

## **Mette Castor's Responses to the Candidate Questionnaire**

We have one child currently at BFA – Kyle-7th grade. Our two older sons Nick and Chris attended BFA from Kindergarten through 8th grade.

This year is our 13th year as a BFA family. Our son Nick was in Kindergarten the first year BFA opened.

I'm originally from Texas but went to school in Louisiana. I have a bachelor's in psychology with minors in biology and chemistry from Louisiana Tech University and an MBA from LSU. My husband Bill and I moved to Highlands Ranch from Kingwood, Texas in 2009 and in 2011 our oldest son Nick was in the very first class of Kindergarteners at BFA. He was part of the first 8th grade class to have spent all of their elementary and middle school years here at BFA. Over the last thirteen years I have volunteered in the classroom, library, outdoor education, field days, field trips, served for three years on the School Accountability Committee including as Vice-Chair during my last year, and I have served on the BFA Board of Directors for the past three years (this being my third year) as Board Secretary.

Professionally I spent six years in the pharmaceutical industry before stepping away to focus on being a full-time mom. After an eleven-year hiatus I returned to my career in 2018 and I am now in Global Commercial Services with American Express. In addition to volunteering at BFA, I was a member of MOPS for seven years including serving as the Chair of my MOPS group. I also served in leadership positions for six years with the Junior League of Denver, volunteer at the VA hospital, and as the Executive Director of the Miss Colorado Scholarship Organization.

This year I have attended seven board meetings, three committee meetings, and multiple (I haven't kept count) community and other events

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

The ideal relationship between the Board and the BFA Community is one of service and respect. It is incumbent upon the Board to be receptive to the opinions and suggestions of BFA parents and staff while balancing the relationship between the Board and Administration. It's important for the Board to act fairly and impartially while maintaining confidentiality and professionalism. Maintaining trust and transparency is vital and ultimately the Board is responsible for being good stewards of the reputation of BFA within the community and with DCSD. I also believe that continuing to maintain the robust financial stability and resources of BFA is a priority.

### **What are the current challenges facing charter school boards?**

The autonomy to govern our school with more independence than neighborhood schools can sometimes be what presents our greatest challenges. Navigating conversations around policies and potential changes can lead to differing opinions. Proposed legislative changes aim to limit our autonomy, and the ongoing challenge of equitable funding for charter schools is an issue that

continues to require focus. Recruiting and retaining exceptional teachers and staff and ensuring school safety are challenges we must consistently focus on.

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

Over the last thirteen years BFA has expanded and grown into one of the most recognized and respected charters in DCSD. My motivation is the people who make that possible: our students, parents, teachers, and staff. Together we have celebrated successes and mourned losses with the people who walk into this school every day. The last three years have presented the board with some challenges, but also opportunities to work collectively as a board and community to address them. Serving on the board has given me a chance to serve in a meaningful way. I would like the opportunity to continue to help ensure that BFA never loses sight of what and who makes the BFA family extraordinary.

**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.**

I would like to draw from my experience as a parent, volunteer, and professional experience to continue to foster a sense of trust and maintain the level of integrity the BFA Board has established. The Board may not be able to make every parent or stakeholder happy all the time, but I think it is important that people know their concerns have been heard, valued, and considered.

BFA has historically been fiscally responsible, and continued fiscal oversight has allowed us to maintain that strong position. This has given us the ability to increase salaries and benefits for our teachers and staff and invest in programs for our students. School safety is also a priority, and I am proud of our recent safety enhancements (our full-time SRO and other improvements) and I am confident that will remain a focus.

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

You know how sometimes you just *know* something is right? That's exactly what happened for us. My husband Bill and I had been trying to decide whether we were going to send our oldest son to our neighborhood school or consider a private school. Literally that day I saw a sign for an information session about a proposed charter school – BFA. I went to the meeting a few days later and I just knew. There was no building, but there was an anticipated start date and a lot of enthusiasm. We went to the first BFA Bash that summer hoping there really would be a BFA that September. But I think all of us who were waiting for BFA to open just knew in our hearts it would. And it did. What I love most is that there has always been an open door here – whether it's with the teachers, support staff, administration...BFA has always felt like a special place where I know our kids are safe when they walk through the doors in the morning. That's what I love most.