



S.E.A.C.

Special Education Advisory Committee

September 24th, 2026
Cedar Island Elementary
6:30p.m. – 8:00p.m.



Agenda

- Pizza and Social Time
- Welcome and Purpose
- What's Happening Two Weeks In
- IEP/504
- Parent Participation and Communication
- Parent Needs and Resources
- Core Question



Welcome and Purpose

- **Welcome**

- S.E.A.C. – Special Education Advisory Council
- Sonni Buerskin- Director of Student Services
- Lauren Noack- Chair
 - Child Receiving Services
 - Education in Advocacy
 - Substitute in the District
 - Worked with Special Needs Kids Since 2008



Welcome and Purpose Cont'd

- **Purpose**

- **Provide** a Parent and Community Voice in Special Education
- **Advise** the School District on Special Education Programs, Services, Policies, and Procedures
- **Bring** Forward Parent Experiences, Concerns, Ideas, and Recommendations
- **Help** Identify System Wide Needs and Opportunities for Improvement
- **Create** Space for Parents and District Staff to Share Information and Perspectives
- **Support** Communication Between Families, Schools, and the District

Purpose/Big Picture

Individual
Concern

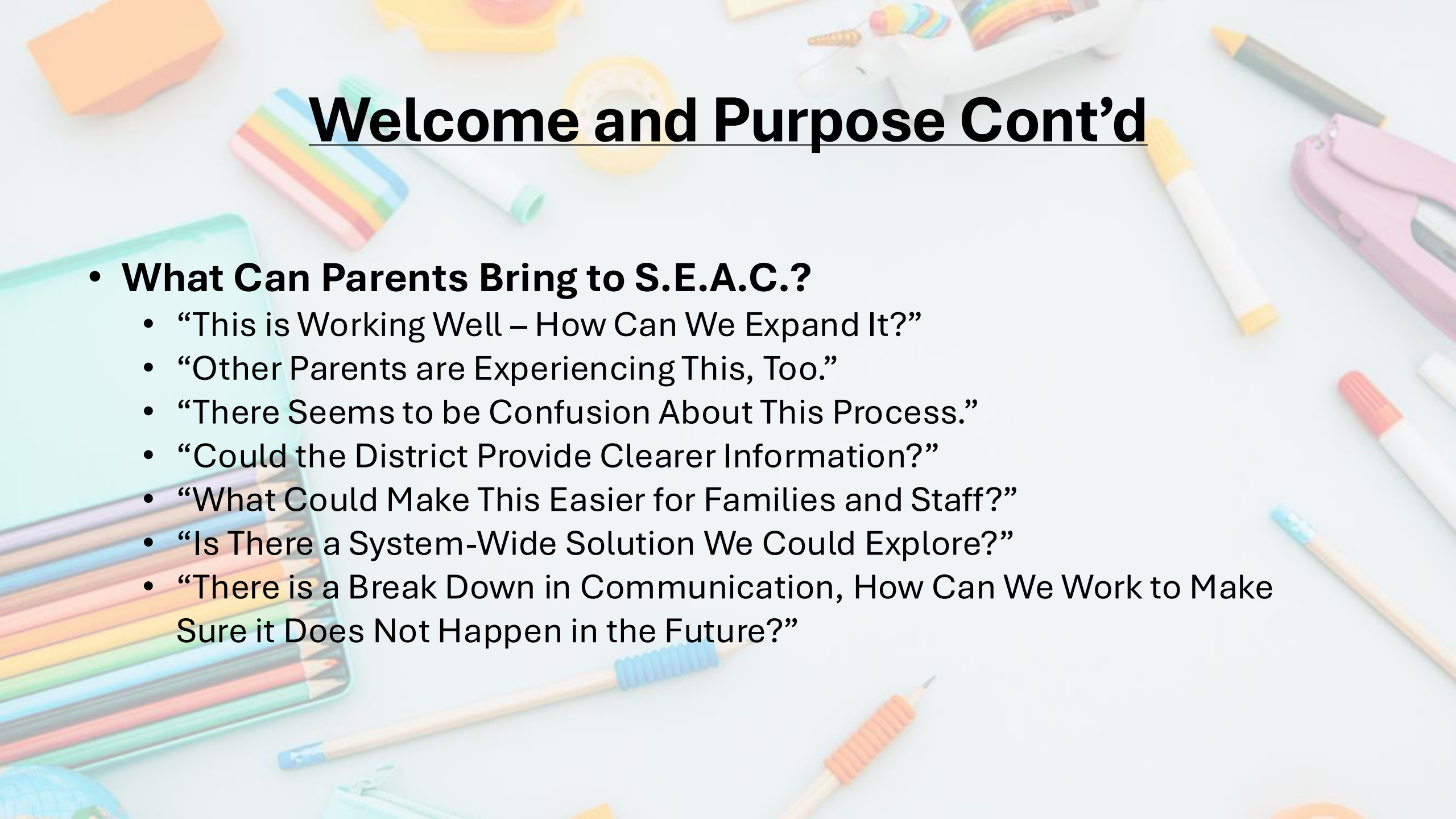
Identify
Patterns

Discuss
System-Wide
Issues

Develop
Recommendations

Improve
Practices

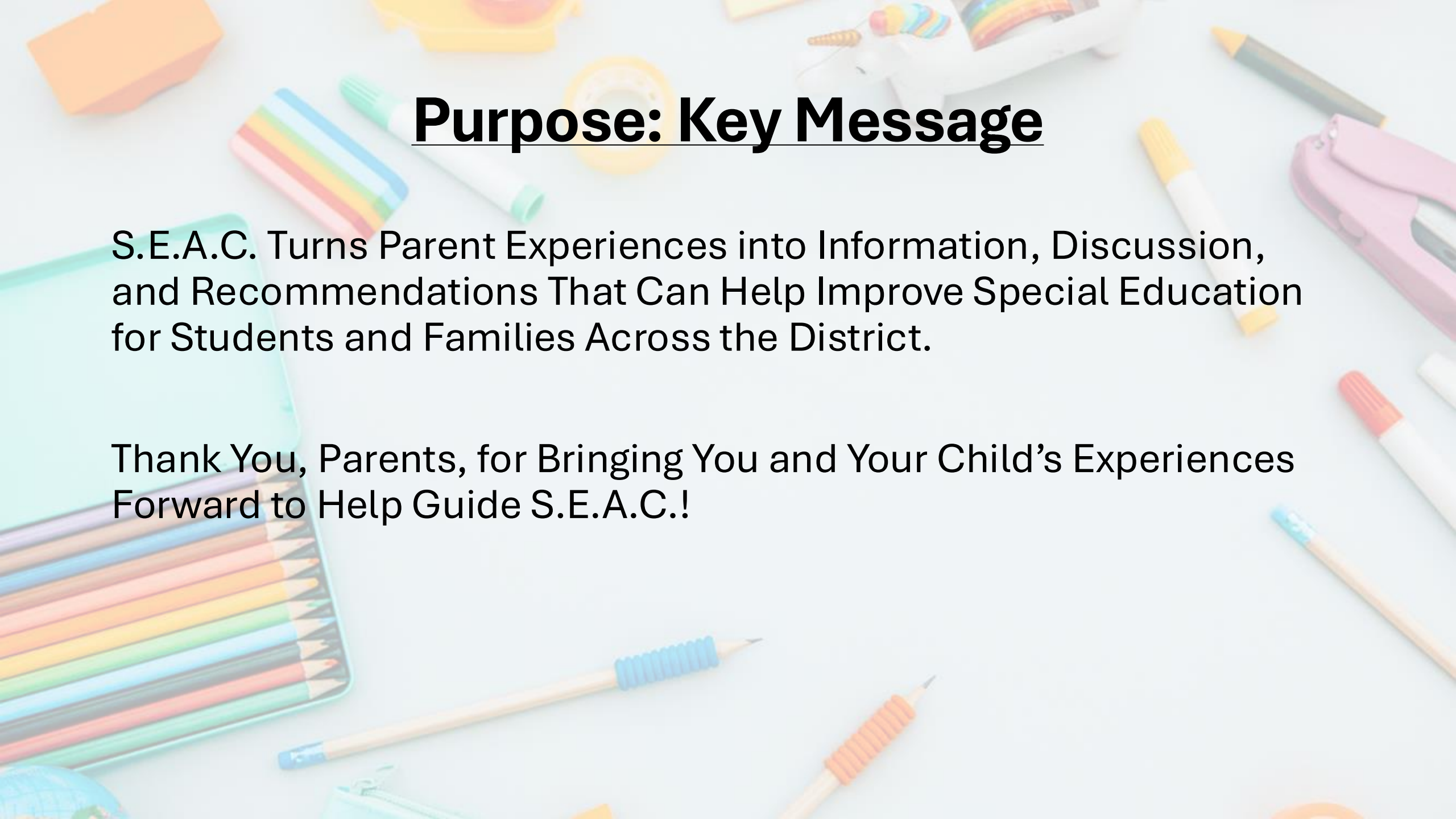
S.E.A.C. is not an IEP Team or an Individual Case-Resolution Process.
We Focus on Advising and Improving Special Education at the District Level.



Welcome and Purpose Cont'd

- **What Can Parents Bring to S.E.A.C.?**

- “This is Working Well – How Can We Expand It?”
- “Other Parents are Experiencing This, Too.”
- “There Seems to be Confusion About This Process.”
- “Could the District Provide Clearer Information?”
- “What Could Make This Easier for Families and Staff?”
- “Is There a System-Wide Solution We Could Explore?”
- “There is a Break Down in Communication, How Can We Work to Make Sure it Does Not Happen in the Future?”

The background of the slide is a light gray surface covered with various colorful school supplies. These include several markers in different colors (blue, green, yellow, orange, pink), a set of colored pencils in a metal tin, a pink stapler, a yellow pencil sharpener, a small white unicorn figurine with a rainbow mane, and several pencils with colorful erasers. The items are scattered across the frame, creating a playful and educational atmosphere.

Purpose: Key Message

S.E.A.C. Turns Parent Experiences into Information, Discussion, and Recommendations That Can Help Improve Special Education for Students and Families Across the District.

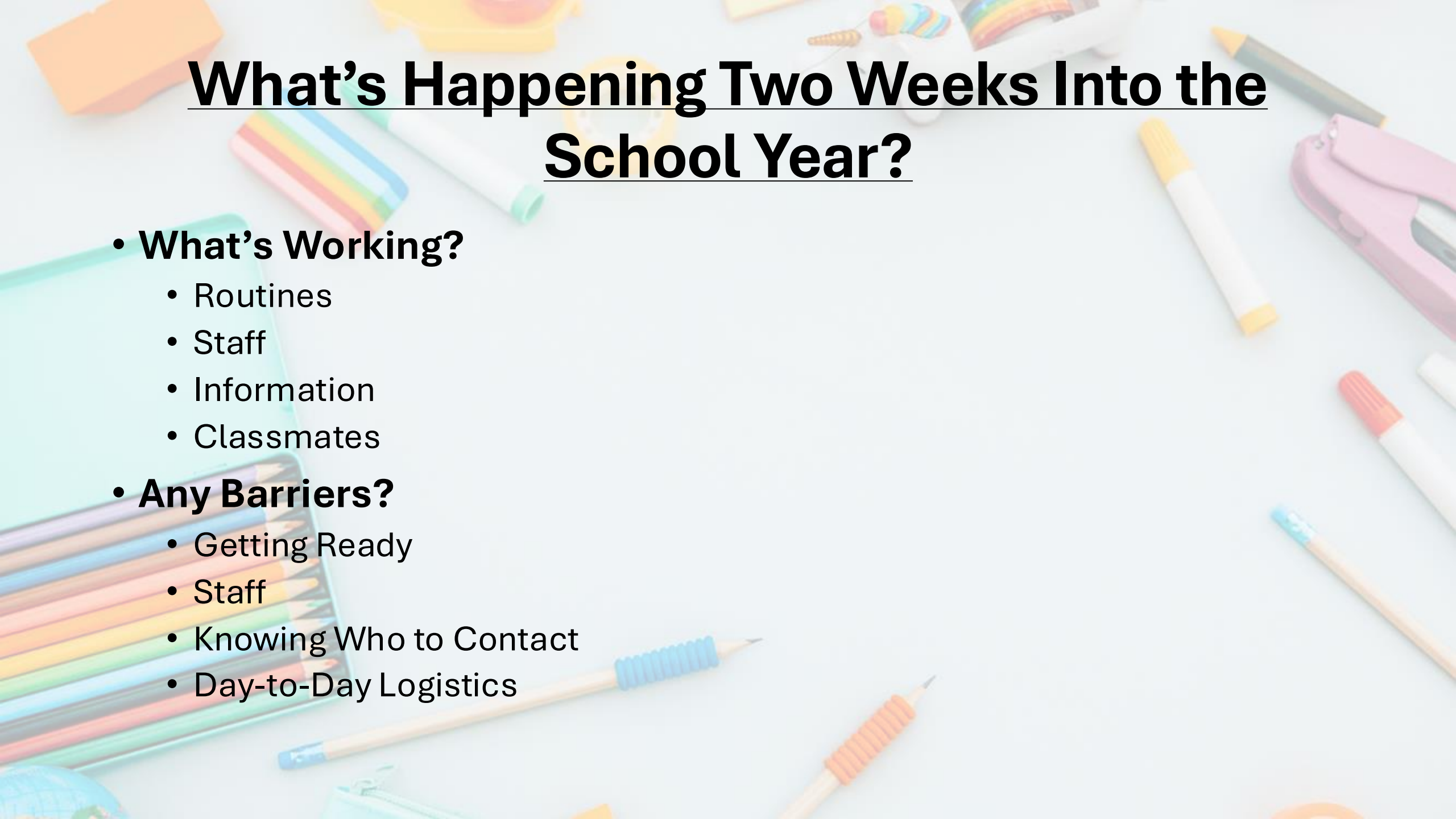
Thank You, Parents, for Bringing You and Your Child's Experiences Forward to Help Guide S.E.A.C.!

Purpose Example: Sensory Friendly Open House

- "My daughter was able to feel the same excitement and joy that every student deserves when meeting their new teacher for the first time. The thoughtful planning, supportive calm environment, and resources provided made our family feel seen, valued, and truly welcomed into the school community."
- "As the parent of a scholar in the center-based program, Open House night has always caused our family lots of anxiety. The Sensory-friendly Open House at Palmer Lake transformed that experience!"
- "This event made Open House accessible to our whole family. My two sons without disabilities have never been able to attend Open House because I couldn't bring their sister along. The busy environment does not work for her disability. Because of this event, not only could my daughter access Open House, but my sons could attend for the very first time."

- Over 100 students and their families attended
- We have already announced to principals that the event will be offered district wide next year





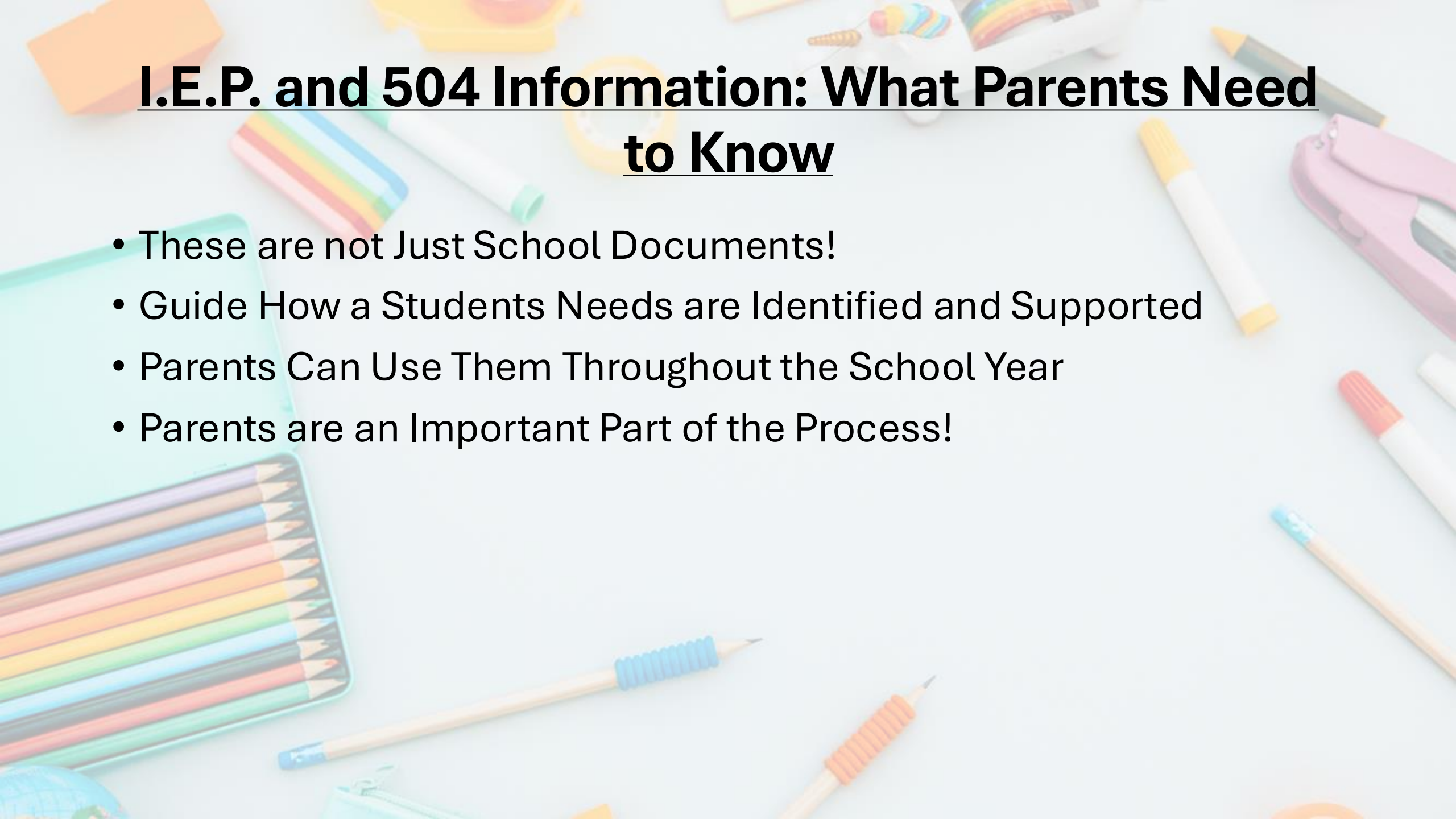
What's Happening Two Weeks Into the School Year?

- **What's Working?**

- Routines
- Staff
- Information
- Classmates

- **Any Barriers?**

- Getting Ready
- Staff
- Knowing Who to Contact
- Day-to-Day Logistics

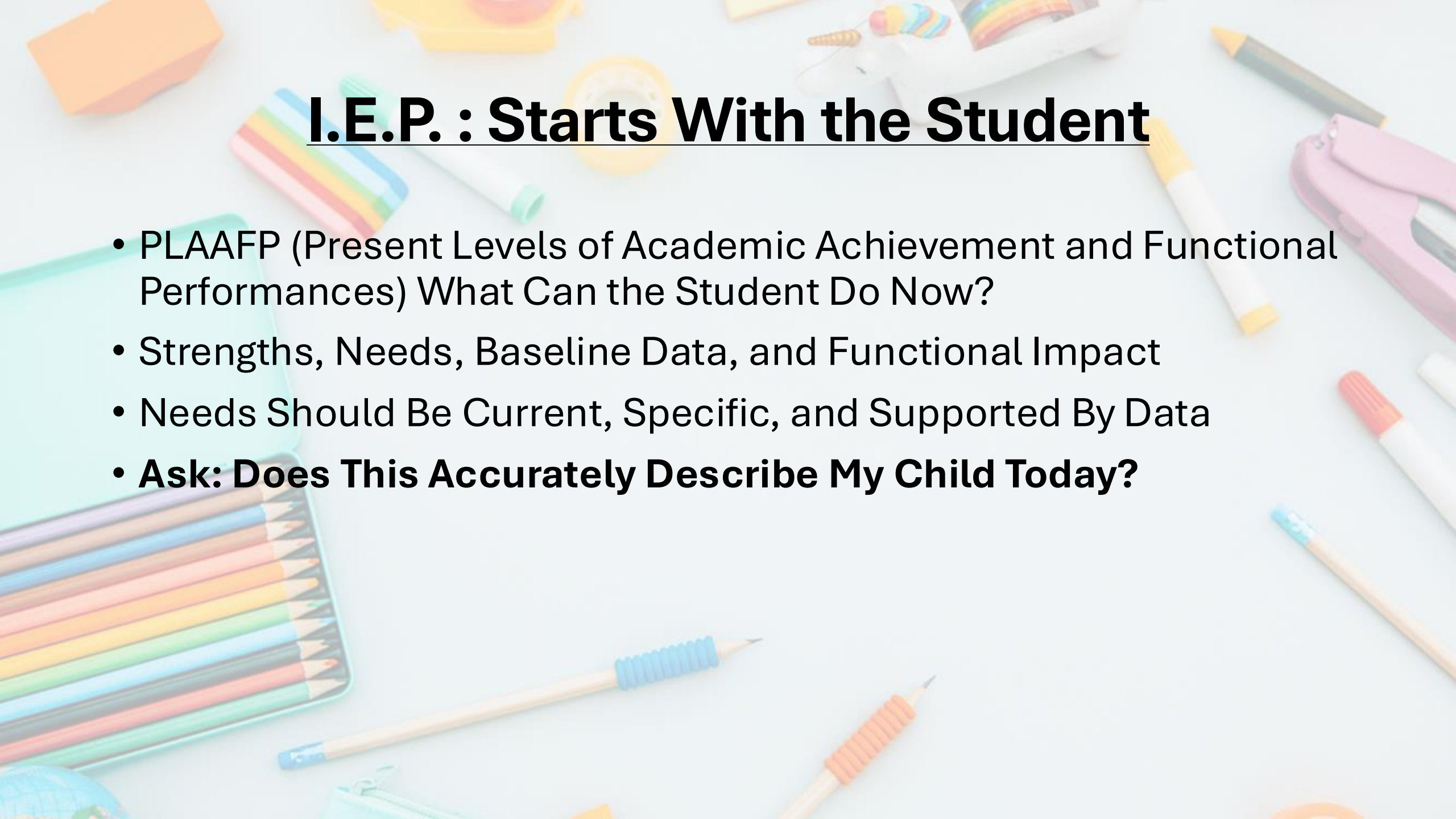


I.E.P. and 504 Information: What Parents Need to Know

- These are not Just School Documents!
- Guide How a Students Needs are Identified and Supported
- Parents Can Use Them Throughout the School Year
- Parents are an Important Part of the Process!

I.E.P. vs. Section 504

I.E.P.	Section 504
IDEA	Rehabilitation Act/ Section 504
Specially Designed Instruction	Equal/ Meaningful Access
Annual Goals	Goals Not Required in the Same Way
Specialized Instruction and Related Services	Accommodations/Aids/Services
Progress Tied to Measurable Goal	Monitor Whether Access and Needs are Being Addressed



I.E.P. : Starts With the Student

- PLAAFP (Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performances) What Can the Student Do Now?
- Strengths, Needs, Baseline Data, and Functional Impact
- Needs Should Be Current, Specific, and Supported By Data
- **Ask: Does This Accurately Describe My Child Today?**

I.E.P. Goals: Where Are We Going?

- Goals **Identify** What the Student is Expected to Accomplish
- Goals Should **Connect** to Identified Needs
- Progress Must be **Measurable**
- Parents Should Know:
 - What is the Baseline?
 - How Will Progress be Measured?
 - How Often Will Progress be Reported?



I.E.P. Services and Supports

- Specialized Instruction
- Related Services
- Accommodations
- Modifications
- Supplementary Aids and Services
- **Look for Clear:**
 - **What, When, Where, How Often, Who Provides It**



Least Restrictive Environment – L.R.E.

- How and Where the Student Participates with Nondisabled Peers
- Consider Participation In:
 - General Education
 - Specials
 - Recess
 - Activities
 - School Event
- **Ask: “What Prevents My Child From Participating?”**
- **Ask: “Could Additional Supports Allow Greater Participation?”**

Monitoring the I.E.P. During the Year

- Parent's Can Monitor:
 - Are **Services** Being Provided As Written?
 - Are **Accommodations** Actually Being Implemented?
 - Has My Child's **Functioning** Changed?
 - Does Progress Data Show Meaningful **Progress**?
 - Does Classroom **Performance** Match the I.E.P.?
 - Have New **Concerns** Emerged?

Key Point: Parents Don't Have to Wait For the Annual Meeting to Raise a Concern!

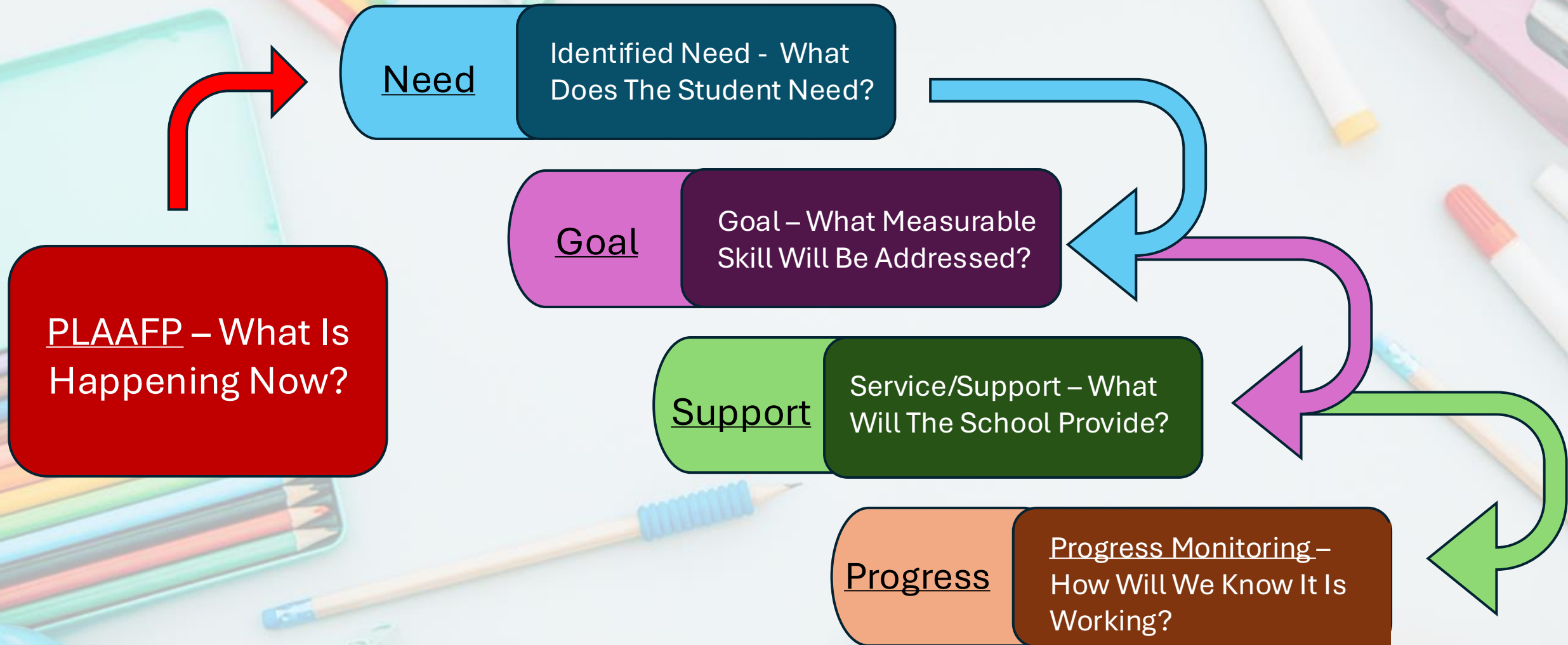
Key Points

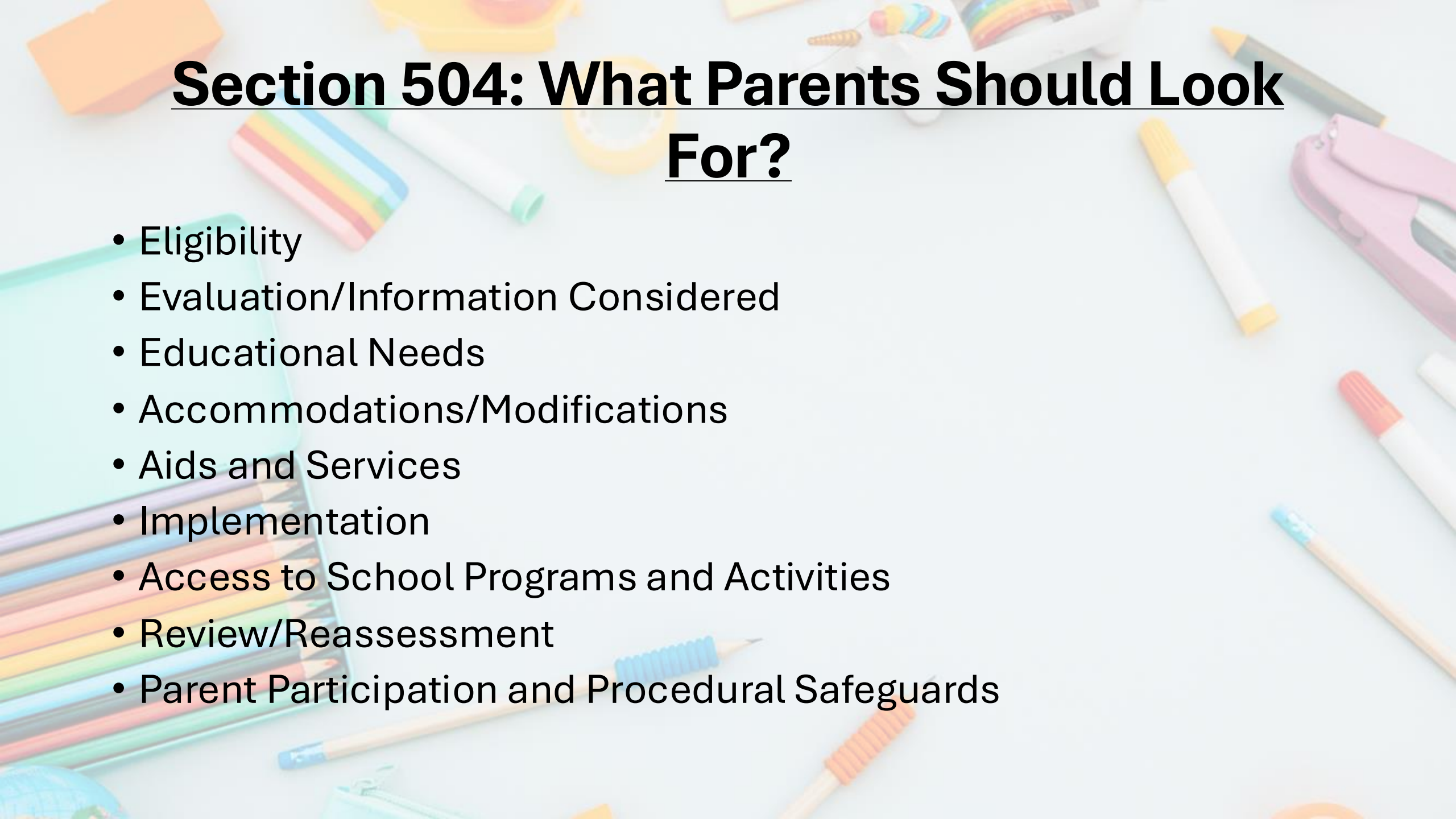
- If Something Is Missing From The PLAAFP, It Can Have A Ripple Effect
- Use Progress Reports And Work Samples To Determine Whether The Child Appears To Be Making The Progress Anticipated By The I.E.P.
- Compare The I.E.P. On Paper With What Actually Happens
- Are The Accommodations specific Enough That Different Staff Members Would Know what To Do?
- Everything Is Connected!
- Ask ISD279 To Explain The “Why”?
- Get Things In Writing

Connection Example

- PLAAFP: Student Has Difficulty Completing Written Work Because Of A Documented Functional Limitation
- Need: Student Needs Support To Access Written Academic Tasks
- Goal: Student Develops A Measurable Written Output Or Related Functional Skill
- Service: Specialized Instruction And/Or Related Service Addresses The Identified Need
- Accommodation: Student Receives An Alternative Method For Demonstrating Knowledge When Handwriting Is A Barrier
- Progress Monitoring: The Team Collects Data To Determine Whether The Student Is Making Expected Progress

The I.E.P. Connection



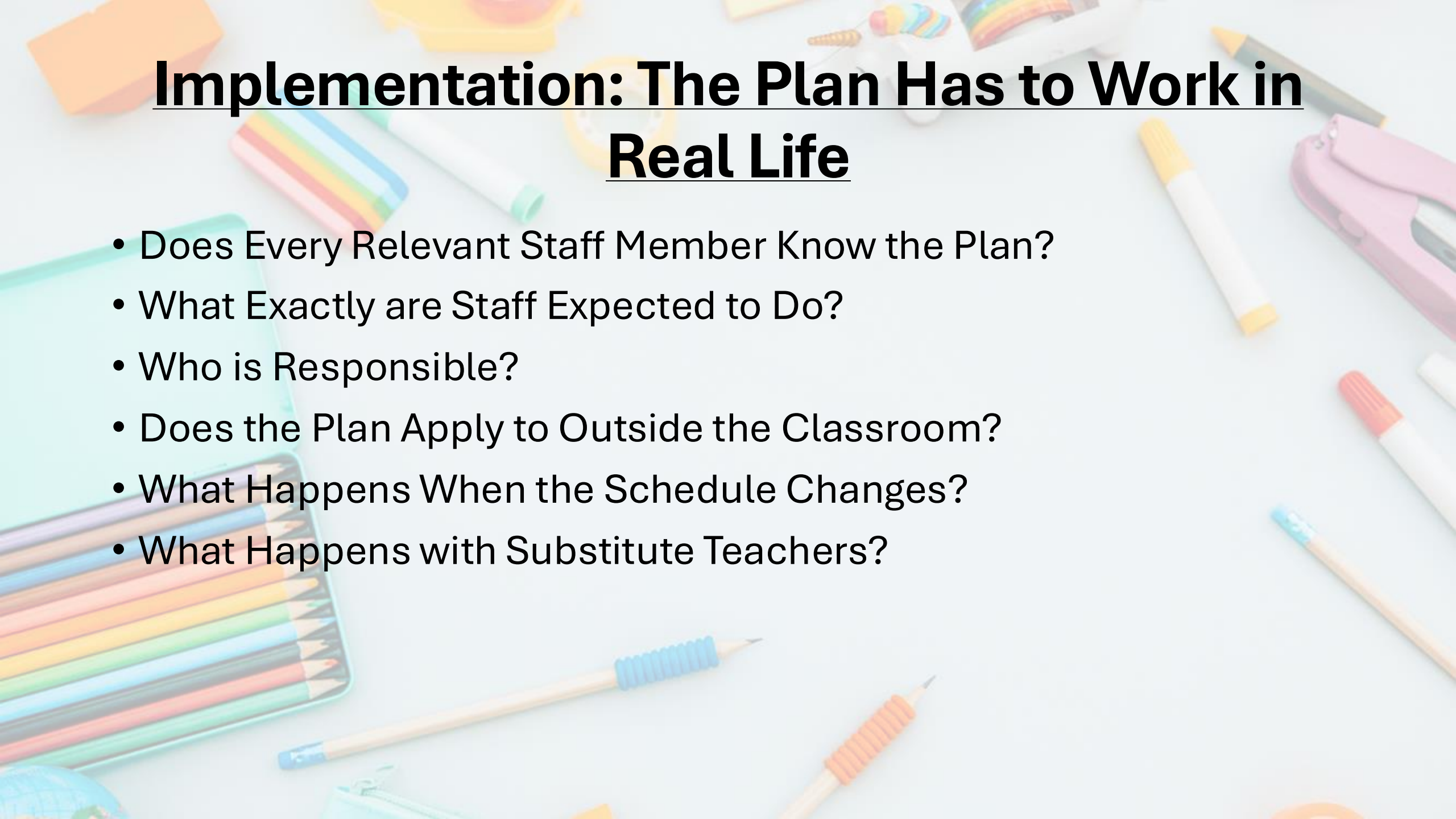


Section 504: What Parents Should Look For?

- Eligibility
- Evaluation/Information Considered
- Educational Needs
- Accommodations/Modifications
- Aids and Services
- Implementation
- Access to School Programs and Activities
- Review/Reassessment
- Parent Participation and Procedural Safeguards

504 Is More Than a Classroom

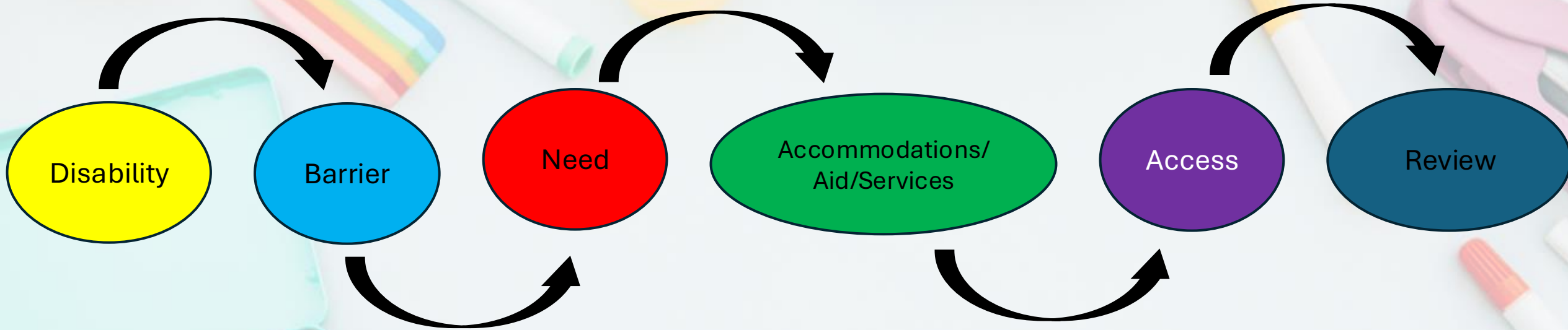
- Consider Whether Supports are Needed For:
 - Classroom Instruction
 - Homework
 - Testing
 - PE
 - Recess
 - Lunch
 - Passing Periods
 - Field Trips
 - Assemblies
 - Transportation
 - Extracurricular Activities
 - Schedule Changes
 - Substitute Teachers
 - Emergencies



Implementation: The Plan Has to Work in Real Life

- Does Every Relevant Staff Member Know the Plan?
- What Exactly are Staff Expected to Do?
- Who is Responsible?
- Does the Plan Apply to Outside the Classroom?
- What Happens When the Schedule Changes?
- What Happens with Substitute Teachers?

504 Framework A Different Way And Example



- Barrier: Student Cannot Consistently Participate Because of A Disability Related Limitation
- Need: Student Needs An Adjustment To Participate Meaningfully
- Accommodation: Alternative Activity/Participation Method
- Access: Student Can Participate In The Educational Program Without The Disability Unnecessarily Preventing Participation
- Review: Is The Accommodation Actually Providing The Intended Access

Parent Participation In I.E.P. And 504

- Parents Bring Important Information About:
 - Strengths
 - Needs
 - Concerns
 - Priorities
 - What Works at Home
 - Changes in Functioning

Make Sure to Ask: “Where is This Concern Addressed in the I.E.P. or 504 Plan?”

Parent Participation Cont'd

Parent 5 Question Test:

- Where is the Need Documented?
- What Goal Addresses It?
- What Service, Accommodation or Support Addresses It?
- How Will We Know Whether It is Working?
- What Happens if Progress is Not Adequate?

What Parents Can Do During the Year

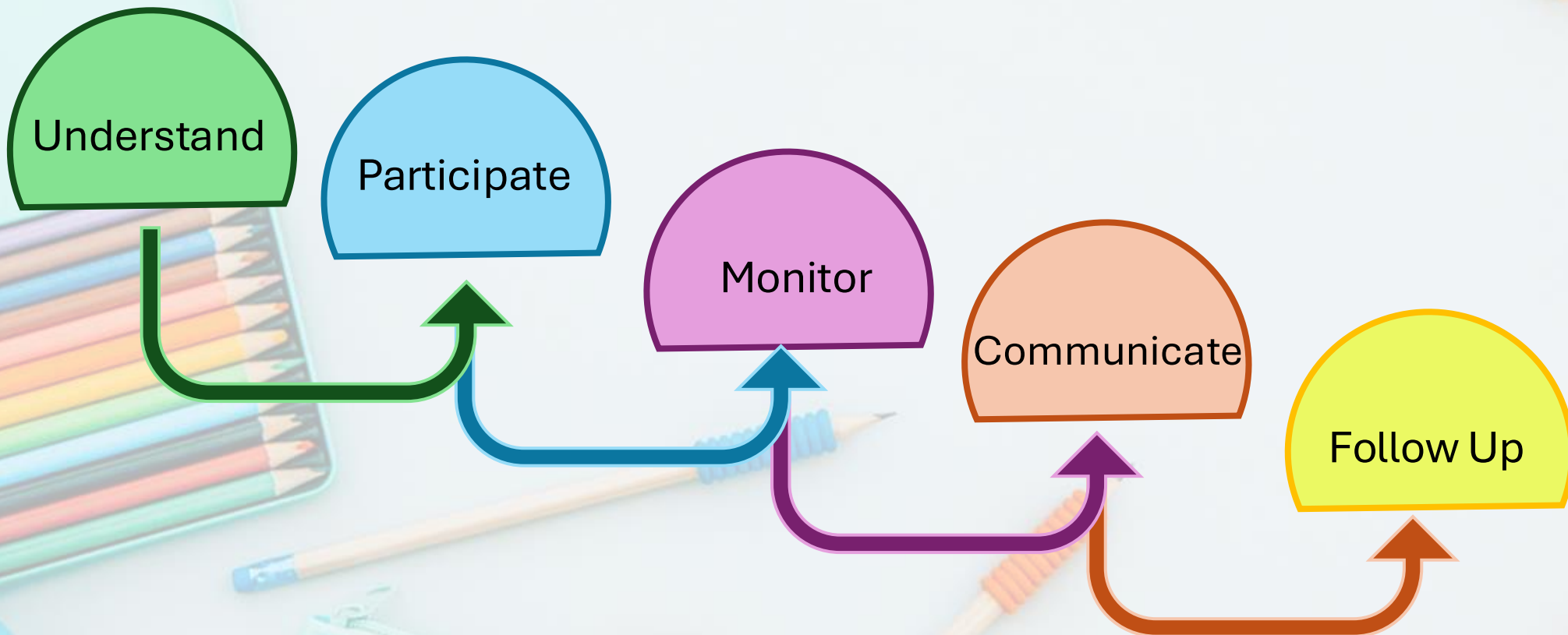
- Keep Track of Concerns and Patterns
- Compare Actual Supports With the Written Plan
- Review Progress Information
- Communicate Changes in Needs
- Document Implementation Concerns
- Ask Questions When Something Isn't Working
- Request the Team Reconsider the Plan When Circumstances Change

Remember: Don't Wait Until the Annual Meeting

Parent Participation and Role

You Play An Active Part In Your Childs I.E.P./504

The Plan Is Not Just Something Parents Review Once A Year – It Is A Tool
Parents Can Use Throughout The School Year!



Use The Information Collaboratively

- Use This Information To Communicate More Precisely, Not Fight The School
 - Example 1:
 - Instead Of: The School Isn't Doing Enough
 - Try: I'm Concerned That The Current Support May Not Be Adequately Addressing The Identified Need In The Plan
 - Example 2:
 - Instead Of: I Want This Accommodation
 - Try: This Is The Barrier We're Seeing. What Support Does The Team Believe Is Necessary To Address It?
 - Example 3:
 - Instead Of: You Need To Fix This
 - Try: What Is The Process For Reviewing This Concern And Determining Whether The Current Plan Needs To Be Changed?

Communication

Be Involved And Know Who To Contact

Who To Contact

*Start with the person who works most closely with your child. If you still have questions or concerns, move to the next step. Use this sheet to save names, contact information, and notes.

1. Your Childs Case Manager or Service Provider

Begin here with questions about your child's I.E.P., services, progress, accommodations, or supports at school.

Name/Role: _____

Phone/Email: _____

2. Special Education Building Coordinator (S.E.B.C.)

This person helps coordinate special education at your child's school. Contact the S.E.B.C. if you still need support.

Name/Role: _____

Phone/Email: _____

3. Principal or Assistant Principal

Contact a school administrator if your concern is not resolved or you need additional building-level support.

Name/Role: _____

Phone/Email: _____

4. Student Service Administrator (S.S.A.)

This district administrator supports special education at your child's schools. Contact S.S.A. if concerns continue.

Name/Role: _____

Phone/Email: _____

5. Additional District Support – Student Services

Name/Role: Jill Lesne – Assistant Director

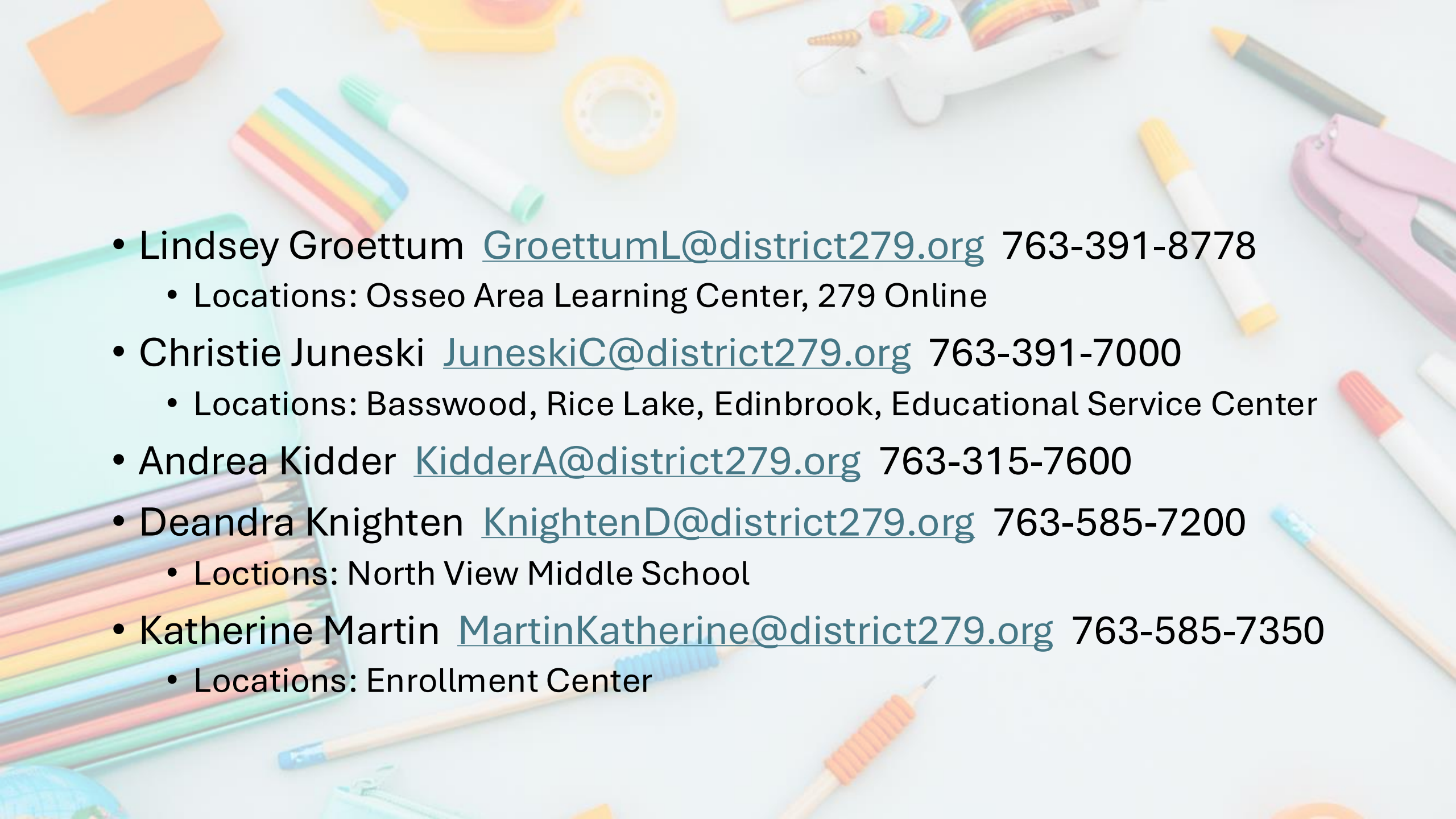
Phone/Email: 763-391-7137 LesneJ@District279.org

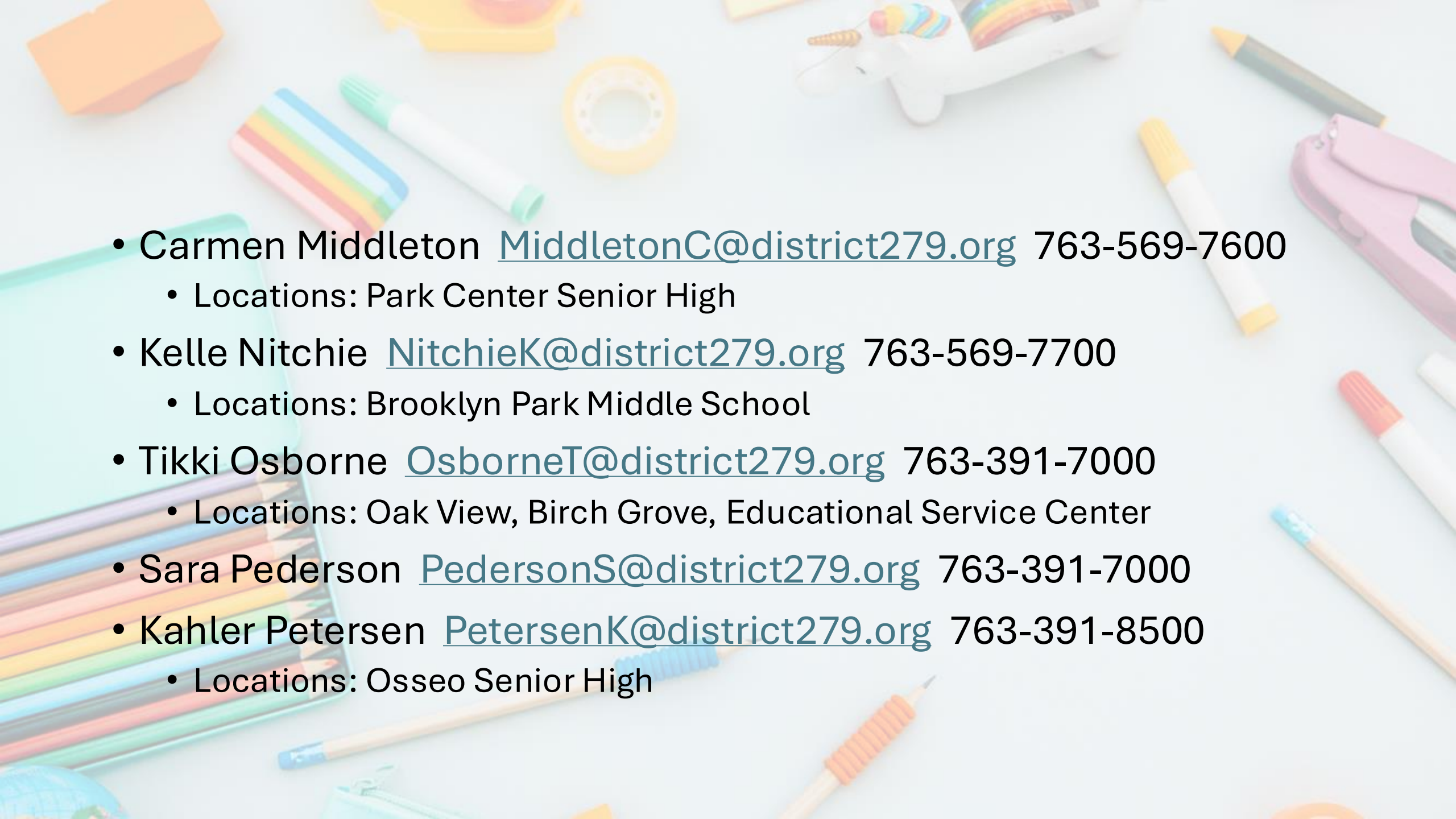
Name/Role: Sonni Buerskin – Director

Phone/Email: 763-391-7255 BuerskinS@District279.org

Special Education Building Coordinators

- Kelly Bakker BakkerK@district279.org 763-585-7300
- Jennifer Bauer BauerJ@district279.org 763-391-7000
 - Locations: Garden City, Fair Oaks, Elm Creek, Educational Service Center
- Suzanne Bum Grundyson BlumGrundysonS@district279.org 763-569-7600
 - Locations: Park Center Senior High
- Aldo Cantellano CantellanoA@district279.org 763-391-7000
- Daniel Gregory GregoryD@district279.org 763-391-7000
- Lindsey Groettum- GroettumL@district279.org 763-391-8778
- Christie Juneski- JuneskiC@district279.org 763-391-7000
- Andrea Kidder- KidderA@district279.org 763-315-7600

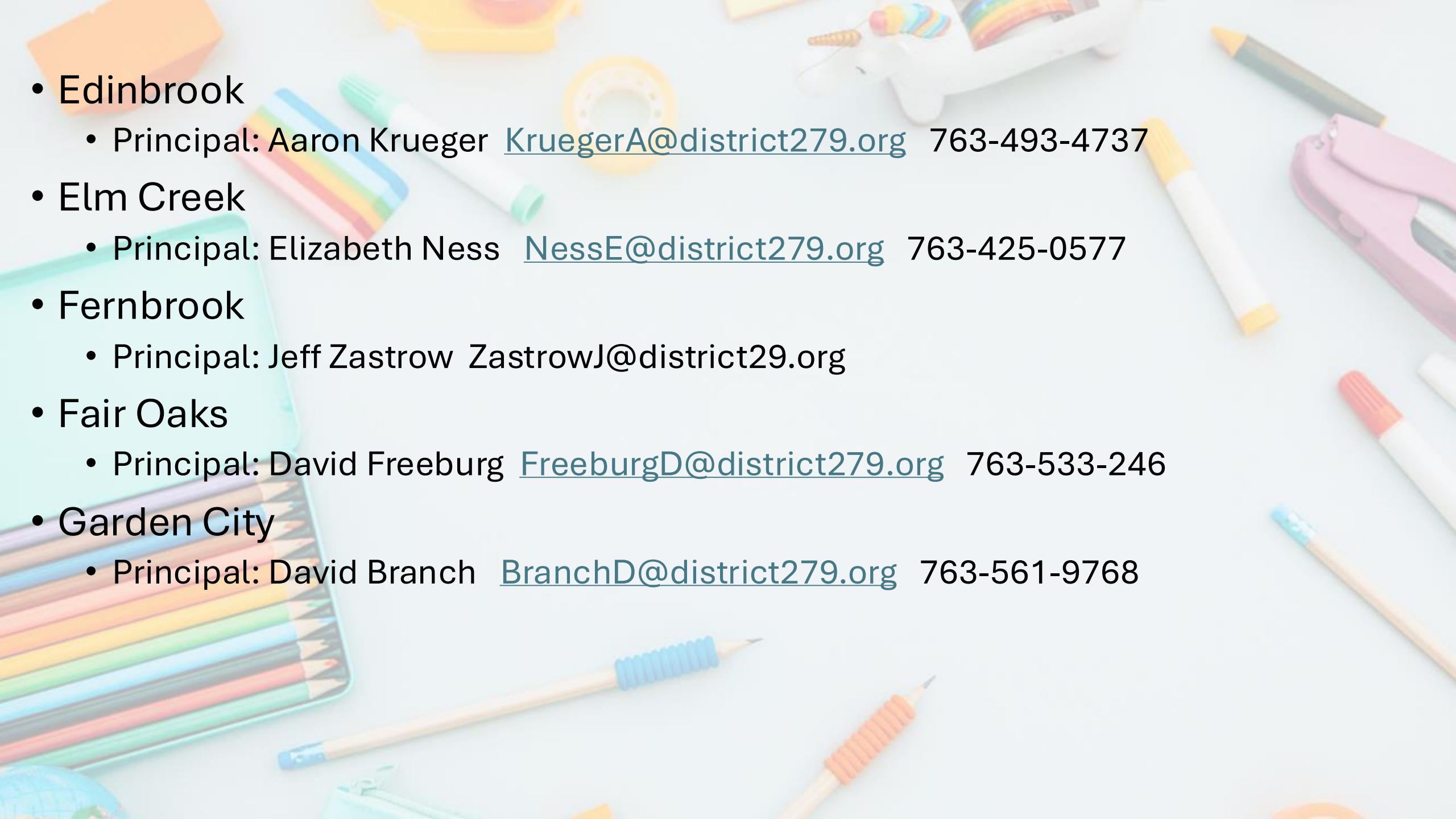
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- Lindsey Groettum GroettumL@district279.org 763-391-8778
 - Locations: Osseo Area Learning Center, 279 Online
 - Christie Juneski JuneskiC@district279.org 763-391-7000
 - Locations: Basswood, Rice Lake, Edinbrook, Educational Service Center
 - Andrea Kidder KidderA@district279.org 763-315-7600
 - Deandra Knighten KnightenD@district279.org 763-585-7200
 - Locations: North View Middle School
 - Katherine Martin MartinKatherine@district279.org 763-585-7350
 - Locations: Enrollment Center

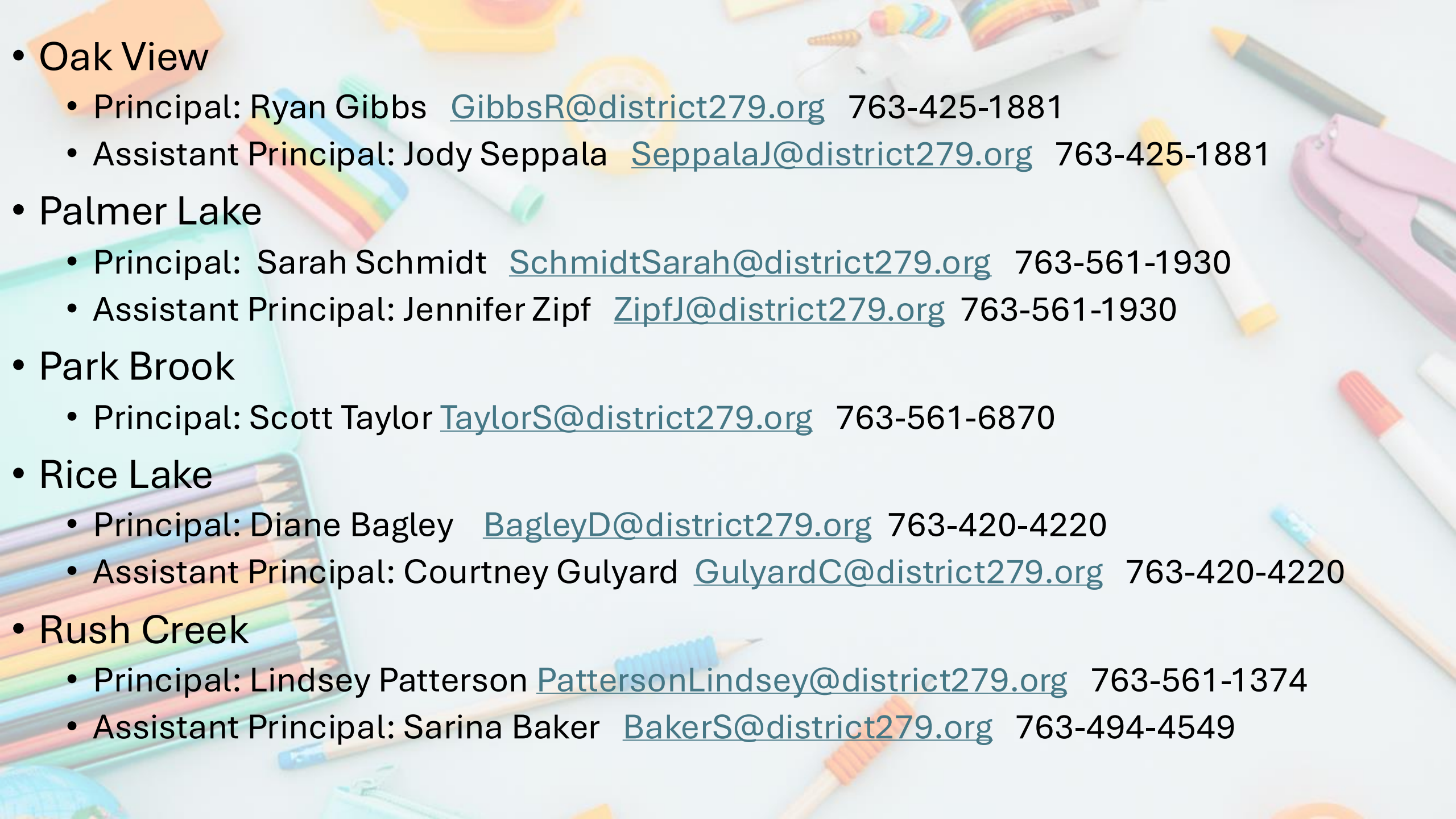
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- Carmen Middleton MiddletonC@district279.org 763-569-7600
 - Locations: Park Center Senior High
 - Kelle Nitchie NitchieK@district279.org 763-569-7700
 - Locations: Brooklyn Park Middle School
 - Tikki Osborne OsborneT@district279.org 763-391-7000
 - Locations: Oak View, Birch Grove, Educational Service Center
 - Sara Pederson PedersonS@district279.org 763-391-7000
 - Kahler Petersen PetersenK@district279.org 763-391-8500
 - Locations: Osseo Senior High

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- Kelly Reeck- ReeckK@district279.org 763-391-8700
 - Locations: Maple Grove Senior High
 - Kelley Reed- ReedK@district279.org 763-585-7300
 - Locations: Willow Lane Early Childhood Center
 - Angela Schroetke- SchroetkeA@district279.org 763-391-8800
 - Locations: Osseo Middle School
 - Simu Sikka- SikkaS@district279.org
 - Locations: Osseo Education Center
 - Karen True- TrueK@district279.org
 - Locations: Weaver Lake, Park Brook, Educational Service Center

Principal or Assistant Principal

- Aspen Ridge
 - Principal: Patrick Smith SmithPatrick@District279.org 763-450-8100
- Basswood
 - Principal: Steven Schwartz SchwartzSteven@district279.org 763-494-3858
 - Assistant Principal: Karen Kennedy KennedyK@district279.org 763-494-3858
- Birch Grove-
 - Principal: Stephanie Webster WebsterS@district279.org 763-561-1374
 - Assistant Principal: Kaitlyn Leiningner LeiningnerK@district279.org 763-561-1374
- Cedar Island
 - Principal: Alex Berg BergA@district279.org 763-425-5855

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- Edinbrook
 - Principal: Aaron Krueger KruegerA@district279.org 763-493-4737
 - Elm Creek
 - Principal: Elizabeth Ness NessE@district279.org 763-425-0577
 - Fernbrook
 - Principal: Jeff Zastrow ZastrowJ@district29.org
 - Fair Oaks
 - Principal: David Freeburg FreeburgD@district279.org 763-533-246
 - Garden City
 - Principal: David Branch BranchD@district279.org 763-561-9768

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- Oak View
 - Principal: Ryan Gibbs GibbsR@district279.org 763-425-1881
 - Assistant Principal: Jody Seppala SeppalaJ@district279.org 763-425-1881
 - Palmer Lake
 - Principal: Sarah Schmidt SchmidtSarah@district279.org 763-561-1930
 - Assistant Principal: Jennifer Zipf ZipfJ@district279.org 763-561-1930
 - Park Brook
 - Principal: Scott Taylor TaylorS@district279.org 763-561-6870
 - Rice Lake
 - Principal: Diane Bagley BagleyD@district279.org 763-420-4220
 - Assistant Principal: Courtney Gulyard GulyardC@district279.org 763-420-4220
 - Rush Creek
 - Principal: Lindsey Patterson PattersonLindsey@district279.org 763-561-1374
 - Assistant Principal: Sarina Baker BakerS@district279.org 763-494-4549

- Weaver Lake

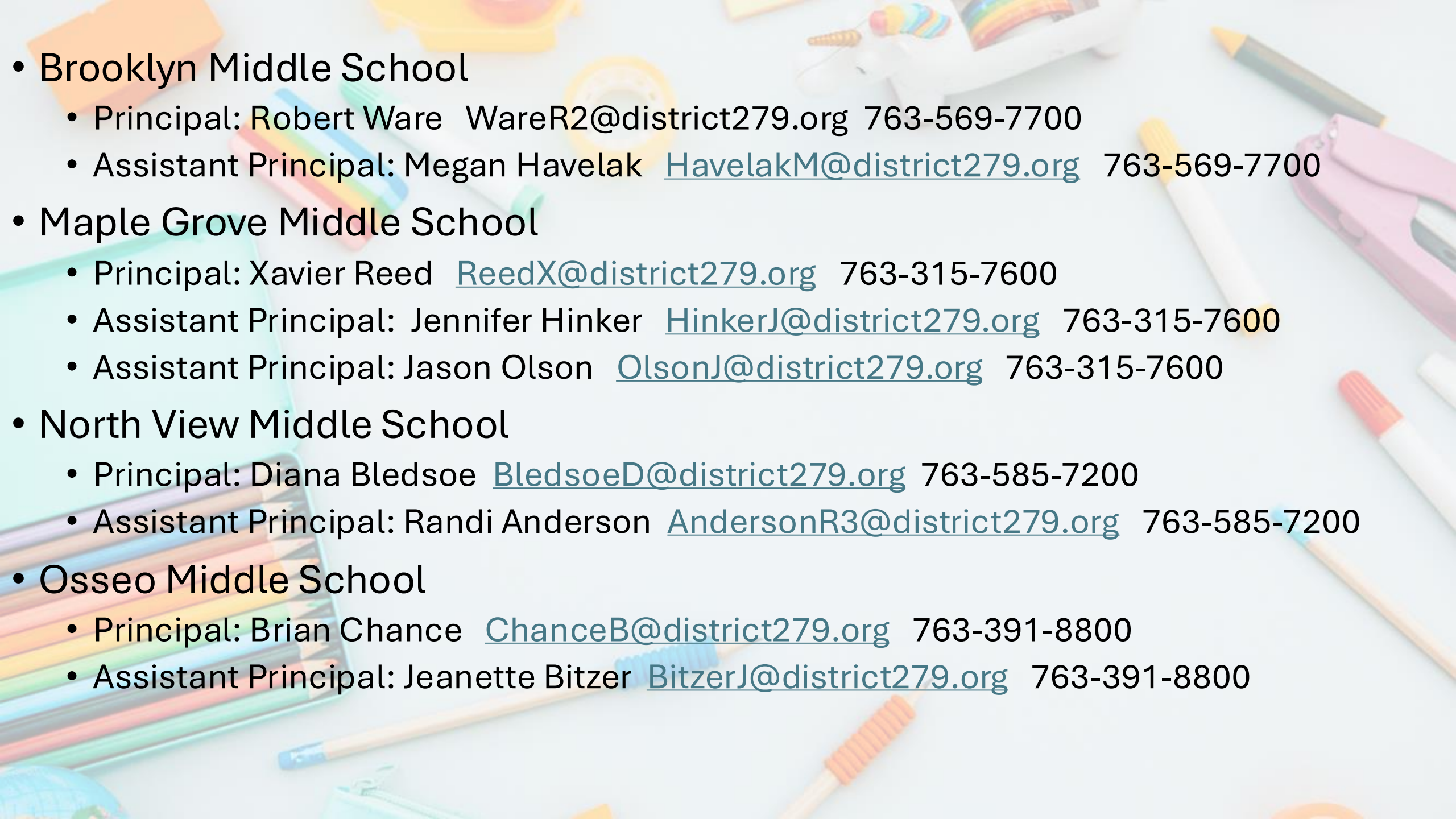
- Principal: Roanld Salazar SalazarR@district279.org 763-420-3337

- Woodland

- Principal: Theresa Jackson JacksonT2@district279.org 763-315-6400

- Zanewood

- Principal: Jennifer Tollefson TollefsonJ@district279.org 763-561-9077

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- Brooklyn Middle School
 - Principal: Robert Ware WareR2@district279.org 763-569-7700
 - Assistant Principal: Megan Havelak HavelakM@district279.org 763-569-7700
 - Maple Grove Middle School
 - Principal: Xavier Reed ReedX@district279.org 763-315-7600
 - Assistant Principal: Jennifer Hinker HinkerJ@district279.org 763-315-7600
 - Assistant Principal: Jason Olson OlsonJ@district279.org 763-315-7600
 - North View Middle School
 - Principal: Diana Bledsoe BledsoeD@district279.org 763-585-7200
 - Assistant Principal: Randi Anderson AndersonR3@district279.org 763-585-7200
 - Osseo Middle School
 - Principal: Brian Chance ChanceB@district279.org 763-391-8800
 - Assistant Principal: Jeanette Bitzer BitzerJ@district279.org 763-391-8800

- **Maple Grove Senior High**
 - Principal: Bart Becker BeckerB@district279.org 763-391-8700
 - Assistant Principal: Jill Knutson KnutsonJ@district279.org 763-391-8700
 - Assistant Principal: Janell Leisen LeisenJ@district279.org 763-391-8700
 - Assistant Principal: Bradley Revolinski RevolinskiB@district279.org 763-391-8700
- **Osseo Senior High**
 - Principal: Kimberly Berling BerlingK@district279.org 763-391-8500
 - Assistant Principal: Kristan Bidwell BidwellK@district279.org 763-391-8500
 - Assistant Principal: Amber Hegland HeglandA@district279.org 763-391-8500
 - Assistant Principal: Ellen Stewart StewartE@district279.com 763-391-8500
- **Park Center Senior High**
 - Principal: Antwan Harris HarrisA@district279.org 763-569-7600
 - Assistant Principal: Paris Kyles KylesP@district279.org 763-569-7600
 - Assistant Principal: Erin Nelson NelsonE3@district279.org 763-569-7600
 - Assistant Principal: Erik Thompson ThompsonE@district279.org 763-569-7600
- **279 Online**
 - Principal: Kristen Swanson SwansonK@district279.org 763-391-8890
 - Assistant Principal: Ryan Bisson BissonR@district279.org 763-391-8682

Student Services Administrator

- Patrick Clymer- ClymerP@district279.org 763-315-9760
 - Locations: Osseo Education Center, Education Service Center
- Korto Dixon- DixonK@district279.org 763-391-7000
 - Locations: Educational Service Center
- Emma Ganion- GanionE@district279.org
- Danielle Johnson- JohnsonDanielle@district279.org 763-391-7000
 - Locations: Educational Service Center
- Laura Louis-Jacques- JacquesL@district279.org 763-391-7000
 - Locations: Educational Service Center
- Elizabeth Ronning- RonningE@district279.org 763-585-7300
- Angela VanHee- VanHeeA@district279.org 763-391-7000
 - Locations: Middle Schools

Communication

- Possible Information To Provide To Main Teacher/Case Manager
 - Interests
 - Strengths
 - Things That May Be Misunderstood
 - Health Information
 - How Student Learns
 - Concerns
 - Parents Contact Information
 - Special Considerations
- This Can Be Used As A Teacher “Cheat Sheet” and Quick Reference”



Student: _____

Favorites:

To y: _____ Movie/Show: _____ Color: _____

How I Learn Best: (1-5 Stars)

Visual:	☆☆☆☆☆	<u>Strengths:</u> _____ _____ _____
Auditory:	☆☆☆☆☆	
Group:	☆☆☆☆☆	
Alone:	☆☆☆☆☆	
Active:	☆☆☆☆☆	<u>Struggles:</u> _____ _____ _____
Passive:	☆☆☆☆☆	

Health and Safety:

Diagnosis: _____

Allergies: _____

Dietary Restrictions: _____

How This May Look In a Classroom:

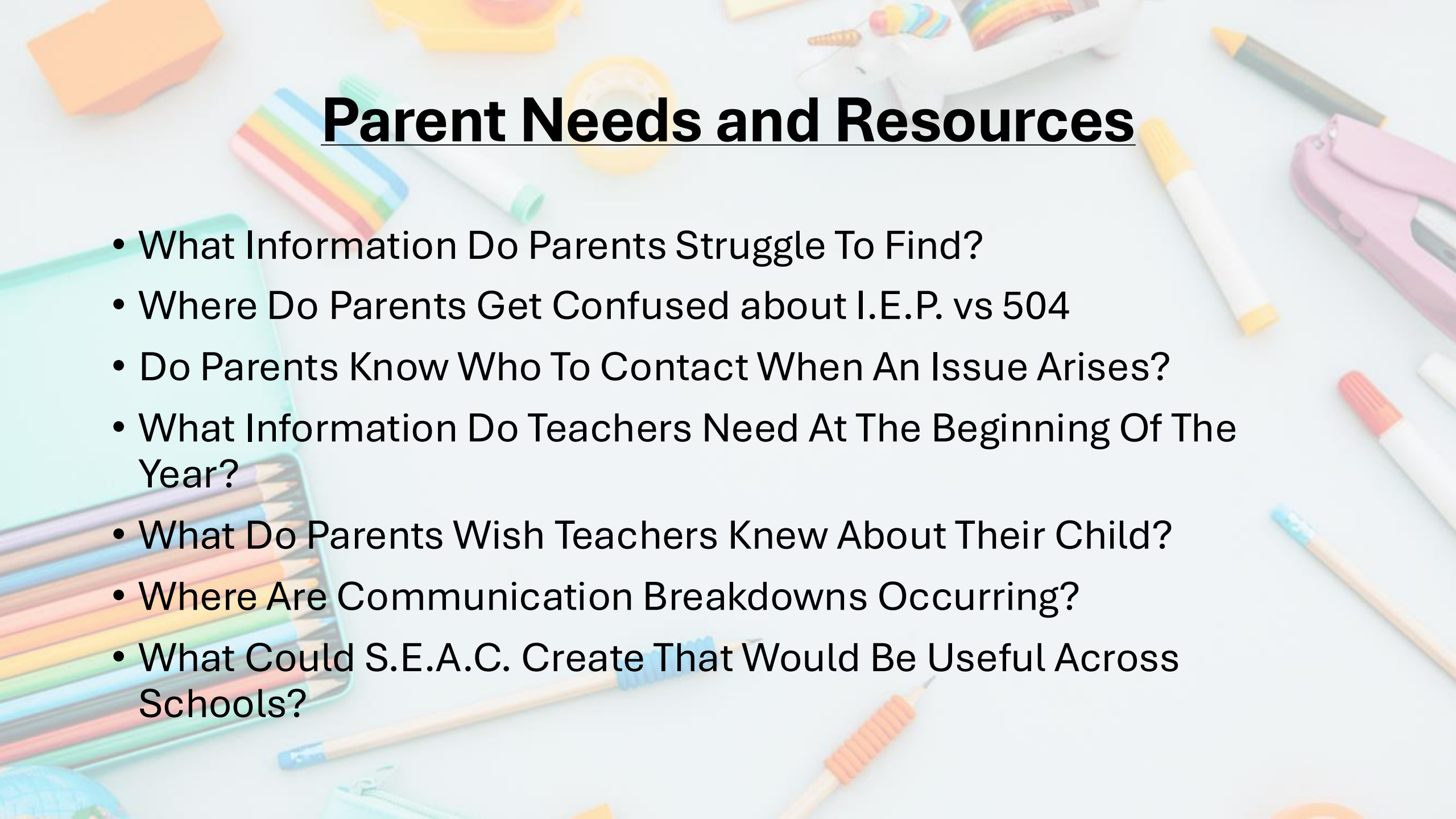
Other Information to Know:

*For teacher quick reference only. Not to replace nurse Communications, IHP, or doctors orders.

Parent Contact and Communication:

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Preferred Method of Communication: _____ (Phone, Email, Paper)



Parent Needs and Resources

- What Information Do Parents Struggle To Find?
- Where Do Parents Get Confused about I.E.P. vs 504
- Do Parents Know Who To Contact When An Issue Arises?
- What Information Do Teachers Need At The Beginning Of The Year?
- What Do Parents Wish Teachers Knew About Their Child?
- Where Are Communication Breakdowns Occurring?
- What Could S.E.A.C. Create That Would Be Useful Across Schools?

Core Question

"What Could ISD 279 Do Differently That Would Make the Special-Education Experience Better for Families Across the District—Not Just for One Student or One Building?"

- **Parent Communication and Navigation**

- Helping Parents Understand Who To Contact, How To Communicate Concerns, And How To Navigate IEP/504 Process

- **IEP/504 Implementation and Consistency**

- Looking At The Gape Between What Is Written And What Happens Day to Day.

- **Parent Education and Resources**

- Creating Practical, Plain Language Resources That Help Parents Participate Effectively In The Process.



Thank You For Attending

