

HOW TO BE AN IDEA ALLY



Three actions anyone can take to support students with disabilities and protect the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act** on its 50th anniversary.



1 ADVOCATE.

Speak up. Protect rights. Push for funding.

- Ask your school how IDEA is supported in classrooms.
- Tell your local and state officials to fully fund IDEA.
- Support teachers and staff who provide special education services.
- Stand with families when individualized education plans are delayed or ignored.

Being an advocate means challenging silence with action.



2 AMPLIFY.

Share what matters. Correct what harms. Celebrate what works.

- Share disability-positive messages and stories.
- Redirect classmates, community members, or online groups away from slurs and misinformation.
- Highlight inclusive classrooms and success stories.
- Promote resources that teach empathy and accessibility.

When you amplify inclusion, you normalize dignity.



3 ACT.

Join hands. Show up. Build community.

- Participate in IDEA-at-50 school events or townhalls.
- Attend a Share My Lesson webinar on IEPs, least restrictive environments, or inclusive practices.
- Volunteer with your PTA, local disability advisory group or community advocacy circle.
- Help a family prepare for meetings, transitions or service requests.

Action is how equality becomes real, not just written.

WHAT MAKES AN IDEA ALLY?

- You pay attention even when it is not your child.
- You ask questions when systems are confusing.
- You step in when you see kids treated unfairly.
- You use language that respects identity and humanity.
- You model empathy for the children around you.

You do not need expertise. You need compassion, courage and consistency.

START TODAY

One step is enough.

Choose one of these actions this week:

- Share a disability-positive post.
- Attend a school meeting or training.
- Ask how your district supports IDEA.
- Encourage respect in your online spaces.

RESOURCES TO GET YOU STARTED

- Inclusive Education Collection—Share My Lesson
- IDEA information—AFT Special Education
- Local PTA or SEAC (special education advisory council)

Join the movement. Be an IDEA Ally. Advocate. Amplify. Act.
aft.org/idea50