

2026 Polk County School Board Seat 7

Surveys were sent on June 13 and all candidate responses were received prior to June 30. This document was published July 4, 2026.

Lisa Miller is unopposed in this race but answered our questions for your information.

Prepared by Citizens Support Services Lake Wales.

1. What is your background? Why are you running for school board now, and what are your qualifications?

Lisa Miller



I am originally from Winter Haven and live in North Lakeland with my husband Bob and our two children. Evie is a creative writer at Harrison/Lakeland HS and Michael is at home volunteering in his community with his caregiver during the day. Michael has Cerebral Palsy and Autism. Michael is nonverbal and needs support for all daily living skills. Michael is who led me into education advocacy. I have a BA in Public Relations from USF and a master's degree in public administration from Barry University. I worked in advertising and as a real estate broker before running for office. When Michael started school, I took a job teaching 5th grade to better understand the needs of students and staff. I found quickly that there were barriers to educating our students with disabilities. I started working in disability advocacy and learning more about policy at the local and state level. I was elected without opposition for my third and final term on the school board. I am running to be the voice that has navigated the system as a parent, business partner, teacher and advocate. Having someone at the table that can speak for those that are often forgotten has been a highlight in my career. I have recently taken a position with Jr. Achievement Polk. We are building the Discovery Center to bring BizTown and Finance Park to all students in Polk County. We know that bringing financial literacy in a real-world connection will transform our communities.

2. What service organizations do you support with your time and money?

I am a Lakeland Kiwanis member where I volunteer with projects and support their initiatives. I am a Rotary member in Auburndale because that is part of my district and I want to make sure that I am supporting groups directly connected to our students. I am currently finishing Leadership Bartow and have graduated Leadership Polk and Leadership Florida. I still work with those leadership organizations to connect and network with people doing the work in education every day. I serve on the Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board with the county, on the Board of Directors of Polk Vision and the Lakeland Alliance on Accessibility.

3. What do you feel are the 2 most critical issues that need to be addressed as a board member? What do you believe are the most important (not necessarily urgent) challenges/priorities facing Polk County and the School Board?

Lisa Miller



I think two of the most critical needs are related: We must plan for growth and be able to recruit and retain staff to serve the growth in our county. We face many challenges in the 7th largest school district in the state. The size of this county creates unique challenges in meeting transportation needs and ensuring equitable access to programs and resources across our rural and more urban areas. I think a priority related to growth is creating school and district environments where employees feel supported, seen and heard. We are the largest employer in Polk, and I think it is important to build learning communities for students and staff.

4. How do you view Tallahassee’s involvement in our local community? “overreach” or “necessary support”? Why do you take this view?

I believe Tallahassee plays an important role in setting statewide standards, ensuring accountability, and protecting students’ rights. That level of oversight can provide necessary guardrails and consistency across districts. In a state this large, state level decisions can be overly prescriptive and fail to account for the unique needs of local communities. I think a balanced approach is best. We have to stay engaged and work with our delegation members to share our local needs. Local leaders understand the needs of our community.

5. What are your views on school choice? What are your views on the competing components of choosing a school? (public, charter, private, religious, etc.)

Lisa Miller



I think we must change the mindset of us vs. them. We have made real progress when looking at our community as one, valuing every child. It is important to value all students and seek accountability for tax dollars, no matter where they flow. There are more options in education than ever before and still people choose public schools at a much higher rate than other school settings. Choice is successful for some of our students. We need to focus on outcomes for all students. I work with families of children who have disabilities who have chosen to leave public schools only to return after their child's needs were not met. The money does not flow back to public schools. We take all children, any time during the year. I know choice is important for families who know their children would excel in a therapeutic environment or Montessori learning environment or in creating their own learning environments in home or micro schools. We all want the same thing, independent, gainfully employed adults who are good citizens, giving back to their community.

I think to be fiscally conservative any dollars flowing from the state or federal government should be tracked and accounted for.

6. What are your views on the school grading system?

I think accountability is important, but I do not think school grades tell the entire story of a school. I tell parents to visit a school and “feel” what it is like to attend. The grading system started over 25 yrs ago and yet many performance gaps remain. I can teach a child to make progress on a standardized test, but I do not believe that is the best measurement of what they will experience or what their final outcome will be. I can introduce you to students who can perform standards but do not test well. Parents can take them out of public school and create a non-test environment in a private or home school setting. Why do we think standardized testing is good for some but not for all settings? We need to focus on whether students are graduating prepared to become independent, productive citizens.

7. How will you address the different needs of all students?

Lisa Miller



We have to work to provide learning environments that support students from hospital homebound to international baccalaureate. We educate every student from the child with zero support in the juvenile justice system to the child who excels and shows they can make it an Ivy League school. This is one of our challenges across the spectrum. As funding lags, and we serve all students, we have to become more efficient in getting supports to the students in the classrooms. That is done by ensuring we are making budget decisions that are in best interest of the needs of students/staff. Ultimately, our responsibility is to ensure every student, regardless of where they start is given what they need to succeed.

8. What are your views on educator salaries and benefits?

I think one of our biggest recruitment tools is that we provide free health insurance. That is becoming more challenging every year. Our salaries are lagging districts around us and are challenged with recruiting and retaining highly qualified staff. Our funding model does not support a district that is land locked and the size of the state of Rhode Island. It is critical we work to be competitive with wages and benefits.

9. What are your budget priorities?

Lisa Miller



My budget priorities align with planning sustainability and meeting the needs of the most diverse learning population in the county. My priority is that we use our dollars to improve outcomes for all students. We must continue to become innovative with resources, community partners and strategic investments. We cannot continue doing more with less without reimagining systems. Creating pathways to gainful employment after graduation is my focus when discussing budget priorities.

10. Why should citizens vote for you specifically instead of your opponent(s)?

I am participating after winning this seat to connect with constituents. I beg you to get involved and volunteer in our schools. If you need ideas or support in volunteering or partnering with a school, please reach out.

11. Where can people get more information about you and/or your campaign?

You can call me at 863-698-6240 or go to www.Miller4Polk.com