

PROMISING FUTURES

A PUBLICATION FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION DECISION-MAKERS IN NEW JERSEY



PARTNERSHIPS

With more than 10,000 public school students served by ASAH members, our highly specialized schools are an important part of the special education system in New Jersey, and a vital safety net for local districts when they cannot effectively meet the needs of a child with complex disabilities. We are proud to support and collaborate with our public-school colleagues who refer students for the help they need.



ASAH 2023 LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR



John J. Mulholland, Jr., Esq. (left), ASAH Executive Director, and **Brian Detlefsen**, ASAH President (right), congratulate **Assemblywoman Carol Murphy** (center), for receiving the ASAH Legislator of the Year Award. Here is what she had to say: "...Working to bring every student high quality, specialized education is extremely important to both myself and ASAH and we will continue to advocate to improve access for children throughout our state."

PARENT ADVOCACY

The New Jersey Board of Education voted to accept the recommendation of the New Jersey Department of Education to readopt N.J.A.C. 6A:23A, Subchapter 18 with no substantive changes. More than 200 changes initially proposed by the DOE would have dramatically impacted funding to APSSDs. Hundreds of advocates, including parents and nonprofit organizations, urged the State Board to take this important action.



"ASAH appreciates the active and ongoing engagement of the State Board of Education on this critical issue, and their commitment to listen to and consider the concerns that were raised. We are grateful that leadership in the New Jersey Department of Education made this recommendation," said **John J. Mulholland, Jr., Esq.**, Executive Director of ASAH.



John J. Mulholland, Jr., Esq., is joined by New Jersey **Governor Phil Murphy** at the New Jersey Statehouse following his Budget Address delivered in advance of the 2025 state budget.



CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF COLLABORATION

**partnership - (pärt-nər-ship):
associated with another, especially in an action.**

There are many kinds of partnerships, but they all center around an agreement to work together around a shared goal: to take action for a common good.

As we prepare to mark our 50th anniversary, ASAH is proud to reflect on the myriad of partnerships that make our work possible.

First and foremost, ASAH partners with our member schools – more than 120 strong – to carry out work that advances the service delivery system for children with disabilities who need highly customized special education. Our members work in close collaboration, often referring students to other member schools when their own school is not the right fit. They share expertise, strategies, innovations, and best practices.

Each year, our member schools partner with New Jersey’s 613 school districts to serve more than 10,000 public school students whose needs cannot be met locally. One child at a time, these partnerships can develop into long-term, trusting relationships that help school districts meet their federal obligation to provide an appropriate special education to each child, regardless of how complex that child’s needs may be.

ASAH partners with families, helping them understand their rights and the rights of their children. We provide vital information, referrals, and support, and keep families updated and engaged around issues in special education that affect them and their child. We listen to families and work with them to address challenge and unmet needs. And we stand beside them to celebrate their triumphs.

ASAH proudly partners with our colleagues in other organizations, associations, and coalitions. Together, we work to build awareness and momentum to encourage changes that will help the children and families we all care so much about.

Through our ongoing partnership with the New Jersey School Boards Association, the second week in May has been celebrated as Special Education Week for the last 39 years. Our associations with NJSBA raises awareness of best practices and highlights the achievements of students, schools, and staff.

And our partnership with state, local, and federal leaders—built on a solid foundation of trust—allows us to ensure that our state’s policies and programs help the most vulnerable citizens, children with disabilities.

Thank you, to all of our partners, for helping to make New Jersey a better place!

“Each year, our member schools partner with New Jersey’s 613 school districts to serve more than 10,000 public school students whose needs cannot be met locally.”

John J. Mulholland, Jr., Esq.
Executive Director



AROUND THE STATE

Recent ASAH and ASAH Member Events and Activities



Congresswoman Mikie Sherrill visited ECL in Morris County as part of Autism Acceptance Month. She was joined by Chatham Borough Mayor **Carolyn Dempsey**, Council President **Jocelyn Mathiasen**, and other council members in announcing Community Project Funding for renovations at the school, which is housed in a building leased from Chatham Borough.



Gloucester County Commissioner **Matthew Weng** recently toured **Archbishop Damiano School** in Gloucester County to learn about the school and the students they serve.



The Assembly Budget Committee listened attentively as **John J. Mulholland, Jr., Esq.**, Executive Director of ASAH testified on the Extraordinary Special Education Aid Line, urging them to ensure the state budget contains the resources school districts need to make the most appropriate decisions for their students.

NorthJersey.com recently featured **The Phoenix Center** located in Essex County, for their innovative use of virtual reality. The school is part of a pilot program that exposes students with autism to the chaos they might experience in an airport in a controlled, virtual setting.



Congressman Chris Smith (R-4) met with **Sr. Debbie Drago**, Executive Director of Collier Youth Services, and Collier Board Member **Cathy Sugden** to discuss human trafficking, an issue that affects at-risk youth. Collier School is located in Monmouth County.





Lexington Square, 2125 Route 33
Hamilton Square, NJ 08690

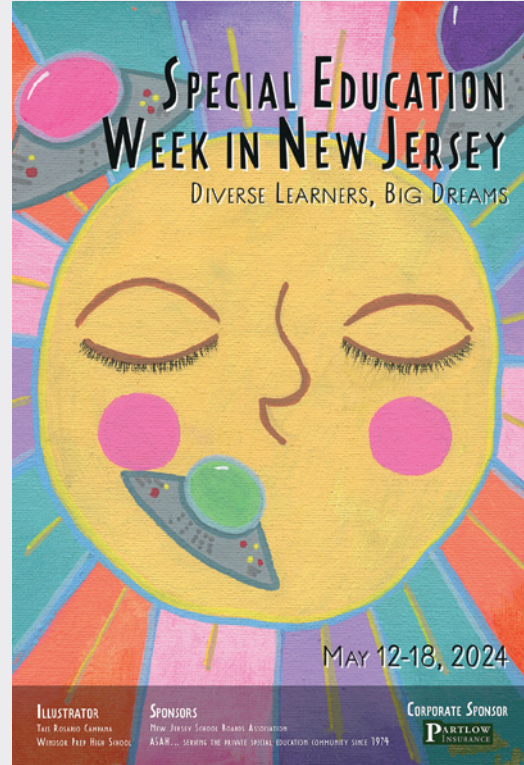
Visit our website
at www.asah.org

DIVERSE LEARNERS, BIG DREAMS

Each year New Jersey honors students, educators, parents, schools, and the school board members that all contribute to the high quality of special education services in our state.

Created by resolution of the New Jersey Legislature, the second week in May is designated Special Education Week in New Jersey. In 2024, the week falls on May 12-18, and our theme for the year is "Diverse Learners, Big Dreams."

ASAH is pleased to partner with the New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA) to celebrate the dedication and hard work of all who contribute to our state's success in the field of education.



Lexington Square, 2125 Route 33, Hamilton Square, NJ, 08690

(609) 890-1400 // info@asah.org // www.asah.org