



For Immediate Release
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Lee Erica Palmer Announces Candidacy for School Committee from Ward 3

SOMERVILLE – Seeking to build on the tremendous strides made by the Somerville Public Schools in recent years, Lee Erica Palmer announced her candidacy for the Somerville School Committee’s Ward 3 seat. Palmer is an educator, union organizer, and civil rights attorney. Her son, Andrew, is in the SMILE pre-school program at Somerville’s Capuano School, where Palmer is a member of the Parent-Teacher Association.

In her role as an educator Palmer taught high school Spanish in the Boston Public Schools. More recently she served as Executive Director of Keshet, a Somerville-based after-school and pre-school program. Additionally, she has worked with the Somerville School Department and the Somerville Family Learning Collaborative as the coordinator for the Early Childhood Literacy Fair and the Summer Camp Fair.

Currently, Palmer consults with the City of Somerville on several projects that support the work of the Somerville Promise Alliance (SomerPromise). This citywide campaign ensures that every child living in Somerville achieves his or her greatest potential, graduates from high school, and is prepared for college or the workforce.

“While Somerville schools have many strong assets, as a parent and community activist, I also see many areas for growth and opportunity,” noted Palmer. “For example, I will focus on high quality, innovative, and affordable learning opportunities for our children during their out-of-school time, both afterschool and in the summer. Also, I would like to see an increased focus on nutrition, health, and wellness. Research shows that these factors affect *every* child’s ability to learn and to fully participate in school, home, and community activities.”

Palmer begins her campaign enjoying broad support among Ward 3 families and across Somerville. She has earned the endorsements of Somerville’s State Representatives, Denise Provost and Christine Barber, Somerville School Committee member Paul Bockelman, and Somerville Board of Aldermen members Matthew McLaughlin, Mark Niedergang, Rebekah Gewirtz, Katjana Ballantyne, Tony Lafuente, and Maryann Heuston. Further, Palmer has garnered the support of Ward 3 community leaders and activists including Dick and Roberta Bauer, Mike Grunko, Bill Shelton, Janine Fay, Michelle Kweder and Denise Gorayeb, Ellen Friedman and Chris Guerrero, Christopher Wand, and Alex Lessin.

“Lee’s work ethic, leadership, and drive would make her a formidable member of the Somerville School Committee,” said Representative Provost. “She embraces high standards, and I’m confident she’ll push to make our fine school system even better, for all our students.”

"As someone who represented Ward 3 on the School Committee for 10 years, I am thrilled that Lee is now a candidate for that position," said Roberta Bauer. "My husband and I have worked with Lee on a number of local issues. We know that she will put students and their families first while judiciously watching school department expenditures."

“Our son is starting in the Somerville Public Schools this fall," said Oxford Street residents Karen Gardner and César Urrunaga. "We support Lee for School Committee because we know she will work tirelessly to make Somerville's public schools the best both in terms of education and overall resources for all kids in the city's schools."

In addition to her career as an educator, Palmer’s legal background includes positions as a bilingual legal services attorney serving low-income immigrant families, and as a civil rights attorney/educator working in public school districts to train school administrators and teachers on Title IX. She also served as the Field Director to pass the Community Preservation Act in Somerville to increase funding for parks and recreation, affordable housing and historic preservation, and has worked as a union organizer with labor unions SEIU and UNITE.

Palmer graduated with a Bachelor of Arts (dual major in Political Science and Spanish Language) from the University of Michigan in 2001, earned her Master’s degree in Labor Studies from the University of Massachusetts in 2003, and received her Juris Doctor from the Northeastern University School of Law in 2011.

Somerville residents are encouraged to learn more about Lee Erica Palmer and keep up-to-date with news on the campaign via her School Committee campaign Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/LeeEricaPalmerWard3>. Her campaign kick-off event is scheduled for 4-6pm on Sunday, April 12, with additional details forthcoming.

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