

# fAMILY

## MEET KELLY HOLLOWICH

Parent Advocate of the Month  
February 2025

### WHAT MADE YOU ADVOCATE FOR YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION?

We felt that we were not being heard and looked for support outside of the school district. IEP meetings and daily encounters at school can be intimidating. Having someone that is knowledgeable and impartial is helpful. There are many options within the special education department that are not offered unless you ask.

### WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO EDUCATE YOURSELF ABOUT SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES?

Google and social media are a great resources to get started. I would look to join a local group that has meetings and seminars with professional speakers. You will be able to talk to other parents. Unfortunately, you will most likely feel alone when you first start. Most people do not want to go outside their comfort zone to help. It took years to find a supportive advocate.

### WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE OTHER FAMILIES ADVOCATING FOR THEIR CHILD'S RIGHTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION?

Do not be afraid to voice your concerns. Write down a list of questions that you have so you do not forget anything. You are your child's voice and sometimes you will be uncomfortable. Think about how your child would feel if you do not speak up for them. Think about what realistic goals you may have for them. What would happen if you do not advocate for them?

### WHAT DOES BEING YOUR CHILD'S BEST ADVOCATE MEAN TO YOU?

Being my child's best advocate means always asking questions. Asking for opinions from people that are outside of the classroom, such as parents, or local special education groups.

