
**Children's Attorneys Project
Education Advocacy Program
and
Volunteer Education Advocate Program
Year-End Report 2025**



Executive Summary

Our Education Advocacy Program (EAP) continued its zealous advocacy for the educational needs of foster and special needs students in 2025, both through direct advocacy support of educational decision makers and through the administrative hearing process. Our team, which includes three attorneys, five advocates, one paralegal, and two assistants, worked on 356 general and 182 special education cases. We also worked with our CAP Attorneys to connect 182 children in foster care with educational decision makers through our Volunteer Education Advocate Program, ensuring that these children’s voices were not just heard in court, but in school as well. Our attorneys filed 38 due process complaints in 2025, nearly triple the amount filed last year. Many of these matters resolved favorably for the students in question through settlement while others resolved favorably after trial. EAP did not lose a single due process case brought on behalf of a student this year.

Given that 2025 was a Legislative Session year, we proposed and advocated for legislation directed at recognizing the unique needs of students in foster care by prohibiting these students from being expelled for behavior substantially related to their foster care status. SB 177 was passed and EAP has now worked directly with Clark County School District (CCSD) on the implementation.

In 2026, the Education Advocacy team will continue to fight for foster children and children with special needs through advocacy and litigation. We will continue to grow our partnerships to serve students in care and will continue to train non-attorney volunteers to serve as VEAs to meet the increased needs of children in foster care.

Clients Served

Education Advocacy Program 2025	
New clients accepted in 2025	227
Total clients represented by our Education Advocacy Program (includes new and previous years cases)	356

Volunteer Education Advocacy Program 2025	
New clients accepted in 2025	61
Total clients represented by our Education Advocacy Program (includes new and previous years cases)	182

Most Significant Accomplishment

We filed 38 due process complaints on behalf of students with disabilities, primarily in the foster care system, including students with autism, dyslexia, intellectual delays, schizophrenia, and fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. The claims in these due process complaints varied wildly by

case, but all related to CCSD's failure to provide a free appropriate public education. Among these due process complaints, we filed 26 due process complaints on behalf of students with unmitigated Dyslexia, including 23 on one day, marking the 50th anniversary of the passage of the IDEA.

Most Impactful Client Success Story

Seth

Seth* spent more than half his life in foster care and was expelled from high school in the last quarter of his senior year. Despite his diagnoses for PTSD, anxiety, depression, and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, at the mandatory meeting to determine whether or not Seth's behavior was a manifestation of his multiple disabilities or his being in foster care, Seth and his CAP attorney argued that Seth has a complex trauma history and sometimes self-medicates because the psychotropic drugs he is prescribed make him agitated and aggressive, while weed calms his nerves and helps his functioning. His history was completely ignored by the school team, who were more focused on their "zero tolerance" policy than recognizing Seth's mental health needs. With the assistance of his CAP attorney, Seth (a legal adult) retained an attorney through the Education Advocacy Program (EAP) to help him be able to graduate high school, a feat accomplished by less than half of foster youth in Clark County.

As soon as EAP was involved, the team requested records and the results were shocking. While the school team had blatantly ignored Seth's rights under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) in terms of his recent expulsion, a review of his education records from the time he entered foster care showed a global failure to Seth to meet his needs as a student with disabilities. What started out as a simple due process complaint to address his expulsion instead turned into a 35-page complaint that included claims for denial of parental participation since 2020.

EAP asked for significant compensatory education on Seth's behalf, along with a host of other remedies. Because the burden of proof in Nevada falls on the school district in due process complaints and the issues in Seth's complaint were so obvious and egregious, there was no question that the complaint would be successful. But what Seth really wanted was to return to his high school, walk the stage at graduation with his peers, and celebrate the tremendous accomplishment of graduating high school with the teachers he had known for four years. Over and over again, the answer from CCSD was no. CCSD would rather pay for tens of thousands of dollars in compensatory education and attorney's fees than allow Seth to walk the stage at graduation. But EAP continued its advocacy for Seth. On the eve of trial, the foster care coordinator and the Office of General Counsel reached out and asked to settle the complaint with the proposed resolution of allowing Seth to walk the stage at graduation and have Seth's diploma reflect that he graduated from his school of origin. EAP counseled Seth that he had a strong due process complaint, but if he wanted to walk the stage at graduation and was not concerned with compensatory education, the settlement was the best way to accomplish that.

Seth decided walking the stage was his top priority, and he agreed to the settlement.

In June, Seth walked the stage at Shadow Ridge High School and is officially a high school graduate. He is now a Freshman at the College of Southern Nevada.

**Names changed to protect client's confidentiality.*