Advocate: to support or speak in favor of something; to act or intercede on behalf of another

Tips for advocating for your gifted student:

- **DO** talk directly to your student’s classroom teacher(s).
- **DON’T** be confrontational and tell the teacher they are doing something wrong.
- **DO** set up an appointment so you and the teacher can talk privately.
- **DON’T** try to talk specifically about your child at class or school events (Parent Night, class parties, carnivals, etc.)
- **DO** talk to your school’s gifted education teacher about the identification of gifted students.
- **DON’T** use disparaging terms regarding your child’s day or class studies (example: boring, waste of time, useless).
- **DO** approach your teachers with proposing a partnership for success – everyone is needed to make your student successful.
- **DON’T** assume you have the only answer to a situation or problem.
- **DO** be open to trying different approaches to see what works best.
- **DON’T** ignore the reporting structure at your building (talk to your teacher before you talk to the principal, talk to the principal before you talk to anyone at the school district).
- **DO** tell your student’s teacher about areas of interest that could give depth to your student’s studies (example: a student who loves art could illustrate short stories from writing class, a baseball fan could apply math lessons to baseball statistics, a reader could use newspaper stories to support social studies topics).
- **DON’T** allow your student to skip work or not do assignments -- talk to the teacher about an alternate assignment.
- **DO** research the Blue Valley school website under curriculum for ideas of ‘other’ options in classroom assignments or reading suggestions.
• DON’T be afraid to say or hear, “I don’t know” as long as it is followed by, “but I can find out” or “can you help me” or “what does my student think.”

• DO ask your student their opinions, feelings, and ideas.

• DON’T promise anything to your student that you can’t guarantee. Everyone (parents, teachers, school districts, and students) have limitations.

• DO tell your teachers when something is going well or a new process is working.

• DON’T compare your student to other individuals in class and or allow educators to do the same. Focus on your student’s abilities and possibilities.

• DO realize that different teachers and schools do things differently. Just because something is done in another class/building does not mean it is done in your class/building.

• DON’T be afraid to bring up other success stories, you may end up bringing a new success to your class or building.

• DO invite as many teachers as you wish to your annual IEP meeting.

• DON’T be afraid to ask for what your student needs.