

## **You're at the Halfway Mark: Now Prepare for the Home Stretch**

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Oh my! The first half of the school year is just about over. It's time to pace ourselves as the holidays approach us. We should use this time to relax, reflect and rejuvenate ourselves as we approach 2015. Sometimes you may not want to take a quick look back while running; fearing that you may stumble and fall while trying to maintain your place in this marathon of "Special Education Advocacy."

As some of you sit and prepare your list of New Year's resolutions, think about the progress your child has or hasn't made thus far. Has your child made progress towards their goals thus far this school year? Did you just have an IEP meeting or need to prepare for it upon returning from the holiday break? As a parent myself, I am continuously taking deep breaths, reminding myself to drinking plenty of water and taking the stairs instead of the elevator to push me farther. As the saying goes, "No pain, No gain." While treading this course, we as parents must take time to focus on the trials and tribulations of being a parent of a child with special needs. Oh, but the hills we have to climb and the bumpy roads we may tread will make us stronger and wiser daily. Remember you are not alone. While pacing yourself and controlling your breathing, take a look at all the other parents running this course also. Some families have to push not one, but two children in a stroller or walk instead of run and want to make it to the home stretch. Soon it will be time to pick up the pace and to focus while that inner voice continues to say, "You're doing great."

Preparation and organization are keys to success. Gather your child's educational records and organize them. While running the second half of this course, it's time to prepare yourself and your child for the La. state assessment. Do you know the difference between last year's assessment and the PARCC assessment being administered this school year? Have you ever participated in our many live educational webinars or attended a workshop? If not, add it to your list of things to do for the New Year.

You will have an adrenaline rush at times, cramping or the feeling of fatigue. It is then, that you push yourself and envision your goals and dreams for your child. Don't give up! Pace Yourself! You will cross the homestretch soon.