

	BFA Board Candidate	
	<i>Name:</i>	Matthew Olson
	<i>Students:</i>	Three: third grade, kindergarten and preschool.
	<i># of years at BFA:</i>	Five

Brief biography, including any charter school experience

Matthew Olson graduated with a B.S. in Business Management – Strategy Emphasis, *magna cum laude*, from Brigham Young University and a J.D., *with honors*, from The University of Chicago Law School. Mr. Olson has nearly ten years of experience as a corporate attorney representing a wide variety of companies and non-profit organizations in global and domestic transactions and corporate governance matters. Mr. Olson began his career as a corporate attorney at two global law firms, Latham & Watkins and Morrison & Foerster. Mr. Olson subsequently transitioned to be an in-house attorney at Rimini Street, a provider of enterprise software and support where he led a team of attorneys. Mr. Olson currently leads the legal team at ZOLL Data Systems, a technology company providing software solutions for healthcare providers. During his career, Mr. Olson has represented several non-profit organizations, including many organizations focused on educational pursuits such as a 501(c)(3) organization developing innovative educational and cultural programs in south side Chicago and a nonprofit organization dedicated to scientific, educational and charitable activities related to paleontology.

Number of BFA Board meetings and events have you attended this school year

Board meetings **1**; PTO meetings **0**; Committee meetings **0**; Community events **0**; Other **0**

Candidate Questions and Responses:

Describe the ideal relationship between the BFA Board and the BFA community.

I believe transparency and accountability between the Board and community are key to a successful relationship. The Board should be transparent to ensure that the community is aware of important decisions and is heard during the decision-making process, including decisions related to BFA's ongoing COVID-19 response, budget and curriculum. With increased transparency, the community can then ensure, through Board elections and otherwise, that the Board is accountable and appropriately representing the best interests of



the students. If elected to the Board, I would make sure that the Board obtains feedback from the community before making key decisions.

What are the current challenges facing charter school boards?

A constantly evolving dynamic among the goals set by state legislatures, local school districts and the charter school itself is a constant challenge faced by charter school boards. The current response to the COVID-19 pandemic from each of those groups is a perfect example of the tightrope that must be walked to ensure compliance with applicable law while still representing the interests of the students and parents within the BFA community. The solution is ensuring the Board and community are educated and transparent about these sometimes disparate interests. Awareness is key.

What motivated you to accept a nomination for a seat on the BFA Board?

A desire to give back to BFA and its community. Last month, my wife and I were reflecting on the challenges that so many have faced as a result of the pandemic. As we reflected, we realized how blessed we have been to have our children's wonderful education continue with relatively little disruption! So, I must first thank the BFA Board, teachers and other leaders at BFA who made that happen. But now, I recognize it's time for me to focus outward and ensure that I share my professional abilities with the school that has given my family so much.

Share any personal aspirations you would like to achieve by serving on the BFA Board, as well as aspirations for the BFA Board itself during your term

As a Board member, my primary goal would be increasing parent engagement during, and transparency regarding, Board meetings and in key decisions. While parent surveys can be helpful, in the Board meeting I attended, I noticed there was little to no community participation. I believe increasing that engagement is critical to a successful Board. As a long-term project, as an attorney, I want to ensure that BFA is able to successfully renew its charter, which would come due for renewal near the end of my term, if elected.

Describe a moment when you knew BFA was the right school for your family and what you love most about BFA.

My wife and I knew BFA was the right school for our four daughters nearly five years ago when we spoke with many of our friends about their experience at BFA. Each of them highlighted the academic rigor and personal engagement from teachers as key factors for their enjoyment of BFA. I love that the teachers know our younger daughters' names before they are even old enough to attend BFA!