

New Hampshire School Administrators Association

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Spotlighting Excellence: Timberlane School District Partnership Supports Students Along the Autism Spectrum

Young children living on the autism spectrum face challenges as vast as the disorder itself.

Some struggle with basic communication. Others face difficulty reading social clues, regulating their behavior, or coping with sensory overload.

In 2023, the Timberlane Regional School District partnered with The New England Center for Children (NECC) in Southborough, Mass., an internationally recognized nonprofit dedicated to ensuring those on the autism spectrum may live the fullest lives possible.

The goal of the year-round program is to provide district students — from Atkinson, Danville, Plaistow and Sandown — who live along the autism spectrum with the same level and quality of services they would receive if they were placed outside the district.

Further, students remain in-district with their peers, providing an additional sense of comfort.

NECC partner classrooms are in two district schools and can serve students from all four towns, including the only PreK partner program in New Hampshire at Sandown Central School, and the elementary partner program at Atkinson Academy. Ten students are being supported this year.

One-to-one instruction seeks to grow students' learning and increase social skills that will allow them to become more independent.

Members of the Timberlane leadership team presented the ongoing success of this effort to the state Board of Education on Thursday, Dec. 12. They were joined by parents Casey Finn, Matthew Bleisch and Lindsay Bleisch, who shared stories about their children's growth. Special Education teacher Amanda Azevedo, whose child attends a partner classroom, also spoke.

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A message from the New Hampshire School Administrators Association

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