

# Everybody Advocate: California Non-Profit Launched to Advance Special Education

PLEASANTON, CA, USA, June 1, 2023

/EINPresswire.com/ -- Everybody Advocate™, a nonprofit committed to the support and advancement of special education, today announced its launch. The mission of the organization is to increase respect, awareness, and funding for special education services and to address systemic barriers - whether bureaucratic, financial or cultural - for both students with disabilities and their educational service providers.



Everybody Advocate logo

“Our philosophy is that meeting the challenges of students with disabilities is key to innovation in education for all,” said founder Christina Maehr, a special education advocate. “In medicine, well-regarded specialists are critical to providing high-quality patient outcomes. By comparison, education has failed to embrace a similar model, too often expecting teachers to be experts at everything while sidelining specialists and adopting lower expectations for students with disabilities. We believe special education can be transformative. What we learn from investing in and advancing special education benefits everyone.”

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*Christina Maehr*

Everybody Advocate is a growing alliance of special education professionals, parents, teachers, students, advocates, attorneys, administrators, and many others who share this mutual goal.

“Anyone who chooses to work in special education services wants to help kids with disabilities, but they often feel stymied by the very systems meant to help,” said Sharon Spivack, a director of special education. “We plan to work together to improve outcomes for students, improve retention of educators, and reduce frustrations. We aim to work collaboratively to improve the experience for all.”

Founding Board Members include:

- Christina Maehr, President – Formerly PR manager at Agilent Technologies, trained in advocacy by the Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates, Ms. Maehr has served as a special education advocate for more than 200 families across 50 school districts since 2018. She holds a B.S. in Biology from MIT.
- David Richards, Treasurer – Currently at Asana Technologies, Mr. Richards serves as a parent representative. A 12-year tech veteran, he spent 5 years at Meta where he led Facebook's non-profit and partner alliances group. He holds a B.A. in Accounting.
- Sharon Spivack, Secretary – Ms. Spivack is Special Education Director with 25 years of experience in special education and site administration. She holds a M.A. in Special Education.
- James Bylund, Psy.D., Vice President – Dr. Bylund is a licensed clinical and educational psychologist who has served students with disabilities for 15 years as a school psychologist and now Director of the Bylund Clinic, which provides independent psychoeducational evaluations and consulting.
- Kerry Gardanier, Vice President – Ms. Gardanier is a Slingerland©-certified teacher of students at Livermore Valley Academy. Before becoming an educator, she was a founding employee of Macys.com LLC with responsibility for generating hundreds of millions of dollars in site sales.
- Kristin Springer, Vice President – Ms. Springer is special education attorney and trained mediator who has practiced law since 2000, originally in real estate law. She began her special education practice in 2016 and has resolved hundreds of cases on behalf of students with varying disabilities.

Incorporated as a California non-profit public benefit corporation, Everybody Advocate plans to apply for 501(c)3 tax-exempt status. Visit [www.everybodyadvocate.org](http://www.everybodyadvocate.org) to learn more. Follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

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