

# Federal Oversight Concerns Put Special Education Advocacy in the Spotlight

AVONDALE, PA, UNITED STATES, March 19, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As concerns grow over potential changes to the U.S. Department of Education and the future of special education protections under IDEA, parents of children with disabilities must take advocacy into their own hands like never before. With IDEA potentially shifting under the oversight of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and increasing state-level variability in IEP enforcement, families need to be proactive in ensuring their child's educational rights are upheld.

Lisa Lightner, a nationally recognized special education advocate and founder of A Day in Our Shoes and Don't IEP Alone, is urging parents to recognize the heightened importance of IEP advocacy in light of these developments. "Special education advocacy has always been largely state-driven, but with potential federal rollbacks and funding cuts, parents must step up to make sure their child's IEP is meaningful and enforceable," said Lightner.



Lisa Lightner, Special education advocate and ADayInOurShoes founder

## Why This Matters:

**The Risk of Federal Changes:** If IDEA oversight shifts to HHS, there is a strong likelihood of increased inconsistency in how special education services are delivered from state to state. Without a dedicated education department, enforcement mechanisms may weaken.

**State-Level Advocacy is Now Essential:** Even under current IDEA protections, special education advocacy has primarily happened at the state level. With reduced federal oversight, disparities

between states will grow, making it even more crucial for parents to know their state's laws and policies.

**Most Parents Don't Put in the Work—But You Can:** Data shows that only a small percentage of parents consistently challenge school districts on IEP implementation. Those who actively advocate and stay informed secure better outcomes for their children.

To support families during this time, Lightner has launched new resources, including the [Anxiety at School: Support and Advocacy Toolkit](#) and a new mini-course on [IEP progress monitoring](#). These tools equip parents with the knowledge and strategies they need to navigate state-level advocacy and ensure their child's education remains a priority.



“The reality is that schools are already struggling to meet the needs of students with disabilities. If oversight weakens and funding is cut, families will face an even steeper uphill battle. But parents who take action now, who learn how to advocate effectively, will be the ones who ensure their children receive the services they need,” Lightner added.

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Our children's futures are too important to leave to chance or shifting political landscapes. Now more than ever, parents must become their child's strongest advocate.”

*Lisa Lightner, Special Education Advocate*

For more information on special education advocacy resources, you can visit [Don't IEP Alone](#).

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