jeffco's small GT office packs a lot of punch on its limited budget supporting staff and students in every school building in the district.

If underutilized facilities can help address the needs of GT's under-served, high-risk, yet high-promise population, JAGC would gratefully support positive changes increasing geographic access to GT's continuum of services. The concept of a stand-alone, GT magnet school has merit, but not at the expense of losing any of the existing, successful 'school within a school' GT Center programs. If 6<sup>th</sup> graders are shifted into some middles schools, then GT Center programming at both the elementary and middle school levels need to be aligned with those changes.

Opening up new GT opportunities might well draw in students who have been lost to the district, bringing in tax dollars that have gone from Jeffco to highly gifted magnet schools in other counties or that have remained untapped due to unsatisfied highly gifted and twice-exceptional homeschoolers or disengaged dropouts.

### **JAGC POSITION SUMMARY**

GT Center programs will falter if relocated, particularly into schools where the school community is not welcoming and/or where school leadership is not knowledgeable about the specific issues related to supporting the academic, affective and social needs of the vulnerable GT population. Such moves have not been proposed for other diverse learners.

We must state again that the JAGC Board of Directors strongly objects to all of the above options for moving GT Center programs. Such relocations have little to offer as high-capacity or cost-saving solutions, but pose a considerable threat to the integrity of GT Centers which lie at the heart of Jeffco's GT community.

The assumption that gifted students will 'make it on their own' is false. Sadly, a lack of adequate support results not only in a loss for the students as individuals, as their abilities and passions are often ignored and extinguished, but also in a loss to society as a whole. JAGC implores the Committee, staff, and the School Board to support actions that strengthen programs for Jeffco's gifted and talented students.

**Respectfully,**

**Terri Taylor Straut, Vice President  
on behalf of the JAGC Board of Directors**

**14405 W. Colfax Avenue, #179  
Lakewood, CO 80401**

**Website: [www.jeffcogifted.org](http://www.jeffcogifted.org)  
Email: [info@jeffcogifted.org](mailto:info@jeffcogifted.org)**

**See below: Options Affecting GT Center Programs, detail**

**See attached: Addendum #1 – Jeffco Schools with High Capacity Utilization %**

**Facilities Usage Committee Options Affecting GT Center Programs:**

- 7B-2(portion): Move Coronado GT to an under-enrolled Columbine area ES.
- 10A: Move Westridge GT program to Mt. Carbon ES. Demolish temps.
- 12: Move Ken Caryl MS 7-8 and GT Program to Deer Creek MS. Close and sell Ken Caryl MS site.
- 15: Consider changing boundaries of Parmalee ES, Marshdale ES, West Jefferson ES and MS & Evergreen MS. Further analysis required to determine enrollment boundaries, savings, and implementation costs.
- 16B: Move GT program from Kyffin ES and Devanny ES to Pleasant View ES. Demolish temps.
- Various options shifting middle school populations

(taken from the list of 45 options submitted to the public for review and comment)

**JEFFCO SCHOOLS with HIGHEST CAPACITY UTILIZATION %**

including ranking of GT Center Program Host Schools

(please see 'Notes' at bottom of page 2)

See Option #	GT Center Host* Rank in Capacity Utilization %	School	Type	Articulation Area	Choice OUT %	Choice IN %	Net Choice Out (-In)	Design Capacity # (without temps)	'09-'10 Enrollment	Capacity Utilization %	Net Underenrlmt # (- Overenrlmt)	# of Temps
<b>Elementary Schools (ES)</b>												
7A,7B-4,7C, 7D,7E-1,7F	1	STONY CREEK ES	PK-6	CHATFIELD HS	27%	30%	-3%	489	640	130.9%	-151	14
none	2	RED ROCKS ES	K-6	BEAR CREEK HS	23%	58%	-35%	240	314	130.8%	-74	6
none	3	WEST WOODS ES	K-6	RALSTON VALLE	17%	13%	4%	504	658	130.6%	-154	5
19	4	SIERRA ES	K-6	RALSTON VALLE	34%	24%	10%	435	562	129.2%	-127	6
none	5	NORMANDY ES	K-6	COLUMBINE HS	20%	45%	-25%	556	713	128.2%	-157	12
5	6	VANDERHOOF ES	K-6	ARV-WEST HS	30%	18%	12%	441	547	124.0%	-106	3
1A	7	STEIN ES	K-6	ALAMEDA HS	25%	18%	7%	567	695	122.6%	-128	12
10B,11	8	POWDERHORN ES	K-6	DAKOTA RIDGE	28%	21%	7%	549	663	120.8%	-114	9
7B-1	9	SHAFFER ES	K-6	CHATFIELD HS	33%	5%	28%	540	646	119.6%	-106	6
none	10	MITCHELL ES	K-6	GOLDEN HS	25%	12%	13%	496	588	118.5%	-92	2
22A	11	MOLHOLM ES	PK-6	JEFFERSON HS	31%	25%	6%	460	541	117.6%	-81	10
21A,21B	12	PROSPECT VALLEY	K-6	WHEAT RIDGE F	34%	56%	-22%	426	498	116.9%	-72	1
9,10A,11	63	WESTRIDGE ES	PK-6	DAKOTA RIDGE	25%	42%	-17%	489	567	116.0%	-78	6
21B,25	14	STOBER ES	K-6	WHEAT RIDGE F	43%	54%	-11%	264	298	112.9%	-34	4
none	15	RYAN ES	K-6	STANDLEY LAKE	16%	30%	-14%	510	575	112.7%	-65	3
6,28	16	WESTGATE ES	K-6	BEAR CREEK HS	34%	26%	8%	540	608	112.6%	-68	8
none	17	SOUTH LAKEWOOD	K-6	LAKEWOOD HS	38%	41%	-3%	487	545	111.9%	-58	1
7A,7B-2,13	92	CORONADO ES	PK-6	CHATFIELD HS	40%	26%	14%	489	526	107.6%	-37	4
28	19	KENDALLVUE ES	PK-6	BEAR CREEK HS	25%	41%	-16%	489	525	107.4%	-36	6
none	20	CAMPBELL ES	K-6	ARV-WEST HS	51%	70%	-19%	360	385	106.9%	-25	1
24	21	MAPLE GROVE ES	K-6	WHEAT RIDGE F	20%	40%	-20%	384	410	106.8%	-26	0
16B	126	KYFFIN ES	K-6	GOLDEN HS	15%	30%	-15%	556	590	106.1%	-34	5
none	23	VAN ARSDALE ES	K-6	RALSTON VALLE	26%	47%	-21%	510	541	106.1%	-31	3
3B,3C,3D	24	FOSTER ES	K-6	ARVADA HS	32%	39%	-7%	432	458	106.0%	-26	6
16B,17A	83	DEVINNY ES	K-6	GREEN MOUNTA	29%	39%	-10%	582	614	105.5%	-32	7
6	26	GREEN GABLES ES	K-6	BEAR CREEK HS	36%	38%	-2%	318	334	105.0%	-16	2
23	27	EDGEWATER ES	PK-6	JEFFERSON HS	38%	24%	14%	416	433	104.1%	-17	9
none	**	BERGEN VALLEY ES	3-5	EVERGREEN HS	40%	27%	13%	318	328	103.1%	-10	0
3B	29	LAWRENCE ES	K-6	ARVADA HS	39%	37%	2%	405	410	101.2%	-5	2
18,27	30	PARR ES	PK-6	POMONA HS	55%	68%	-13%	318	319	100.3%	-1	11
2	31	SWANSON ES	K-6	ARVADA HS	42%	19%	23%	540	537	99.4%	3	3
14	32	GOVERNOR'S RANC	K-6	COLUMBINE HS	18%	36%	-18%	489	486	99.4%	3	4
21A,21B	33	PENNINGTON ES	PK-6	WHEAT RIDGE F	43%	49%	-6%	288	286	99.3%	2	3
none	140	HACKBERRY HILL ES	K-6	ARVADA HS	21%	38%	-17%	480	473	98.5%	7	0
1A	35	DEANE ES	K-6	ALAMEDA HS	40%	17%	23%	471	461	97.9%	10	4
27	36	LITTLE ES	K-6	POMONA HS	33%	20%	13%	395	383	97.0%	12	2
none	37	LUKAS ES	K-6	STANDLEY LAKE	32%	29%	3%	504	471	93.5%	33	0
15	58	PARMALEE ES	K-5	EVERGREEN HS	45%	22%	23%	237	221	93.2%	16	5
none	39	FREMONT ES	K-6	ARV-WEST HS	49%	37%	12%	395	365	92.4%	30	3
none	40	FAIRMOUNT ES	K-6	ARV-WEST HS	32%	7%	25%	648	598	92.3%	50	0
none	41	PEIFFER ES	K-6	BEAR CREEK HS	50%	19%	31%	448	412	92.0%	36	6
1A	62	KENDRICK LAKES ES	PK-6	ALAMEDA HS	49%	29%	20%	432	396	91.7%	36	4
<b>K-8 Schools</b>												
28	1	BEAR CREEK K-8	K-8	BEAR CREEK HS	27%	48%	-21%	1000	1143	114.3%	-143	0

**JEFFCO SCHOOLS with HIGHEST CAPACITY UTILIZATION %**

including ranking of GT Center Program Host Schools

(please see 'Notes' at bottom of this page)

see Option #	GT Center Host* Rank in Capacity Utilization %	School	Type	Articulation Area	Choice OUT %	Choice IN %	Net Choice Out (-In)	Design Capacity # (without temps)	'09-'10 Enrollment	Capacity Utilization %	Net Underenrlmt # (- Overenrlmt)	# of Temps
<b>Middle Schools (MS)</b>												
none	1	OBERON MS	7-8	A-WEST/RV HS	18%	31%	-13%	770	757	98.3%	13	5
7A,7B-2	2	FALCON BLUFFS MS	6-8	CHATFIELD HS	17%	21%	-4%	700	678	96.9%	22	0
15	83	3 EVERGREEN MS	6-8	EVERGREEN HS	16%	10%	6%	700	665	95.0%	35	2
7E-2	4	SUMMIT RIDGE MS	7-8	DAKOTA RIDGE	13%	27%	-14%	878	823	93.7%	55	0
none	5	DRAKE MS	7-8	A-WEST/RV HS	21%	15%	6%	753	674	89.5%	79	0
12	47	6 KEN CARYL MS	7-8	COLUMBINE HS	20%	10%	10%	679	594	87.5%	85	5
15	45	- WEST JEFFERSON M	6-8	CONIFER HS	16%	6%	10%	726	578	79.6%	148	2
17B	104	- CREIGHTON MS	7-8	LAKEWOOD HS	36%	32%	4%	927	666	71.8%	261	0
3A,3B,3C	65	- NORTH ARVADA MS	7-8	ARVADA HS	31%	18%	13%	845	463	54.8%	382	0
<b>High Schools (HS)</b>												
none	1	LAKWOOD HS	9-12	LAKWOOD HS	37%	32%	5%	1850	1984	107.2%	-134	0
none	2	CONIFER HS	9-12	CONIFER HS	14%	9%	5%	1026	1015	98.9%	11	9
none	3	RALSTON VALLEY H	9-12	RALSTON VALLE	13%	29%	-16%	1750	1680	96.0%	70	0
none	GT*	- WHEAT RIDGE HS	9-12	WHEAT RIDGE H	28%	49%	-21%	1500	1286	85.7%	214	2
<b>Option Schools (districtwide - not aligned with artic ares, but indicates location)</b>												
none	1	Fletcher MILLER Spe	PK-12	LAKWOOD HS	0%	100%	-100%	146	209	143.2%	-63	4
none	2	DENNISON ES	K-6	LAKWOOD HS	0%	100%	-100%	504	626	124.2%	-122	7
none	3	McCLAIN COMMUNIT	9-12	GOLDEN HS	0%	100%	-100%	537	632	117.7%	-95	0
none	4	D'EVELYN JR/SR HS	7-12	BEAR CREEK HS	0%	100%	-100%	939	1036	110.3%	-97	0
none	5	JEFFCO OPEN SCH	PK-12	LAKWOOD HS	0%	100%	-100%	559	572	102.3%	-13	6
<b>Charter Schools (not aligned with artic ares, but indicates location)</b>												
n/a	1	COMPASS MONTES	K-12	WHEAT RIDGE H	0%	100%	-100%	240	715	297.9%	-475	0
n/a	2	WOODROW WILSON	K-8	POMONA HS	0%	100%	-100%	208	544	261.5%	-336	0
n/a	3	ROCKY MOUNTAIN /	PK-8	EVERGREEN HS	0%	100%	-100%	192	386	201.0%	-194	0
n/a	4	MONTESORI PEAK	PK-8	DAKOTA RIDGE	0%	100%	-100%	351	442	125.9%	-91	0
n/a	5	FREE HORIZON MON	PK-6	GOLDEN HS	0%	100%	-100%	240	276	115.0%	-36	0
n/a	6	JEFFERSON ACADE	K-12	STANDLEY LAKE	0%	100%	-100%	742	837	112.8%	-95	0
n/a	7	EXCEL ACADEMY	K-8	RALSTON VALLE	0%	100%	-100%	440	454	103.2%	-14	0
n/a	8	COMPASS MONTES	K-12	ARV-WEST HS	0%	100%	-100%	340	331	97.4%	9	0

**Notes**

- 1 Data source: Jeffco Facilities Usage Committee records.
  - 2 Choice OUT/Choice IN data is included to indicate source of high enrollment numbers.
  - 3 Additionally, Options #26 & #30 (eliminating large numbers of temps) affect many schools.
  - 4 The district has minimal control of Charter Schools, but the info is included here to demonstrate their effect on enrollment.
  - 5 Disclaimer: Omissions and transcription errors are the responsibility of JAGC.
- \* GTCenter Host: shows # of students in GT program; HS program in 1st year or 9th grade only  
 \*\* Bergen Valley ES Choice data is for both Bergen Valley (3-5) & partner school, Bergen Meadows (PK-2)