

**Moving  
Forward**

# Superintendent's Report

Donna M. Hargens, Ed.D.  
Superintendent  
Jefferson County Public Schools









# UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

The government of the United States is composed of three branches: the executive, the legislative, and the judicial. These branches are represented by the president, Congress, and the Supreme Court. For more than 200 years, they have worked together to serve the changing needs of the nation.

## Legislative

The Legislative Branch of the United States government consists of the Senate, the House of Representatives, and their administrative agencies. The Senate and the House of Representatives meet regularly in the Capitol in Washington, D.C., making, passing, and amending federal laws.

### The Senate

- Has 100 members.
- Has two senators from each state.
- Members are elected for six years.
- Vote on bills passed by the House.
- Approve or reject the appointments of the president.
- Impeach the president.
- Impeach federal judges.
- Impeach the Justices of the Supreme Court.

### The House of Representatives

- Has 435 members.
- The number of representatives for each state depends on population.
- Members are elected for two years.
- Vote on bills passed by the Senate.
- Vote to impeach federal officials.
- Elect the president.
- Elect the Speaker of the House.

## Executive

The United States Executive Branch consists of the President, Vice President, and the executive departments (the president's Cabinet) and independent agencies. The Executive Branch directs federal law, controls the administration of the national government, and regulates government agencies.

### The President

**Chief of State**—represents the nation in a ceremonial role.

**Chief Executive**—decides how laws are enforced, chooses cabinet members and advisors to help run the government.

**Chief Diplomat**—decides foreign policy and negotiates treaties.

**Chief Legislator**—influences Congress in its lawmaking by signing or vetoing bills.

**Chief of Party**—helps campaign for members of his or her political party.

**Chief Guardian of the Economy**—helps America remain prosperous.

**Commander in Chief**—in charge of U.S. armed forces, Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines.

### The President's Cabinet

**Secretary of State**—handles foreign affairs.

**Secretary of Defense**—directs the operations of U.S. armed forces.

**Secretary of the Treasury**—manages the country's finances.

### Other Executive Branch Officials

- Attorney General**—heads the Department of Justice, advises the president.
- Secretary of Commerce**—responsible for business and trading activities.
- Secretary of Agriculture**—helps farmers, ranchers, and livestock.
- Secretary of the Interior**—manages federal lands, parks, and natural resources.
- Secretary of Housing and Urban Development**—helps cities plan new construction.
- Secretary of Transportation**—runs the Coast Guard, airports, and highways.
- Secretary of Labor**—promotes the welfare of workers and factories.
- Secretary of Health and Human Services**—administers medical and social programs.
- Secretary of Energy**—conserves and regulates energy sources.
- Secretary of Education**—administers programs to improve education.
- Secretary of Veterans Affairs**—administers benefits for military veterans and their families.

## Judicial

The United States Judicial Branch consists of the Supreme Court, the highest court in the land, and 94 federal district courts and 13 federal courts of appeals. Cases that involve the Constitution and federal laws are heard in federal courts.

### The Supreme Court

- Made up of nine judges who are appointed by the president and approved by the Senate.
- Decides if laws are constitutional.
- Settles arguments between states.
- Reviews the federal government's actions.
- Guardian of the rights of citizens.










