

**October 2, 2025**

**Dear Advisory Commission on Disabilities,**

I am writing to express my strong interest in the Advisory Commission on Disabilities, and to share why I believe I am the best candidate for this opportunity. For the past eleven years, I have served as a teacher in West Aurora School District 129 at Hope D. Wall School, where I have dedicated my career to supporting our High School Exceptional Needs department. In this role, I facilitate learning for the most medically complex students in our district, ensuring they have access to equitable and meaningful educational experiences.

In addition to my teaching responsibilities, I am an active member of our building leadership team, where I collaborate with colleagues to guide and support the various departments within our school. My commitment to leadership extends beyond the classroom, reflecting my belief that strong schools are built through collaboration, advocacy, and shared vision. Having spent more than half of my childhood in Aurora, I am deeply proud to serve the community that shaped me. Special education and advocacy are not only the foundation of my career but also a core part of who I am. I believe every individual deserves equity and dignity, and I strive daily to ensure that my students experience both.

I am well-versed in special education law and skilled in monitoring student progress through individualized education plans. I follow complex care plans, including seizure action plans, positioning needs, and feeding and self-care routines. Beyond compliance, I focus on innovation—adapting materials and resources so that students can access learning opportunities that might otherwise be out of reach.

I am committed to fostering strong, trusting relationships with families by supporting them throughout their child's educational journey. This includes guiding families in understanding and accessing programs, resources, and legal processes related to life after graduation, such as guardianship, day programs, and community resources. My goal is to empower families with knowledge and collaboration, ensuring that every student is prepared for a successful and meaningful transition into adulthood.

My commitment to service extends into my personal life. I am a proud parent and active community member, serving as a Cub Scout den leader and secretary for Pack 153, leading a committee for my son's school PTO, and representing my colleagues as a union representative for West Aurora's teacher union. Each year, I raise funds for Special Olympics and participate in the Polar Plunge to support the cause.

People often tell me it takes a "special person" to do this work. I don't see myself that way. To me, this work is about equity—ensuring that every individual has access to their community and the dignity of meaningful experiences. That belief drives me every day as I advocate for my students and their families.

Thank you for considering my application. This work is more than a career to me; it is a calling. I would be honored to bring my experience, dedication, and advocacy to the Advisory Commission on Disabilities and continue serving the community I care so deeply about.

*Sincerely,*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amber Ferguson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The background behind the signature is a decorative graphic consisting of overlapping semi-circular shapes in shades of purple and pink.

# Chelsea Ferguson

Exceptional Needs Teacher  
Hope D. Wall School  
West Aurora School District 129



Accomplished special education professional with 11 years of teaching experience and a strong commitment to advocacy. Skilled in fostering inclusive practices, building collaborative partnerships, and supporting effective policy and program development. Dedicated to contributing expertise and leadership to promote equitable opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

## Educational Background

- 2018 *Concordia University Chicago:  
Master of Arts- Educational  
Technology endorsed in  
curriculum and instruction*
- 2015 *Aurora University- Bachelor of Arts in  
Special Education*
- *President of Kappa Delta Pi  
International Educational Honor Society*

## Teaching Experience

2015- *Exceptional Needs Teacher*  
present *Hope D. Wall School- WASD129*

## Notable Career and Community Contributions

*Strong Student and Family  
Relationships*

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*Building Leadership Team  
Member for five years*

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*Mentor to new teachers*

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*AEAW Union Representative*

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*PLC (Professional Learning  
Community) leader trained*

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*Advocacy and Special  
Education Law knowledge*

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*WASD Feather Badge holder-  
induction and Whole Child*

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*Committee Chair for PTO*

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*Secretary and Den Leader  
for Pack 153*

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*Fundraising efforts to contribute  
to building stronger  
relationships with our families  
via school events*

9/29/2025

Advisory Commission on Disabilities

Dear Members of the Commission,

I would like to recommend Chelsea Ferguson for the open position on the Advisory Commission on Disabilities. Chelsea is a self-contained special education teacher at Hope Wall School, which serves students ages 5–22 with severe and profound disabilities from both West Aurora District 129 and East Aurora District 131.

Our school provides comprehensive services—including adapted academics, PT, OT, speech, social work, music, PE, media center, art, EL services, and wheelchair clinics—to a student population that is approximately 78% Hispanic. We not only support growth and independence but also prepare families for the transition from public school to adult services.

Chelsea is deeply experienced in working with students and their families as they navigate these unique challenges. She is collaborative, compassionate, and highly skilled at fostering communication, independence, and life skills. Importantly, she understands that the world of adult services is vastly different from public education. Her knowledge of benefits and resources both in and out of school will be a tremendous asset to families as they prepare for this transition.

I believe Chelsea's voice on the Advisory Commission will bring valuable insight grounded in daily practice with students who have complex needs. She will represent our families with professionalism and dedication, ensuring their perspectives remain central to the Commission's work.

Thank you for considering her for this important role.

Melissa Yarbrough B.S. Ed., MAEL, ESL

  
Melissa Yarbrough  
Hope Wall School

Assistant Principal and Team Leader

~~630-301-5293 (office) 630-301-5008 (main office)~~

