

What is School Advocacy?

“Advocacy” means to support or speak on behalf of someone or something. School or education advocacy is supporting a student by speaking up and taking action to make sure they get all the services and supports they need.

An advocate is . . .

a person who speaks up for, and defends the rights of him or herself, or of another person.

A self-advocate is . . .

a person who speaks up for him or herself, and defends his or her own rights.

Parent-advocates are . . .

people who speak up for, and defend the rights of their children, and are willing to work with a school or other service provider to make sure that their children get the services they need and deserve.¹

What if I have a question about special education or need someone to help by looking over a document or coming to a meeting?

The Arc of Whatcom County

Free workshops, information,
1 on 1 support, IEP advocates

www.arcwhatcom.org

Monica Burke, Parent Coalition Coordinator

360-715-0170 x303

monicab@arcwhatcom.org

*“Great information that
will be very useful!”*

- Workshop Attendee

Partnerships for Action Voices for Empowerment (PAVE)

Free information and resources, trained advocates
who can assist individual families

www.wapave.org [Facebook for the North Sound](#)

Jen Cole, Parent Training and Information

Specialist for Northwestern WA

360-742-9827

jcole@wapave.org

*“PAVE is a one stop
place. It offers a lot of
different resources and
the answers you need.”*

-Parent

¹Portions of this information are excerpted from <http://www.schooladvocacy.ca/>
For a nice introduction to school advocacy see: http://www.wrightslaw.com/advoc/articles/advocacy_intro.htm

What if I have a dispute with the school and need help to resolve it or need information on what I can do?

The Office of the Education Ombuds

Informational booklets. Resolves complaints, disputes, and problems between families and elementary and secondary public schools in all areas that affect student learning.

<http://oeo.wa.gov/>
866-297-2597

For helpful videos created by The Arc of Washington in conjunction with the Education Ombuds go to:
arcwa.org/getsupport/special_education

Where can I go on the web for comprehensive and parent-friendly information about special education law and advocacy?

WrightsLaw

Special Education Law and Advocacy Information
wrightslaw.com/

What if I need to know about specific laws governing special education?

Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

Information on the laws governing special education in Washington State.

WWW.K12.WA.US/SPECIALED/DEFAULT.ASPX

ASK OSPI: <http://www.k12.wa.us/SpecialEd/ContactUs.aspx>

360-725-6000

SCOTT RAUB, SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT LIAISON

(360) 725-6075

[HTTP://WWW.K12.WA.US/SPECIALED/FAMILIES/ASSISTANCE.ASPX](http://WWW.K12.WA.US/SPECIALED/FAMILIES/ASSISTANCE.ASPX)

"I was intimidated to call, but they were great! They found the rules for me right away."

-Local Service Provider

US Department of Education – IDEA

Information on federal laws governing special education.

idea.ed.gov/



for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN)