



## Securing the Most Appropriate Educational Service Plan for Your Child

by Ashley Kinkaid Koedel, M.A.,  
Director of Educational Services

What does an advocate do?

An advocate represents you and your child and works cooperatively with the school site team and/or school district team to develop an appropriate and effective Section 504 or IEP plan for your child. The advocate will complete a personalized review and explanation of assessment results and educational records; develop, monitor, and review IEP and 504 plans; evaluate your child's current academic program and related services; attend any school meetings; and help you identify a more appropriate school program for your child if the current program is not working. An advocate is child-centered and helps you to fully understand your child's rights and entitlements. They become your voice, translating students' needs into cogent arguments as to why IEP teams must provide particular services and supports.



### Advocate or Attorney?

The presence of an attorney at an IEP meeting, especially at an early stage of disagreement, often creates an adversarial atmosphere. It also often means that the school district, in return, will also bring an attorney to the meeting. Advocates know and understand the state and federal laws related to both Special Education and Section 504, but also have strong backgrounds in education and first-hand experience teaching students with special needs. At Morrissey-Compton, we also bring a thorough understanding of assessment and therapeutic and educational intervention to the table. Should you reach a place with your case where an attorney is needed, your advocate will work with you to find an experienced local special education attorney.

### How do I get started?

Contact our intake coordinator, Suzy Music, at (650) 322-5910 today. A one-hour consultation is typically scheduled to begin the process. Educational records are reviewed prior to the meeting and an action plan is drawn up. Any questions regarding services, accommodations, and school placement options are discussed at that time. Should you need assistance with putting requests in writing or drafting compliance complaints these are also available services. In many cases, our staff will also prepare agendas and attend IEP/504 meetings with the parents.