



March 29, 2025

Dear Colleagues:

This letter is written in full, unconditional, enthusiastic support of Elizabeth Barszcz's application to become the new Superintendent in Silverton.

I have known Elizabeth for close to ten years, dating to the occasion when she responded kindly and openly to my request to host a one-day visit of a cohort of our Teacher Education Department master's-level students. She has also been my open-minded and gracious contact when we—too rarely—ask you to host Practicum and/or Student Teaching candidates.

Over the course of this time, it has not simply been a welcome pleasure to continue returning to Silverton, it has been much like attending a master class in school innovation, curriculum, instruction, assessment, administration, and community outreach. This influential, awe-inspiring, deeply received and inspiringly realized “way” you have in Silverton has been deftly led by Elizabeth.

Elizabeth herself of course has been at the center of all your work over the past many years, balancing the overwhelming tasks of a teacher, maintaining all the brutally taxing practical/bureaucratic work of a school administrator, sustaining instruction and fostering new paradigms of student learning, reinventing notions of faculty development and support, collaborating with staff and the Silverton community in original, powerful program development, and, ultimately, cooperating in broad circles of influence to create something wholly new: a compassionate competency I have never seen anywhere else.

It may be difficult to fully see and understand from the inside the town, the caldera, of Silverton, but the model of teaching, learning and caring—not just of and for students, but for teachers, community members, visitors—is original and powerful; it is immediately inspiring and has influential for all those who learn of what you do and how you do it. It deserves regional commendation, national notice. Schools must, of course, all *comply* with so (too) much: regulations, budget stability, calls for accountability, proof of student achievement, evidence of flexibility, tolerance, solidarity, and openness. The tone of school life in your district, the intellectual, affective, and creative manner you, your teachers, and your students enjoy in Silverton, is “wholly other”. *No school or school system we work with has what Silverton has.* To use too academic a vocabulary: the epistemological, ontological, and emotional grain of what has been established there cannot be taken for granted; what is done in Silverton is one-of-a-kind, particular and intriguing in a way that other schools are not, cannot, be. The awe-inspiring, deeply received and inspiringly realized “way” that this is done there, is, in my mind, much Elizabeth's work.

Never anyone's personal, lonely, singular work, of course: Elizabeth does not work this way. But it is fair to say she works in the heart of your community. She is as *sui generis* an administrator as I have ever been privileged to work with. I have never known anyone so smart, so hard-working, so student-friendly, so accepting, and so adaptive as Elizabeth Barszcz. We hope to work with her, your teachers, and your students for a very long time to come.

Most Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W.A. Camp".

William A. Camp, M.A.  
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