

PROMISING FUTURES

A PUBLICATION FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION DECISION-MAKERS IN NEW JERSEY



A LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP

As part of our Golden Anniversary, ASAH hosted a statehouse event to celebrate the leaders that have helped to improve the lives of students with complex disabilities.

"...We are proud to offer solutions for public schools whose students need specialized help."

-John J. Mulholland Jr., Esq.



"Special education is a partnership," said John J. Mulholland Jr., Esq., Executive Director of ASAH. "It begins with policymakers, and extends to public school professionals, parents, and students, themselves. ASAH member schools are an important part of that partnership."

LEGISLATIVE VICTORY



Governor Murphy signed A-2180 into law, allowing Type S school buses to be driven without a Commercial Driver's License. The legislation, aimed at reducing New Jersey's school bus driver shortage, allows certain school personnel to transport students in nine-person passenger vans or smaller vehicles. The bill improves the ability of students at ASAH schools to access community-based instruction and work-based learning opportunities.

"It is a practical solution that ensures that even in challenging circumstances, our students can get to school and participate in activities," said Assemblywoman Carol Murphy, one of the bill's sponsors.

NEWS JERSEY:

#1 State to Raise a Child with Disabilities

New Jersey is #1 — A new report shows that investment and access to high quality specialized services, including therapies and health care, make New Jersey the #1 State to Raise a Child with Disabilities. The report from VocoVision underscores the important role that ASAH schools play in ensuring our public-school partners have a resource with the expertise and compassion to service students with complex needs.



ASAH ANNOUNCES 2025 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY PRIORITIES

- **Full funding for extraordinary costs.**
- **Strategies to address teacher shortages in special education.**
- **Improvements to school based mental health services.**



PARTNERS FOR TODAY. PARTNERS FOR TOMORROW.

This year, ASAH celebrates our 50th anniversary. What began in 1974 as a bold idea on the part of 13 founding schools has expanded tenfold. Today, more than 130 members strong, ASAH schools partner with local districts across the state to serve students with complex needs. A little “napkin math” suggests our schools have helped an estimated one million students since ASAH was founded. That is one million lives – changed for the better!

While the political and fiscal landscape have shifted, ASAH has consistently worked to support our own member schools and the public schools they serve. We have seen thirteen New Jersey Governors and have watched funding for special education ebb and flow through seven national recessions. Through it all, ASAH has collaborated with other stakeholders to ensure issues affecting the education of students with complex needs remained in the hearts and minds of decision-makers. We will continue to do so.

As we celebrate this Golden Anniversary, watch for a name change to better reflect who we are, what we do, and our role as partners in public education. Our new name, and a new look, will reflect the scope and breadth of our work and our vital role as partners in special education.

This anniversary belongs to all of us: each public school that has turned to one of our member schools for help, each parent who has trusted our schools with their child, each student who evolved and benefitted from the individualized education they received, each lawmaker who saw the value in the students we serve. These partnerships are built on a strong foundation of trust.

As I look to the next 50 years, I am confident we will continue to strengthen our relationships with our members, our colleagues, our state leaders, and families to ensure a new generation of students achieve their potential - they deserve nothing less.

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



AROUND THE STATE

Recent ASAH and ASAH Member Events and Activities



John J. Mulholland, Jr., Esq., presented the findings of ASAH's 24th Annual Outcomes Report to the New Jersey State Board of Education. The report finds that student enrollment in an APSSD is not a barrier to transferring back into an appropriate in-district placement and that the overwhelming majority of students who do graduate from an APSSD enter productive and engaged adult roles.



At the Chamber of Commerce Southern New Jersey luncheon, ASAH Executive Director John J. Mulholland Jr., Esq. thanks Senate Republican Leader Anthony Bucco for his support during the fiscal code fight and his attention to issues impacting students with disabilities.



ASAH met with hundreds of families at the Special Needs Resource Fair and Family Fun Day hosted by The Alliance of Private Special Education Schools of North Jersey.



Students, leaders and staff from ASAH member school Spectrum360 were invited to ring the bell to open the trading day on the New York Stock Exchange to mark Disability Pride Month.

CONGRATULATIONS ASAH 2024 AWARD WINNERS

- **2024 Paraprofessional:** Maria Figueroa , LADACIN - Schroth School
- **2024 Related Services Provider:** Stacy LaCorte, Chapel Hill Academy
- **2024 Educator:** Monica Bruder, The Newgrange School



Maria Figueroa



Stacy LaCorte



Monica Bruder



ASAH recognized the hard work and dedication of the New Jersey Legislative Disability Caucus and honored Caucus leaders with the 2024 Legislator of the Year Award: Senate Co-

Chairs, Anthony M. Bucco and M. Teresa Ruiz, and Assembly Co-Chairs, Aura K. Dunn and Louis D. Greenwald. The Caucus is a bipartisan forum within the New Jersey Legislature for lawmakers and their staff to consider the impact on the disability community when shaping public policies in the Garden State. ASAH is proud to be an active participating community agency in the Caucus.



Lexington Square, 2125 Route 33
Hamilton Square, NJ 08690

Visit our website
at www.asah.org

ABOUT ASAH

ASAHA is a not-for-profit organization of 130 schools and agencies in New Jersey that partner with public schools to provide highly specialized services to more than 10,000 students with severe and complex disabilities whose needs cannot be met locally.

Founded in 1974, ASAH works closely with state leaders to develop policy, promote effective educational practices, and foster productive collaborations between private schools, public school districts, and communities so that the needs of students with significant disabilities are met.



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