



Parent Advocates for Tahoma's Highly-Capable (PATH) is a parent-founded, non-profit advocacy and support group that advocates for Tahoma School District (the "District") students deemed "Highly Capable". PATH's mission is to help these students excel socially, emotionally and academically.

The PATH Board invites you to answer questions related to the District's Highly Capable program. Your responses will be provided directly to PATH parents, unedited. Please either interlineate responses below or prepare your responses separately and attach them.

1. What is your name?

Pete Miller

2. Why are you running for office?

Thank you for the invitation to share my thoughts on this very important topic. I am an admirer of PATH's work and appreciate what you are doing in the district. I have been actively involved in attending school board meetings and am very appreciative of the proactive and collaborative efforts of PATH in working with the district to further this cause. As a board member I would desire to actively engage with you to be part of the change/growth you've discussed at previous school board meetings.

I am running for the Tahoma school board because of the students. I genuinely want to see each and every student succeed in their academic careers. I feel that I have the experience, leadership and drive to make a positive and meaningful contribution to the work of the district in helping each student gain future ready skills and prepare for life after Tahoma.

3. Describe your familiarity with Tahoma School District's Highly Capable program and how you believe it compares to other districts' Highly Capable programs.

As an onlooker I think the programming offered to Tahoma's Highly-Capable student body is impressive. The list of AP courses and manner in which high school students can gain college credit is extensive. The Discovery program is also reaching elementary school students in a meaningful way and helping them launch into their academic careers. Having said that, I am a big believer in continuous improvement and I think these programs can be enhanced.

In my career, one of my primary objectives is helping businesses understand and measure their financial performance. I am a believer that in order to achieve success we must first define what success will look like. The Tahoma Highly-Capable program discusses children meeting their full potential academically but doesn't emphasize how that will be measured. Is that measured in terms of reaching a pre-determined guidepost or is that measured by growing by a year or more over an academic cycle, whether Highly-Capable or not? I know that growth is a point of discussion within the district, but it seems that relative to other districts this piece could be further emphasized.

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4. What changes (if any) for Tahoma School District's Highly Capable program would you endorse?

The Tahoma School District seems to have a hole in their curriculum for Highly-Capable students in the middle school level, which I would work to change. Highly-Capable students will find fulfilling curriculum at the book ends of their academic career at Tahoma, with the Discovery program at the elementary level and then AP and running start programs, among others, at the high school level. In between, at the middle school level, the program loses momentum. Advanced math is offered at the middle school level but other subjects, like Science, English and Social Studies/History do not have Highly-Capable tracks. This creates a risk of regression in those subjects in these critical years. This is a gap that needs to be evaluated and corrected.

5. What do you want parents of Tahoma School District children deemed "Highly Capable" to know about you?

I define a successful student as one that has not only achieved academic success but emotional confidence as well. Growth of the whole person is important to me and I am committed to pushing for that approach as a member of the school board. Our family has firsthand experience with these concerns from our own children's developmental growth. It has been eye opening to see how important it is to understand the individual child, challenge them, but recognize that every student has unique cognitive, emotional and sensory needs. It is a day to day process in growth that must be met throughout their entire educational career. I would like the parents of Tahoma School District children deemed "Highly-Capable" to know that I relate to the needs of the student and the parent in this area and will advocate for those needs. I am passionate about providing a full and enriching academic experience for each student while at the same time providing emotional supports to create a safe and encouraging environment in which to learn.

Thank you for your consideration of my candidacy for Tahoma School District's board of directors. I am of course willing to answer any additional questions you might have and am also willing to listen to additional thoughts or concerns. I would like to continue to learn more about PATH and what you are working on. I would invite continued engagement and look forward to hearing from you on the most effective way to do that.

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