

**Thomas Jefferson Charter School**

Proposed Transfer Year: 2019-20

Location:

1209 Adam Smith Ave., Caldwell, ID 83605  
Canyon County (Vallivue School District boundaries)

Jodi Endicott, Principal  
Thomas Jefferson Charter School  
1209 Adam Smith Ave. Caldwell, ID 83605  
[jendicott.tjcs@vallivue.org](mailto:jendicott.tjcs@vallivue.org)  
(208)871-5662  
Matt Dorsey, Board Chair  
21753 Hoskins Rd., Caldwell, ID 83607  
[mdorsey.tjcs@vallivue.org](mailto:mdorsey.tjcs@vallivue.org)  
(208)573-2045

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# Executive Summary

The mission of Thomas Jefferson Charter School is to develop virtuous citizen leaders. What distinguishes great leaders is their moral strength and intellectual qualities. Instilling and developing virtue is accomplished by examining the lives of noble and great people to ascertain the value of their virtues and then strive to emulate those virtues to serve the interests of family, community, professional vocation, and our nation.

Thomas Jefferson Charter School utilizes the Harbor Method to develop the intellectual capacity of our students by providing a solid foundation in reading, writing, and mathematical conceptual understanding. The philosophy of a Harbor School is grounded in the belief that when there is low threat and content is highly challenging, accelerated learning takes place. We believe that all children are capable of more than we imagine if we unlock their potential through high expectations, a rigorous, fast-paced curriculum, and dynamic character education. Children must attain not only the knowledge and skills necessary for the 21st century, but also the work habits, the communication and problem solving habits to lead meaningful lives and contribute to our democratic republic. A liberal arts approach increases student appreciation for the arts, foreign languages, and a deeper understanding and respect for our own culture and our place within a worldwide context.

We serve kindergarten through twelfth grade (one class per grade), with class sizes ranging from 26 to 33 students. Current enrollment is 372 students with 600 on the waiting list (2/5/19). Vallivue School District approved our charter school on October 17, 2003 and the Idaho State Department of Education approved Thomas Jefferson Charter School (TJCS) on November 2, 2003. The primary attendance area is the Vallivue School District and this is reflected in the TJCS student population; however, we also serve students from Caldwell, Marsing, Middleton, Nampa, and Homedale School Districts. Enrollment and the waiting list support the need to continue offering a Harbor education to our community.

The current demographic population is 81% Caucasian, 16.4% Hispanic, .3% African American, .7% Asian, .7% Pacific Islander, and 1% Native American. Further, .8% are ELL, 42.1% free or reduced lunch, 3.5% Special Education, and 4.6% receive accommodations via Section 504. Daily attendance is paramount to learning in a Harbor School and the goal is 96%. The daily average student attendance for K-12 was 97.1% for 2016-17 and held steady at 97% K-12 for 2017-18 and 2018-19.

Thomas Jefferson Charter School students consistently score above the State academic targets. Data from 2018 (State Target): 4 year graduation rate 90.0% (84.8%), ISAT ELA 80.3% (58.2), ISAT Math 67% (48.1), IRI Fall 83.3% (58.4), IRI Spring 91.7% (73.1%). It is notable that TJCS IRI K-3 2019 spring scores averaged 93.6%. The goal is to continue to improve across all academic measures.

Six members of the TJCS Board of Trustees provide oversight and exhibit a strong commitment to retain the unique and innovative qualities of TJCS. Presently, one of the original founders remains on the TJCS Board of Trustees.

# Educational Program

## Educational Philosophy

Thomas Jefferson Charter School is a Harbor School. The educational philosophy is clearly stated in *The Harbor Method Essentials for Educators*:

“The Harbor School Method is a way of teaching, a way of learning and a way of schooling. It is an integrated model designed to educate children to be capable graduates ready to contribute to society. Harbor Schools create a setting focused on the development of knowledge and skills as well as the development of attitudes and dispositions of children. It is grounded in core beliefs about children, how they learn and the responsibilities of the adults who shape their development. The instructional strategies are not necessarily unique and innovative. What is unique and innovative is the way in which these elements have been brought together to form a way of being as a school.”

The philosophy of a Harbor School is grounded in the belief that when there is low threat and content is highly challenging, accelerated learning takes place. We believe that all children are capable of more than we imagine if we but unlock their potential through high expectations, a rigorous, fast-paced curriculum, and dynamic character education. Children must learn not only the knowledge and skills necessary for the 21st century, but also the work habits, the communication and problem solving habits that contribute to a democratic republic. The Harbor School Method integrates elements in five key areas: student learning, Instructional Fidelity, School Culture, Parental Engagement, and School Leadership (Appendix A). Thomas Jefferson adheres to the Harbor School philosophy that daily attendance, consistently excellent instruction, a safe learning environment, and multiple opportunities to engage with concepts and skills will result in high achievement for all students.

## Student Academic Achievement Standards

TJCS consistently meets or exceeds the academic benchmarks on all mandated State of Idaho assessments.

## Description of Key Design Elements, Curricula, Tools, and Instructional Methods

The primary difference between K-8 and grades 9-12 is utilization of the strong skills-based foundation in K-8 to tackle relevant, personalized learning opportunities which encourage a learning to learn approach in grades 9-12. All grades include a discovery-based approach to learning; however, the K-8 ensures that students are proficient readers, writers, and have a firm number sense and grasp of basic math facts and skills. To this end, direct instruction is a critical component of instruction (Marzano, 2001; Jensen, 1998; Stahl and Fairbanks, 1986). The elementary and high school recognizes the importance of performance tasks, but also emphasizes the conceptual and skills-based framework that allows students to make real world application.

In addition to the 46 credits required by the State of Idaho, Thomas Jefferson High School students must successfully complete an additional 16 credits. The additional 16 credits and all high school academic content revolves around five basic pillars of learning: 1) Independent Study, 2) Team Discussion and Studies, 3) Industry Apprenticeship, 4) Community Service and Leadership, and 5) Family Unit Focus. Students are the “dynamic workers” within the classroom, who consistently are given the opportunity to excel at projects that most appropriately develop the breadth and depth of conceptual knowledge, refine skills and impart new ones (Graduation Progress Checklist, Appendix G)

Grades 9-12 provide opportunities for short and long-term study projects as well as team studies, hands-on industry internship, community service, leadership opportunities, and positive contribution to the family unit. Projects are inquiry based, require an essential question and guiding questions, and activities aligned to assist the student in answering the essential question (Wiggins, McTighe, 1998). Questioning sequences are key drivers in all disciplines and provide feedback to the teacher as to the depth of understanding for each student and serve to guide their thinking via a metacognitive approach. The modeling of thinking aloud about the thinking process allows students to understand there are various approaches to gain understanding or solve a problem, plus, provides a model for the self-questioning that must occur when the teacher or other teammates are not present to assist in learning (Fisher, Frey, Hattie, Thayre, 2016; Hattie, 2012; Good and Brophy, 2008).

For grades K-8, the skill and concept building methods (frequency, intensity, and interdisciplinary connections) are based on neuroscientific research (Arendal and Mann, 2000), memory research, specifically, explicit and implicit memory (Schacter, 1996), and utilization of high effect size instructional strategies (Marzano, Pickering, Pollock, 2001). The behavior model relies on pre-teaching school culture expectations through teacher-created stories (Elmore, 2004) and natural consequences (Jones, 2007) coupled with care and respect (Curwin, Mendler, 2018).

Care is taken to ensure vertical alignment between grades and the curriculum spirals so that students continually have opportunities to learn challenging concepts and are taught specific strategies to store conceptual and skills based knowledge into their long term memory (Jaeggi, Buschkuehl, Jonides, & Perrig, 2008).

From its inception to the present, TJCS meets and exceeds the averages on all State-mandated tests, IRI, ISAT, and SAT. Our goal is continued mastery for all students in every sub-group of 3% or more. To this end, teachers will study the results and determine instructional gaps and strategies to address weaknesses in the educational program. Since our overall mission is to develop virtuous citizen leaders, two of the five pillars specifically address community service and leadership and contributing positively to the family unit. These areas are assessed in terms of hours completed and the quality of short and long term projects, activities, and involvement.

The K-12 certified counselor, like the charter administrator, is visibly present throughout the school, and also teaches a required one credit course, College and Career Prep. All staff members encourage students to prepare for post-secondary education, whether college, professional technical, or job-related.

TJCS utilizes every space in the current facility. As funds are available, TJCS will build an additional facility on purchased ground across the street from the current building. At present, students have access to science, computer, and music labs, classrooms, gym, library, and the high school commons area.

Curricular materials are purchased as needed; however, the elementary curriculum is based on the Harbor School curricula (math concept boards, Shurley English, academic vocabulary) and teachers

develop curricula based on the State Standards. Consumable materials, technology, and textbooks are reviewed by the staff and administration, then approved by the Board prior to purchase. All instructional decisions are based on data and instructor expertise.

Given the increased use of technology and the short and long term consequences of individual technology footprints, TJCS will provide greater oversight as well as opportunities for discussion regarding ethical and safe use of technology, including cyberbullying and laws regarding the proper use of technology. Further, since many high school students transfer to TJCS after elementary and middle school, more attention will be given towards developing the safety, expectations, and responsibilities of participating in a Harbor School.

### **Strategies for Effectively Serving Special Populations**

Thomas Jefferson Charter School adheres to the tenet that multiple and differentiated opportunities to engage with new concepts and skills will result in all students learning and applying those new concepts and skills. Providing challenging curriculum addresses the needs of those who grasp the material more quickly, while those who are less quick or who are struggling know that they will see the material again and will be given additional learning strategies.

Parental involvement is crucial to student achievement. Parents are welcome to volunteer in classrooms, assist with school projects, programs, and committees; this involvement is recorded and available for review. In addition to Parent/Teacher conferences in the fall and spring, parents are asked to complete a yearly survey addressing the following issues: safety of students, classroom discipline, school-wide discipline, child's response to classroom atmosphere, and parents' perception of the learning environment and student achievement. A weekly newsletter is sent electronically and hard copy for those without access to technology. The charter administrator, counselor, and teachers contact parents to discuss concerns and to express appreciation for students for actions within and outside of the school.

In conjunction with Caldwell and Vallivue School Districts, TJCS advertises in the Idaho Press Tribune to address student identification programs (Child Find). TJCS follows a written Response to Intervention protocol.

TJCS employs two K-12 ELL Certified staff members. English Learning Plans (ELP) are developed by an ESL certificated teacher, the student and parent for qualifying students. Students are immersed in the general education program and are monitored for progress in achieving ELP goals. As with any student at TJCS, individualized help by a certificated and/or paraprofessional is provided as needed. Four staff members are fluent Spanish speakers and, at present, this satisfies translation needs.

TJCS employs a part-time Special Education Director, a full-time Special Education teacher, two part-time educational assistants, and contracts for Occupational Therapy services and Speech, Language Therapy services. There is a specified classroom for Special Education. TJCS develops Individualized Education Plans (IEP) or 504 Plans for qualifying students, with all stakeholders being represented throughout the process. Progress monitoring occurs regularly through various measures. All students are immersed in the general education program, but as with students on ELPs, students on IEPs or 504 Plans receive additional instruction and support as needed and as delineated by the individualized plan. TJCS is responsive to meeting student needs and will hire additional staff should progress monitoring indicate that additional time is necessary.

## Professional Development

At present, teachers seek professional development opportunities that occur outside of the school day. While each teacher creates an Individual Growth Plan, all certified staff will participate in after school, on-site professional development in the Essentials of the Harbor Method for elementary, middle, and high school levels. Classroom video and coursework artifacts describing the Harbor Essentials in action will serve as training tools for onboarding future Harbor teachers. In addition to the training materials, new teachers will be paired with an on-site and off-site mentor. Other possible course offerings include Developing a Growth Mindset (Dweck, 2016 and Boaler, 2016), Developing Inquiry Units with Essential and Guiding Questions, subject-specific instructional strategies (Wilhelm, Wilhelm, and Boas (2009); Markham, T., Larmer, J., and Ravitz, J. 2003); and Making Learning Visible (Hattie, 2012).

# Financial and Facilities Plan

## Fiscal Philosophy and Spending Priorities

The goal of TJCS's fiscal, management, policy is to focus on devoting financial resources primarily to fund the education program. The TJCS Board is fiscally conservative and attains this goal through efficient use of funds, while ensuring teachers have the tools necessary to provide an accelerated curriculum and a high quality learning experience for every student. The annual budget is evidence of the Board's commitment to the objectives of the instruction programs. Strict adherence to annually, approved, budgets is critical in managing and maintaining the financial position of the school. Board members recognize the importance of budget details and oversight as well as maintaining revenue and associated spending practices that ensure necessary cash reserves to cover salaries, operating expenses, facility and other unexpected expenses. The board does not spend money that the school does not have.

- In 2005 \$2,600,000.00 in Idaho Housing and Finance Association, Nonprofit Facilities Revenue Bonds were issued with U.S. Bank serving as Trustee. The amortization period for the loan was estimated at 20 years. Proceeds were used to build a 36,000 square foot permanent facility. This loan was paid in full in 2016, approximately 10 years prior to the estimated maturity date.
- The school has been debt free since 2016.
- As a result of retiring the building debt and conservative budgeting, TJCS approved a salary schedule increase for all staff members. The average salary increase for certified staff was 9% and the average increase for hourly, classified staff was as much as 34% depending on years of service.
- Additionally, in 2014, the school purchased an adjacent section of land for potential, future, growth. That purchase was a cash transaction. Beginning in fiscal year 2016-2017, annual Charter School Facilities funding [33-5208 (5), I.C.] is held in a construction fund for potential growth on that section of land. Administration is closely monitoring the intention of the ID State Legislature in regard to school funding. If an enrollment based funding model is adopted, TJCS may see a significant reduction in funding. Even so, financial standing is solid and the most likely result of less funding will mean postponing an additional structure to house increased science opportunities, an auditorium, and commons area for middle school students.

Gale Martini has been employed by TJCS since 2006. Gale serves as Business Manager, Clerk, and Board Treasurer. She holds a CPA license in the state of Montana and works remotely from Billings Montana. Gale has 12 years of experience with:

- budgeting and the SDE reporting process
- financial statement and audit cycle
- payroll and associated reporting
- Board meeting packet preparation including monthly financial statements with budget comparison and cash flow projections.

Administration has many years of experience with preparing budgets and the ever-changing funding formulas approved by the legislature. Budgets are prepared under the premise of under-stating income and overstating expenses, however, budgets lose credibility if actual numbers are not consistently close to budgeted numbers. An analysis of the budgets for the 8-year period beginning 2010-2011 and ending 2017-2018 show the following:

1. Revenue budgeting:
  - a. The average change from original revenue projections compared to amended budget revenue projections is an under-estimate of revenue of 2.95%.
  - b. The average change from amended, revenue, projections compared to actual revenue received is an under-estimate of revenue of 1.77%.
2. Expense budgeting:
  - a. The average change from original, budgeted, expense projections compared to amended budget expense projections is an over-estimate of expense of 1.15%.
  - b. The average change from amended, expense, projections compared to actual expenses is an under-estimate of .38%.
    - i. Under-estimating expenses for the period 2010-2011 through 2014-2015 can be attributed to the Board approving additional, principal pay-down on the facility loan at year-end.

Adequate cash reserves are maintained to cover reductions in revenue or unbudgeted expenses. Cash flow projections estimate the balance in the LGIP account, at the end of 2018-2019 will be approximately \$1,900,000.00. Approximately \$550,000.00 are special distribution funds held in the Occupied School Building Maintenance fund and the Construction fund. The remaining unappropriated funds would cover expenses and payroll for approximately four months assuming no income at all. Successful implementation of our educational program is dependent on teachers and support staff.

The legislature has not voted to approve the proposed enrollment based funding model, however, it seems likely a similar funding model will be approved in future years. Administration has reviewed the proposed funding model and has prepared a preliminary budget projection based on those numbers. If the legislature votes to revert to the previous funding model, budgets have been prepared using that model for several years. Thus, we are well acquainted with its provisions and parameters.

### **Transportation and Food Service**

Transportation is contracted through a local provider, currently, Brown Bus Company, and operates within the attendance boundaries of the Vallivue School District. Parents are allowed to transport students living outside of the district to the nearest bus location as space permits.

Food Service operates within the State guidelines and offers free and reduced lunch for qualifying students. We currently employ one full time employee and two part-time employees.



## Financial Management and Monitoring Plan

The Chairman of the Board is the general manager and chief executive officer of the Corporation and has, subject to the control of the Board, general supervision, direction and control of the business of the Corporation. The Board Chair has the general management powers and duties usually vested in the office of President and General Manager of a corporation as well as such other powers and duties as may be prescribed from time to time by the Board.

Once the annual budget has been adopted by the board, Administration and the Business Manager, who also serves as the Board Treasurer, are responsible for administering the budget.

Role or Position	Duties and Responsibilities
Board of Directors	Policy, oversight and approval
Administration	Expenditure approval, budget oversight
Business Manager	<p>Budget and amended budget preparation.</p> <p>All financial accounting cycle processes in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and Governmental Accounting Standards.</p> <p>Transfer of funds between the general fund checking account and the LGIP account.</p> <p>The school uses 2M Budget, Payroll, and ABRPT software for financial tracking and reporting.</p> <p>ISEE reporting and review of data submitted to ensure accuracy. PowerSchool and 2M Payroll software are used to generate ISEE reports.</p> <p>Monthly financial reporting to Administration and the Board of Directors including income and expense by fund, budget comparison and potential amended budget numbers, cash flow and cash disbursements.</p>

Budget Process		
Role	Timeline	Responsibility
Business Manager	April	Develops budget timeline calendar to comply with Idaho code requirements regarding adoption, reporting, posting, publication of 4 year summary, notification and SDE submission deadlines.
Business Manager	April & May	Develops budget for the next fiscal year.
Business Manager	April & May	Amends budget for the current fiscal year.
Business Manager	June	Presents amended budget and proposed budget to Administration and the Board of Directors at the June Board meeting and budget hearing.
Board of Directors and Administration	July	Adopts current year amended budget and subsequent year's proposed budget
Business Manager	July	Submits approved budgets to SDE, posts budgets to the website

## **Internal Controls**

### **Cash:**

- The school maintains three checking accounts; general fund, café account and a student fund fiduciary account.
- Bank statements are received by the business manager electronically.
- The Business Manager reconciles the bank statements and files a paper copy and an electronic copy of the bank statements and reconciliations.
- Quarterly, the board reviews all bank statements at board meetings and signs and dates the statements. Examples of transactions the board may review:
  - confirm cash disbursements tie to approved cash disbursements
  - verify banking transfers between accounts
  - review outstanding checks
  - compare banking activity to banking activity included in monthly board packets
  - compare a random sample of cleared check images, provided on the bank statement, to accounting software check register presented at each board meeting

### **Revenue:**

- State funding is directly deposited into the school's general fund checking account or the school's LGIP investment account.
- The Business Manager prepares and submits ISEE reports according to the ISEE timeline. Attendance counts are tracked by teachers in PowerSchool. Manual attendance is also taken by administration. The two counts are reconciled weekly and monthly. Staffing demographics are tracked in payroll software. 2M payroll and Powerschool software is used to compile reports for ISEE.
- Subsequent to each ISEE submission, the Business Manager reconciles reports generated from the SDE ISEE portal.
- All receipts received at the school are recorded into a ledger, i.e., excel spreadsheet.
- Card reader receipts are electronically deposited into applicable bank accounts.
- All cash and check receipts received at the school are deposited into the school's accounts at First Interstate Bank via courier. The total deposit is verified a second time by bank staff.
- Monthly, the receipt ledger received from the school is reconciled to bank statements by the Business Manager.
- Prepaid lunches balances are tracked online and in Nutri Kids software. Parents can make a deposit to student prepaid lunch accounts online or by cash/check/card in person at the school office. The majority of payments are made in person. Parents who use the online deposit system have access to the online accounts to see their child's balance.
- All cash payments must be paid at the front office and are receipted by administrative staff. No cash is accepted in the café.
- A list of cash payments received is forwarded to the café supervisor. Cash amounts received are recorded to students' accounts in Nutrikids software.
- Both the list of lunch receipts received from the front office and those receipts entered into Nutrikids software are reconciled monthly by the Business Manager. Deposits are also reconciled to the cafeteria bank statement.

### **Expenditures:**

- A purchase order (P.O.) is generated by the secretary and approved by the Administrator.
- The invoice and P.O. is sent to the Business Manager for payment after being approved by administration.

- Staff in the following designated positions is authorized to certify invoices: Custodial Director, Technology Directory and the Café Director. Final approval from Administration is required.
- Utility payments, i.e. gas, water, electricity and telephone, are paid electronically. Administrative approval is not required as these payments are contractually obligated. The payments are included in the monthly list of disbursements approved by the board.
- If an additional P.O. is required, the business manager generates the P.O. and obtains administrative approval.
- Confirmation that merchandise has been received or services rendered is obtained by email or initials on shipping documents.
- Cash disbursement lists are first emailed to administration for final approval. After final administrative approval the list is emailed to the entire board. At least two members must provide final approval before the checks can be mailed.
- Total monthly cash disbursements are reviewed and reconciled and receive a third approval at monthly board meetings.
- Monthly, department directors are given YTD expenses as compared to the budget for that department. Comparisons to that information for the previous year are also included.
- The administrator is authorized to sign on behalf of the board, contracts, leases, and/or contracts for goods and services for amounts under \$10,000.00 without prior approval of the Board

**Debt:**

- New debt must be approved by the Board.
- Debt payments go through the same procedure as other expenses.
- Additional debt principal pay down is also approved by the board.

**Payroll:**

- The Board Chair and Administrator are authorized to sign personnel contracts and agreements of employment.
- Hourly employees fill out time cards, which are checked and approved by the Administrator.
- Approved time cards are sent to the Business Manager who prepares payroll. Paychecks and benefit payments are directly deposited or electronically paid.

**Fixed Assets:**

- Fixed asset additions go through the same process as other expenditures.
- The Business Manager reviews the fixed asset schedule annually for additions and disposals.
- No restrictions on the disposal of assets.

<b>Fiscal Reports</b>		
<b>Report</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Description</b>
Income and Expense	Monthly	Data provided for comparison include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• approved budget amounts</li> <li>• potential amended budget amounts – particularly state funded revenue amounts as those numbers are finalized</li> <li>• month to date income and expense</li> <li>• year-to-date income and expense</li> <li>• monthly and yearly percentage comparisons</li> </ul>

Cafeteria Summary	Monthly	Café income and expense for each month to monitor the deficit to be covered by the general fund.
Bank Account Summary	Monthly	Summary of all bank account activity for the general fund account and the LGIP as well as cash flow projections.
Unappropriated Balance	Annually	Reconciles actual unappropriated general fund balance as per the audit to budgeted amounts.
Audit	Annually	Audit report presented by the auditing firm.

Board members are trained as they serve. The Board Chairman is a founder and has 16 years of experience with the budgeting process, fiscal oversight and vision. The Business Manager has 12 years of experience with these same processes and philosophies. The school uses multiple checks and balances to ensure proper fiscal oversight.

**Facilities Plan**

TJCS opened its doors in portable units in the fall of 2004. In the 2006-07 school year, TJCS moved into a newly constructed 36,000 foot building, designed to house K-12. The building debt was retired in the spring of 2016. The gym doubles as the all-school assembly area. There is a small commons area in the high school wing. Every room is utilized throughout the day.

TJCS acquired land with the intent to add a structure to house science labs, additional classrooms, an auditorium, and a common area for middle school students. As per §33-5208, subsection 5, TJCS receives approximately \$370 per students to set aside as building capitol. At 2018-2019 fiscal year end the school has an approximate balance of \$500,000.00 in the construction fund. These funds are comprised of three years of Charter School Facility Fund payments from the state. The timeline for this building project is dependent on the proposed funding model.

**Board Capacity and Governance Structure**

**Description of Governance Structure:**

The TJCS Charter allows for no less than five and no more than seven members. The Board follows open meeting laws, keeps accurate minutes, and makes the minutes available to the public. The initial formation of the Board consisted of founders; subsequent members are appointed by the current Board of Directors. The Board of Directors discuss potential candidates, develop a slate of possible candidates, and then contact candidates to assess interest. All board openings are posted on the school website and all interested candidates apply. The board interviews candidates out of the application pool and votes to confirm the selected candidate during a public Board meeting. The charter document and By-Laws delineate the role and responsibilities of the Board of Directors.

All six of the current TJCS Board of Directors have read and agreed to abide by the Board Code of Ethics document as well as the Board Protocol document. The current Board Chair is a TJCS founder and has served as Board Chair for 16 years. The previous charter administrator was also a founder and now serves as an adviser to the current charter administrator. A new board member was the first TJCS

administrator and oversaw the move from portable units to the current facility. TJCS Board of Directors contribute expertise from banking, hospital management, technology industry, agri-business, business ownership, and educational leadership. Five of the six Board of Directors have or had children attending TJCS. As members of the Idaho School Board Association, TJCS Board of Directors will receive Board Training, as well as assistance with reviewing and updating Board policies. <http://www.tjcs.org/board-of-directors>. [The board of directors is working with the Idaho School Board Association to provide training specific to policy adoption. TJCS will continue to be under Vallivue District's Policies until the transfer to PSCS is approved.](#)

The Board of Directors annually elects a Board Chair and Vice Chair. In addition to the Board of Directors, TJCS employs a Business Manager who also serves as the Board Treasurer. The Business Manager prepares and presents the monthly and yearly budget report and the Board of Directors and Charter Administrator provide budget oversight.

The TJCS Charter Administrator ensures adherence to the vision and mission of the school, state charter school requirements, recommendations to the Board regarding staffing, program and curriculum changes, as well as day-to-day operations ([Appendix D](#)).

## **Student Demand and Primary Attendance Area**

### **Summary Attendance Area**

Thomas Jefferson Charter School's target population is Kindergarten through Grade 12, primarily within the Vallivue School District, but is also open to students in surrounding school districts. TJCS provides a niche for students who thrive in a small school setting where excellence in academics and character are the primary focus. While all schools seek to provide a safe and orderly environment, a climate of high expectations, instructional leadership, clear and focused mission/vision, opportunity to learn and student time on task, frequent monitoring of student progress, and effective home-school relations, Lezotte (1999), these effective school correlates are more readily attained and maintained in a smaller sized school (Sadker and Zittleman. 2013). According to Sadker and Zittleman, smaller schools allow students to connect with each other and their teachers in ways that increase student achievement and the likelihood of attending college. TJCS achievement measures support the veracity of these claims, as do the student and parent survey results and the waiting list of 814 potential students.

TJCS has enjoyed a mutually beneficial and amicable relationship with the Vallivue School District (VSD) for 16 years. VSD has experienced significant growth resulting in new schools and added infrastructure demands. At the same time, the Idaho Charter School Commission (ICSC) has grown in their capacity to serve charter schools, thus, it is timely and prudent for TJCS to transfer to the ICSC. TJCS and VSD will continue to work together to serve the educational needs of our families.

## Student Demand

Unlike Liberty and Victory Harbor Schools, TJCS does not have a feeder school (Legacy), thus, the high school often has more openings than the elementary and middle grades. Even though most of the high school students were not prepared through the Harbor Method, achievement measures indicate growth and averages that meet or exceed State targets. In addition to TJCS-specific courses focusing on innovation and family involvement, TJCS offers Advanced Placement and Advanced Opportunity coursework. For all grades, regular attendance and active participation in learning are paramount. The mission of developing virtuous citizen leaders does not appeal to everyone, but the waiting list suggests that it continues to fulfill a need in the Treasure Valley. including students with special needs. Currently, we do not market TJCS; however, should numbers warrant it, TJCS will provide academic achievement data that demonstrates the ability of the school to meet the needs of all students.

## Student Population

The demographic information is as follows:

Total students=~~356~~ 369

Male=48%

Female=52%

White=~~80%~~ 72.9%

Black/African American=less than 1%

Asian=less than 1%

Native American=less than 1%

Hispanic/Latino=~~18%~~ 23.8%

Total Free and Reduced Lunch=38%

Students Special Ed/IEP=5.8%

## Enrollment Capacity

TJCS is committed to providing one class for each grade, K-12. Kindergarten is capped at 26, grades 1-3 are capped at 28, grades 4-6 are capped at 32, and grades 7-12 are capped at 33. We will employ one teacher per class, K-6, with additional staff for Music, PE, Science, Technology, and Spanish. The projected enrollment, both now and for the next five years, is 402 students. At present, we are at capacity.

## Community Partnership and Local Support

As part of the TJCS internship requirement, students are placed in local businesses, often within Sky ranch Business Park, but also outside of the United States. TJCS partners with Wahooz for Fit for Fun. Students are involved in home district athletics (IHSA), club sports, community musical/theater productions, perform at City of Caldwell functions, and participate in Mayor's Youth Advisory Council.

Students develop and implement charitable activities, providing coats, food, books, and money to meet local needs.

### **Enrolling Underserved Families**

Sixteen years ago, TJCS advertised both in print and audio throughout the Nampa/Caldwell area. Today, we advertise the lottery and Child Find information in the local newspaper, and post information on our website. Largely, our advertisement is word of mouth and referrals from school counselors. Families are welcome to tour the facility and classrooms the first Thursday of the month. Four staff members are fluent Spanish speakers; they assist with enrollment, Parent/Teacher conferences, parent meetings, and translating written documents.

# School Leadership and Management

## Leadership Team

TJCS employs forty-five part or full time employees. The TJCS Board of Directors provides oversight of the facilities, academic, financial, and social climate of the school in attaining the goal of developing virtuous citizen leaders. The Charter Administrator provides oversight of the day-to-day operations, meeting state and federal expectations/guidelines, and specific Harbor School expectations. Harbor School principals ensure that:

- interruptions to the instructional day are kept to a minimum
- teachers and students develop a productive work ethic
- parents have the opportunity to meet with teachers prior to the first day of school and set the tone for continued interaction
- communication with parents is clear regarding the essentials of a Harbor School, including attendance, academic achievement, and other information regarding student wellbeing and growth
- there is a continued focus on the mission/vision of developing virtuous citizen leaders

The principal is evaluated annually by the Board of Directors based on the [Idaho Principal Evaluation Framework](#), Harbor Essentials and Job Description established in 2004.

The Business Manager/Board Treasurer is charged with developing and presenting the annual and monthly budget and ensuring that the Board reviews and approves the projected and actual revenue and expenditures. The Board of Directors reviews and evaluated the Business Manager/Board Treasurer annually.