

This Board of Education candidate hopes to be a voice for Democrats, moderates in Forsyth County

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Jessica Fleming, a Democrat, is running against Republican candidate Trisha Hoyes for the Forsyth County Board of Education District 2 seat in the November election. Photo courtesy of Jessica Fleming.

Political newcomer Jessica Fleming is looking to keep the school system strong and be a voice for moderates as she campaigns for the Forsyth County Board of Education District 2 seat.

The mother and award-winning writer is running as a Democrat against Republican candidate Trisha Hoyes, who won the May Republican Primary race against incumbent Lindsey Adams.

A Forsyth County resident of nearly 10 years, Fleming has been heavily involved in the local school system, serving on the local school council and as the secretary of the PTA at Daves Creek Elementary where all four of her boys will be attending school in August.

The quality school system played a major factor in why Fleming said she and her husband decided to move to Forsyth County in 2015.

“That’s [one] reason I wanted to run because the school system is so good, so I do get concerned when I hear people talking about making changes to the school system,” Fleming said.

Over the last few years, changes in schools have been discussed nationally as parents, community members and lawmakers debate hot-button issues such as book banning, social and emotional learning and more.

“The stakes are really high to keep our education system strong and to keep it one of the best in Georgia,” Fleming said. “I feel like the way to keep our education system strong is not to be engaging in culture war issues but to really be focusing on education and facts.”

This is Fleming’s first time running for office, and while she said it has been hard to put herself out there, she felt it was important to not only be a rare voice in the election for Democrats but to also be a voice for moderates in the community who, regardless of their party affiliation, want a representative who will take a less extreme approach to these issues.

Fleming said this felt especially important to her after the Republican Primary election when it was made clear that three of the Board’s current “moderate” representatives — Lindsey Adams, Tom Cleveland and Darla Light — will not be returning after their term is over at the end of the year.

“So I’m not really running just for Democrats now, but for all moderates who want to keep extremists out of our school system and off the Board of Education,” Fleming said.

If elected, Fleming explained her top priorities will be to ensure all students feel safe and supported at school, ensure all teachers and school employees are respected and protected to help with declining morale, and keep the system fully funded without increasing the burden on taxpayers.

Fleming plans to also bring her experience teaching middle school students through AmeriCorps to the Board along with her knowledge and involvement in Daves Creek Elementary.

Outside of education, she is an award-winning writer and editor, and she has written for publications such as the Washington Post, the New York Times, Good Housekeeping and more. Currently, she works as a senior editor at Health, creating and editing content to help people lead healthier lives.

Going forward in her campaign, Fleming said she hopes to be a voice for families as she fights to keep the school system strong as it provides opportunities to students across Forsyth County.

“It’s kind of hard to put yourself out there, but I’m really just doing it for the good of the schools, the good of the kids and the teachers,” Fleming said.

Democratic District 5 County Commission candidate Cary Green. Photo courtesy of Cary Green.

Brian Estes (left) and Mendy Moore (right).