



**GOVERNANCE BOARD
PARENT DIRECTOR CANDIDATES**

May 2024 Election
Two 3-year Parent Director Seats

Parent Director Candidates



Ian Bennett



Margaret Berg



Lumakar Challa



Danielle Fox



Lisa Griffin



Toral Joshi



Ian Bennett

**Please describe your background and relevant skills,
as well as a few statements regarding your interest in serving on the Board.**



I am a FCMO, who runs a marketing agency in Broomfield, with experience in strategic planning, branding, music, audio and film production, I believe these skills can be helpful to the school. Prior to this I worked 7 years as a college admissions representative. My interest in being a part of the board stems from a desire to help make the student experience at Stargate, one that they will look back on to realize that it was a launching pad to their legacy. I also believe it's a responsibility of a parent to help where they can. I hope that by stepping up, I will show my kids how to do more than just the minimum. I want the kids to capture the moment and realize how special this time is in their lives so that they can make the most of it and have no regrets. I also want to help them have a sense of leaving the school better than they experienced so that they know that they can make a difference early in their lives.

How long have you been a member of the Stargate community, and what has been your involvement with the school?

2 years. I volunteered with boys high school basketball program. I lead the strength and conditioning program. I have gone a few field trips as well.

What do you believe to be the biggest challenges facing the school, and how do you believe Stargate leadership should address them?

One area that I believe is lacking is school spirit. I do hear a lot of chatter about kids wanting to leave for various reasons. I do think that this can be a natural thing for a young mind but I also think that framing value is everything. If we can shine a light on the value of what Stargate currently provides as well as showcase and communicate the growth that is fueling the future, we can can instill a sense of pride in our students that not only inspires them to stay but to be an active agent now and in the future. I think the parents need this too. The more we see the experience at Stargate as in investment in our relationships, community as well as education- the greater the legacy mindset will take hold.

What strengths will you bring to this position, and how will you help support the mission and vision of the school?

My strength is in finding the solutions to communication problems. Most of the issue that we have are due to miscommunication which leads to misunderstandings and therefor block finding solutions to the problems. This is an area I have been gifted with. The ability to see the the root of a problem rather than only the symptom has been a blessing in finding the solutions that work for our clients. I believe this gift can be useful to help with challenges we face at the school.

**Please describe your background and relevant skills,
as well as a few statements regarding your interest in serving on the Board.**



Maggie Berg

I, Margaret Berg, earned my Doctorate in Curriculum and Teaching with a focus in Literacy and Applied Linguistics at the University of Kansas. I have taught at the secondary and tertiary levels in China, Russia, Ukraine, and in the inner-city and on the Mexican border of the United States. I have also taught general education classwork in a state-level, men's maximum security "correctional facility." I began teaching at 16 years of age--swimming lessons at a public pool. My area of research and expertise is educational linguistics. I entered a professorship at the University of Northern Colorado (UNC) in 2009. Currently, I head the Codification Committee at UNC that reviews all potential changes to the institute's Regulations and Board Policy. I am interested in serving Stargate community that has served my own child's education for the past three years.

How long have you been a member of the Stargate community, and what has been your involvement with the school?

I have been a part of the Stargate community for approximately 3 years. I am a parent of a secondary student and took part in the initial 8th grade overnight team-building in the mountains when my daughter entered the school following lottery acceptance.

What do you believe to be the biggest challenges facing the school, and how do you believe Stargate leadership should address them?

One challenge that the community faces is the loss of teachers. An area that Stargate should develop is increasing parental awareness of teacher expectations in relation to different discipline's professional standards and the standard requirements imposed by the State.

What strengths will you bring to this position, and how will you help support the mission and vision of the school?

I bring with me a nearly thirty years of experience in education in and beyond the United States. The mission and vision of the school is supported through alignment with it in word and action. Our students must be provided the "differentiated program" as stated in the mission statement that also promotes the general well-being of the entire ecosystem--students, parents, faculty, staff, and physical campus itself.



Lumakar Challa

Please describe your background and relevant skills, as well as a few statements regarding your interest in serving on the Board.

I've been an active member of the School Accountability Committee since September, diligently supporting the board and community through initiatives such as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), survey reports, and various other endeavors. Prior to my involvement with Stargate, I contributed to the education sector in roles including cybersecurity cohort with Denver Public School and mentoring College of Business graduates at CSU.

With dual Master's degrees—an MBA from CSU and a Master of Computer Applications (MCA)—I bring extensive experience in IT leadership. Currently, I serve as the IT Director for a leading food company, focusing on vendor management, managing high IT budgets, project management, global communication, and Email & Web Security and Compliance.

My passion for education has been lifelong, stemming from my high school years through engagements with colleges and schools in India until 2005. Education is more than just a profession; it's a deeply held passion. Serving on the Board allows me to leverage my skills and experience to contribute meaningfully to the advancement of Stargate.



How long have you been a member of the Stargate community, and what has been your involvement with the school?

Since 2020, I've been involved in the Stargate community where both my kids attend—one in middle school and the other in high school. Since last September, I've served on the School Accountability Committee (SAC) as Chair, assisting with KPIs and parent surveys, actively engaging with school communications, attending board meetings, and participating in various school events.

What do you believe to be the biggest challenges facing the school, and how do you believe Stargate leadership should address them?

The biggest challenges facing Stargate encompass staff retention, expanding extracurricular activities, enhancing social and emotional learning, optimizing technology use, school lunch, and accommodating diverse preferences regarding the school calendar. The imminent conclusion of board member terms and the need for swift acclimation of incoming members pose significant hurdles. Additionally, there is a critical need for additional volunteers across various departments to support the school's smooth functioning. To tackle these challenges, Stargate leadership should prioritize comprehensive onboarding processes for incoming board members and actively seek feedback from stakeholders to identify specific needs in the mentioned improvement areas. Fostering an environment of transparency, collaboration, and inclusivity will be crucial in effectively addressing these challenges. By engaging stakeholders, implementing targeted initiatives, and leveraging community support, Stargate leadership can work towards enhancing outcomes for the school and its community.

What strengths will you bring to this position, and how will you help support the mission and vision of the school?

I bring a wealth of skills to this position, drawing from my extensive experience in education, business, and IT. My background includes immersing myself in education modules from the Colorado Department of Education and over two decades of experience in teaching and mentoring. Additionally, I possess strengths in strategic vendor management, budget planning, project management, and IT application management.

I am dedicated to supporting the mission and vision of Stargate by ensuring alignment of decisions and actions with the Mission and Vision. This involves advocating for resources to support student needs, fostering a supportive community, and promoting an environment conducive to academic excellence and personal growth. Additionally, I ensure teachers and students have the necessary resources to focus on learning while maintaining a solid financial foundation and long-term planning for student success. Ultimately, the Board and its Committees work to uphold the Mission by creating opportunities for each student to thrive academically, emotionally, and socially.



Danielle Fox

**Please describe your background and relevant skills,
as well as a few statements regarding your interest in serving on the Board.**

In my three years of serving on the board, I've realized it requires a duty of care, loyalty and obedience. Care in maintaining the legal responsibility of participating in decision making on behalf of the school and to exercise best judgment in doing so; loyalty in ensuring that the interests of the school are put before any other interests and acting on behalf of the staff, students and community are taken into account with decision-making situation; and obedience in bearing the legal responsibility of ensuring that the school complies with applicable federal, state and local laws as well as adheres to its mission.

I realized serving is much more than showing up for meetings. It's ensuring that today, tomorrow and in the years to come, Stargate maintains the longevity of success.

Prior to joining the Board, I was an elementary and middle school teacher, as well as a Student Achievement Coach, where I worked with teachers through various aspects such as classroom management, Growth Mindset, and delivering content through the Backwards Design Model (UbD). Being involved in a school has always been a top passion and I am thankful for the teachers and staff who dedicate their lives to make a difference for our future.



How long have you been a member of the Stargate community, and what has been your involvement with the school?

I've been a member of Stargate for the last 4 years. Besides my work on the Board, I have volunteered in many capacities. From setting up the Art Show, chaperoning field trips, working Eddie's Nest, serving on the After Prom committee and helping in the lunchroom, I am at Stargate on a regular basis. Being on campus has become a second home and I'm incredibly grateful for the ability to be present in my children's education.

What do you believe to be the biggest challenges facing the school, and how do you believe Stargate leadership should address them?

Our school is a year into new leadership for both Executive Directors, our elementary principal and soon-to-be middle school principal and elementary assistant principal. There are many things that are still left to unfold as well as the items on our three-year and five-year Strategic Plan. The Reimagine recommendations are being implemented but foundational items need to be addressed before real groundwork can be established. We are making progress for only a year in but there is work to be done. Providing consistency and continuity within the Board will help the school and leadership to success.

What strengths will you bring to this position, and how will you help support the mission and vision of the school?

I have served as Secretary for the past two years, where I used my strengths in organization and attention to detail to ensure the Board maintained proper accuracy of all document retention. My commitment to the school in all areas - not just at the board level - brings a broad perspective that helps the board consider various factors when making decisions. I also believe that by building strong relationships increases trust, and transparency while promoting unity within the school and community. Providing consistency in a position will ensure we complete the ground work we started this year, while staying committed to higher standards of trust, communication, transparency, collaboration and unity.

Stargate's Mission and Vision ensures that our gifted learners are met where they are with the appropriate grit needed to grow and succeed in and outside the classroom. We are responsible for ensuring that we have a dedicated and qualified staff that is focused on educating and inspiring students. The work that's been done this year with specific attention to building our community-wide culture will ensure we maintain teacher retention, as our incredible teachers and staff are the blood line to maintaining our excellent school.



Lisa Griffin

Please describe your background and relevant skills, as well as a few statements regarding your interest in serving on the Board.

I am running for the board because I believe in the mission of Stargate School and want to do everything I can to support our staff, students, and parents in continuing to build the best learning environment possible. I would like to contribute a voice to the Board that brings 12 years of Stargate community insights, as well as a business acumen that includes expertise guiding strategy, growth plans, budgets, communications, and performance reporting for organizations ranging from small non-profits to multi-billion-dollar corporations. I have led diverse teams of paid and volunteer staff, orchestrated global marketing initiatives, and managed high-profile media relations/crisis communications. I have served previously on the boards of three non-profit organizations and helped develop multiple, award-winning marketing, PR, and fundraising programs. My educational background includes a BA in journalism, an MA in international relations and an MBA with a marketing emphasis. I was a finalist this year for the Colorado League of Charter Schools' Most Valuable Charter Contributor award.



How long have you been a member of the Stargate community, and what has been your involvement with the school?

I attended my first CRC meeting in May 2012. Since then, I have averaged 250+ volunteer hours each year while also working full-time. I was recognized in 2023 as one of the school's two outstanding volunteer leaders. I have served on Board committees for 12 years, (Elections, Recruiting, Website), volunteered in classrooms and at school events, created showcase and end-of-year sites to celebrate students, developed online marketing strategies to drive enrollment, helped ensure compliance with state laws regarding financial transparency, attended countless hours of Governance Board meetings, worked to build an archive of publicly accessible school history, launched and managed four websites, supported 26 elections/appointments, successfully nominated teachers/staff for national and regional awards, and attended as many of our students' theatre, music, visual arts, academic, and athletic events as I could, earning the nickname "walking Stargate encyclopedia."

What do you believe to be the biggest challenges facing the school, and how do you believe Stargate leadership should address them?

Stargate has grown almost 145% since my family arrived. However, state and district enrollment is declining and competition for students and per-pupil funding is expected to intensify. Stargate needs to bolster its ability to attract, engage, and retain families, to boost its fundraising capacity, (to address shortfalls that could arise) and to ensure finances remain a source of strength as we continue to build a place where gifted learners can thrive. On its current trajectory, community engagement is insufficient to sustain a charter school our size. The climate and culture study last year identified gaps in trust, transparency, collaboration, shared power, and fulfillment of the school mission. As a strategic body, the Boards needs to prioritize mechanisms for collective action to address these gaps, as well as sustainable structures to foster 2-way communications, build our bench of volunteer leaders, optimize resources, and better funnel community time and talent into work that needs doing to support staff and students. In setting priorities, the Board must keep students front and center while also doing more to differentiate our school, better appreciate volunteers, and nurture a sense of community.

What strengths will you bring to this position, and how will you help support the mission and vision of the school?

I bring a deep appreciation of the people – parents, staff, and students – in this community and of what is possible when they align around goals. I also bring a deep understanding of the school's bylaws and the work the Stargate Board does, combined with an understanding of how other organizations engage community members, protect financial positions, apply data-driven metrics, prioritize goals, and deliver results. Since 2012, I have worked with more than 24 Stargate Board members as well as staff leaders and committee chairs. I have trained volunteers, helped shape committee charters, recommended school policies, and helped create the school's Charter 101 overview. I believe strongly in transparency, soliciting input from diverse voices, listening to understand (vs persuade), and respectfully and productively debating issues. The school's mission is personal for me, driven, in part, by my own less-than-ideal educational experiences. As a Board member, I would continue to support the mission by ensuring alignment around strategies, policies, and programs to protect the long-term capacity of the school (financial, organizational, reputational) to deliver the academic and social emotional programs our gifted learners deserve.



Toral Joshi

Please describe your background and relevant skills, as well as a few statements regarding your interest in serving on the Board.

I am a parent of a 4th grader at Stargate. Coming from an IT multicultural background, I would feel appreciated to help the school and community with new ideas.



How long have you been a member of the Stargate community, and what has been your involvement with the school?

I am a parent to a 4th grader who has been with Stargate since KG.

What do you believe to be the biggest challenges facing the school, and how do you believe Stargate leadership should address them?

Some of the biggest challenges that the school has:

STEM success

Traffic control

Diverse holistic development

There is no right and wrong answer to these question as with the large community the school is serving it gets trickier to implement changes. The discussion needs to be done as a team and I believe together with other parents on board we can tackle such hardships.

What strengths will you bring to this position, and how will you help support the mission and vision of the school?

Coming from a diverse background I believe I can bring a fresh perspective to the school. Currently I work as a Business analyst for an IT saas company. With more than 10 years of experience in the field, I can help the school develop technological skills and leadership abilities. I have a solid educational foundation and a passion for student development. I am extremely enthusiastic and love to be around kids.

Skills and Areas of Expertise

Ian Bennett
 Maggie Berg
 Lumakar Challa
 Danielle Fox
 Lisa Griffin
 Toral Joshi



Academic/Education	X	X	X	X		X
Accounting			X			
Administration			X		X	X
Business Owner	X		X	X	X	
Charter School Law/Regulations				X		
Community Development				X	X	X
Corporate/Business			X		X	
Financial			X		X	
Fundraising				X	X	
Government				X		
Marketing	X			X	X	
Organization and Financial Management			X		X	X
Parent	X	X	X	X	X	X
Personnel			X		X	
Public Relations				X	X	X
Strategic or Long-range Planning	X		X	X	X	X
Surveys and Data Analysis			X		X	X