

Dear Members of Wayland's SEPAC,

Thank you for your questions regarding special education services in Wayland as it relates to my candidacy for School Committee. I am sorry that there have not been more opportunities to discuss special education services during this campaign season. Please know, however, that the lack of discussion about these issues is not indicative of the importance of special education services in our town. As an educator myself, I believe that all students' needs must be met by the district in a way that allows for inclusion, respect, trust, and empathy in the learning environment. Whether a student is on an IEP or a 504 Plan, all students bring a range of abilities, talent, and perspective, and it is this range that makes learning communities diverse and enriching for all.

During my 20 year career in education, working at three different schools, I have worked with learning specialists and school psychologists to understand students' learning profiles, neuropsychological evaluations, and classroom teacher reports in order to help my schools assess students' needs, abilities, and way of viewing and interacting with the world. I understand the importance of finding the right balance between both supporting a student's individual needs and adapting a learning environment to meet the student where she/he is at. To do this successfully there must be excellent communication and coordination between all involved- the school district and the family. It is also imperative that there is adequate training and professional development in place to continue with best practices. Most important, however, is meeting a student's needs in an inclusive, supportive, and caring way.

As we look ahead to the 2020-2021 school year, there are many potential changes in the day to day learning environment. The unpredictability of this is challenging for all students, but particularly for students who receive special education services as these services can be difficult to replicate in a remote learning environment. However, now is the time to be creative and reimagine how the district might use its financial resources, personnel, and buildings in new and different ways. We also need to be aware that the added stress, anxiety, and unpredictability of this challenging time require further commitment to supporting all of our students and ensuring their success. As a member of the School Committee I would work to ensure that the town's commitment to all of its students remains steadfast during this difficult time.

If you have further question, please feel free to contact me at amandadmiles@gmail.com.

Thank you for your support.
Amanda Miles