MAYFIELD SCHOOLS PARENT MENTOR

**What is a Parent Mentor?**

A Parent Mentor is the parent of a child with a disability, employed by local educational agencies to help school districts and families by providing training, support and information services. All Parent Mentor services are provided to you free of charge.

**How can the Parent Mentor help you?**

There is an expectation that students with disabilities will be ensured appropriate and meaningful education. This requires parents and educators to communicate effectively. The role of the Parent Mentor is to provide information to you, to support you, and to act as a liaison back to the school or the district.

In concrete terms, this means that the Parent Mentor can

* Guide you through the special education process, and help you understand your rights.
* Listen and provide support. The Parent Mentor has an office, where you can meet privately to discuss concerns.
* Provide information and resources, in regards to laws, resources, and services.
* Attend IEP or 504 meetings at your request
* Organize and conduct information sessions and workshops
* Provide books and DVDs through the Parent Mentor Resource Library.
* Help build partnerships between your family and the school.

**How can I find out more?**

The Parent Mentors of Ohio Website is at

[www.ocecd.org](http://www.ocecd.org)

**Who is my Parent Mentor?**

The Parent Mentor for Mayfield School District is Shari DeCarlo. She can be reached at sdecarlo@mayfieldschools.org. Please see the back of this page for a message from Shari.



Hi Mayfield Families!

I am very proud to be serving as your Parent Mentor this year! I have a passion for working with Special Needs kids, and am honored to be able to serve you in this capacity.

A little bit about me: I have two daughters, both with special needs. My oldest, Rosie, is a graduate of Mayfield High School. She was on a 504 and continues to receive accommodations as she pursues her college degree. My younger daughter, Rhiannon, is a 5th grader on an IEP at Millridge Elementary. Rhiannon has received services since birth, including through Help Me Grow and Achievement Centers for Children.

When Rhiannon was born, my life was completely changed. I gave up my life in the business world to focus on helping my daughters. This has been a deeply rewarding journey. I have learned more than I ever thought possible, from the “alphabet soup” jargon of Special Ed (What is FAPE, anyway?) to the need to bring a LOT of Kleenex to the IEP meetings.

Because I’m not a district employee (I’m paid through a Ohio Department of Education Grant), I’m in a unique position to see things from both sides, and to help foster partnerships between your family and the school district.

My office is in the Old Schoolhouse, in front of Center Elementary. I can meet you there, or come to you at your school. My office comes equipped with toys for distracting children, and a lending library full of helpful books and literature. We can talk by phone, or email. My email is sdecarlo@mayfieldschools.org.

 I understand that this process can be terrifying, frustrating, and mind numbingly confusing. Please allow me to help you work through it. I once said to a school psychologist, “My daughter will never be able to attend school.” She said “Just trust us.” And she was right. I’m eager to pass on all the support that was given to my family over the years.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Shari DeCarlo

Parent Mentor

Mayfield School District