



NHCASD Meeting Minutes September 26, 2025
In Person Concord School District
The Board Room- 22 Liberty Street -Concord NH 03301

Agenda Welcome and Roll Call Introductions (Admin)

*Determination of Quorum

Public Comments and/or Announcements

Acceptance of the July Meeting Minutes (VOTE)

ATin New Hampshire – Sara Valli

Department of Health and Human Services and Bureau of Developmental Services Update
(Jessica Gorton and Dee Dunn Tierney)

Committee Update:

- HB 140 – Blue Envelope Committee
- Annual Report Discussion
- By-laws committee
- Membership Committee

October Meeting planning

- Dates for November & December Meeting



Members Attendance

Position/Agency/ Organization	Representative	Meeting Status
(a) The governor, or designee.	VACANT	
(b) The commissioner of the department of education, or designee.	Kate Scheer	
	Alternate: TBD	
(c) The commissioner of the department of health and human services, or designee	Deirdre Dunn Tierney	Present In-Person
	Alternate: Lisa Fontaine Storez	
(d) The director of the division of public health services, department of health and human services, or designee.	Courtney Keen	
	Alternate: Amanda Merrill	Present In-Person
(e) The bureau chief of the bureau of developmental services, department of health and human services, or designee.	Jessica Gorton	Present Virtual
	Alternate: TBD	
(f) The bureau chief of the bureau of behavioral health, department of health and human services, or designee.	Carolyn Lewis	
	Alternate: TBD	
(g) The director of the Institute on Disability, University of New Hampshire, or designee.	Lesley Blecharczyk	Present In-Person
	Alternate: Vacant	
(h) A special education director, appointed by the New Hampshire Association of Special Education Administrators.	Jane Bergeron-Beaulieu	
	Alternate: Shelly Fagen	Present In-Person
(i) The president of the New Hampshire Medical Society, or designee.	VACANT	
(j) A representative of the New Hampshire Developmental Disabilities Council, appointed by the council.	Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre, Vice Chair	Present In-Person
	Alternate: TBD	
(k) An individual who has an autism spectrum disorder, appointed by the governor.	Amy Frechette	Present In-Person



(l) A family member of a person who has an AUTISM spectrum disorder, appointed by the governor.	VACANT	
(m) A representative of the Community Support Network, Inc., appointed by such organization.	Marissa Berg	Present In-Person
	Alternate: TBD	
(n) A representative of the New Hampshire Psychological Association, appointed by the association.	Michelle Ronayne	Present Virtual
	Alternate: Jena Motolla	
(o) The director of the office of Medicaid business and policy, department of health and human services, or designee.	Vernon Clough	Present In-Person
	Alternate: TBD	
(p) Up to 5 additional members, nominated by the council and appointed by the governor	VACANT	
(q) A person who has an autism spectrum disorder, appointed by the council.	Gina Cannon	Present In-Person
(r) A representative of the New Hampshire Nurses' Association, appointed by the association	Julianne Taylor	
	Alternate: Paula MacKinnon	
(s) A licensed speech-language pathologist, appointed by the New Hampshire Speech-Language-Hearing Association, Inc	Kathryn Greenslade	Present In-Person
	Alternate: TBD	

Guest-

Steven Ayotte, Karen Blake, Max Thomas & Sara Valli

Quorum Confirmation and Attendance

Shanon Smith conducted roll call to confirm attendance and establish quorum. The council confirmed that quorum requirements were met, with 15 members total and 8 required for quorum. A total of 10 members were present in person.

Public Comments and/or Announcements

- New Hampshire Council on Developmental Disabilities has a draft five-year plan (2026-2031). This will be open for public input via listening sessions and an email with plain language.



- The Advocate New Hampshire conference is scheduled for October 17th, 2025 at UNH in Durham, Co-planned by Disability advocacy organizations.
- A Legislative Service Request (LSR) has been submitted proposing the repeal of the New Hampshire Council on Autism Spectrum Disorder. At this stage, it is only a titled proposal (LSR 2026-2933), sponsored by Wayne McDonald. Further details are expected and will be discussed in upcoming meetings. The legislative session will resume in January. All LSRs and proposed policies are publicly available on the New Hampshire General Court website.

Acceptance of the July Meeting Minutes (VOTE)

Amanda moved to approve July minutes as written, providing corrections. Marissa second.

- Clarify language on DHHS update, bullet 2; Family Centered Early Supports and Services.
- Jessica Gorton attendance was virtual.
 - ✓ Motioned passed with these two corrections, all in favor: Deirdre Dunn, Amanda Merrill, Jessica Gorton, Lesley Blecharezyk, Shelly Fagan, Isadora Rodrigues-Legendre, Amy Frechette, Marissa Berg, Gina Cannon, Kathryn Greenslade,
 - Abstained; Vernon Clough & Michelle Ronayne.

ATin New Hampshire – Sara Valli

Sarah Valli, a Speech and Language Pathologist, Assistive Technology Specialist, and the current Director of ATinNH. ATinNH (Assistive Technology in New Hampshire, is the state's comprehensive program dedicated to providing access to assistive technology (AT) for individuals with disabilities. Assistive technology can be a valuable part of an individual's toolkit. ATinNH is housed in the IOD at UNH. AtinNH serves as a vital resource for families, educators, employers and service providers by offering training, device demonstration, and consultations.

ATin New Hampshire provides -

- devices demonstrations on a variety of different assistive technology
- short-term loans (up to 45 days) device reuse and refurbishment
- partner with REM, they manage device reuse – refurbished and resold at discount
- offer finance activities, newest one is the discount purchasing program
- fabrication
- technical training, this could be for groups, schools, organizations, individuals and state agencies
- Assistive technology can support individuals across various environments, including at home, in schools, in the community, and at work. Examples include:
 - ✓ low-tech - picture cards, checklists, raised buttons, pencil grips
 - ✓ mid-tech - timers, electric can openers, talking photo albums, adapted utensils



- ✓ high-tech - AI notetakers, speech-generating devices, AAC apps, computers
- Suno AI – you can use to create songs using anything
- Apps for time management -family calendars, alarms/reminders, goal setting
- Mobility -seats, walker, tummy time, Trip-trap chairs, peapod seats and others
- Sensory & developmental toys- number of switches adapted toys, which is part of the fabrications – 4H and robotic groups are 3D printing and making adapted switches that will be available to families and school. Also working on adaptive video game controllers.
- Lending library includes a wide variety of adaptive kits – art, kitchen, handwriting, sensory, mobility aids, and communication devices
- Accessible Educational Materials (AEM)- links are available in slide presentation.
- Everway- screen readers, PDF readers, word prediction, dictation software
- Genio Notes- is an AI notetaker, will record and taking notes of what is happening.

Equipment demonstrations of assistive technology devices are offered through a network of eleven partner organizations across the state. These demonstrations allow individuals to explore and compare various AT devices and software before making a purchase or funding decision. The demonstrations cover a wide range of device categories, including vision, hearing, speech communication, learning and cognitive development, mobility, daily living, environmental adaptations, transportation, computer access, and recreation.

Device loan programs allow individuals to borrow assistive technology devices for short-term use. This enables trial use in real-life settings such as the home, school, or workplace.

Equipment Reuse supports the redistribution of gently used assistive technology devices through partnerships with the Refurbished Equipment Marketplace (REM). This program helps individuals access AT devices at a significantly reduced cost—or at no cost—promoting both affordability and environmental sustainability.

Training, Education, and Outreach includes a wide range of activities designed to raise awareness and build capacity around assistive technology. These efforts include professional development workshops, community presentations, webinars, and policy education sessions. The goal is to equip individuals, families, educators, service providers, and policymakers with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively use and advocate for assistive technology.

NH AT Discounted Booklet includes only items currently available at a discounted price.

Lending Library offers a variety of resources, including assistive technology devices, tools, and materials available for short-term loans.

The presentation will be added to the webpage materials once the updated version has been received. There will be a new website coming out in the next few weeks.



Department of Health and Human Services and Bureau of Developmental Services Update (Jessica Gorton and Dee Dunn Tierney)

- In August, the Office of Special Education conducted a weeklong visit to review the policies, practices, and procedures related to Early Supports and Services and the preschool special education system. The team is currently awaiting feedback and any potential corrective actions. Overall, the visit was a positive experience.
- A recent listening session was held for the Developmental Disabilities (DD) and Acquired Brain Disorder (ABD) waivers, which are scheduled for renewal next year by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). These sessions are held before any rewriting begins, to allow individuals to share input and information. For those who missed the initial session, additional opportunities to participate will be available. A formal public comment period will also be held in the future.
- Ashley Wilson will be leaving her position as a Bureau Liaison for BDS as she relocates out of state. Due to the current hiring freeze, the team is now down two liaisons, which has impacted on staffing capacity.

Membership Committee Update

HB 140 – Blue Envelope Committee:

The committee held its second meeting with the DMV and key stakeholders and is progressing toward a mock-up of the Blue Envelope. This tool is designed to support drivers with Autism or related needs during traffic stops. One side of the envelope will include instructions, visual aids, and emergency contact information for the driver, while the other side will provide guidance for law enforcement officers. Envelopes must be picked up at the DMV with appropriate documentation. Participation is entirely voluntary for individuals.

Annual Report Discussion

The Annual Report is currently in the early draft stage and has been shared with the Council. It will cover the reporting period from July 2024 through June 2025.

A small group: Amy, Kathryn, Isadora, and Shanon, will meet within the next two weeks to refine the draft, with the goal of having it ready for a Council vote at the next meeting.

All other members are encouraged to review the draft and share their feedback in writing with the Council Administrator.

By-laws committee

Gina and Marissa met to develop a draft of the revised bylaws. This draft will be included with the materials for the October meeting. The committee would also like to have further discussion at the next meeting regarding the Council's charge.



Membership Committee

The committee is currently working to schedule a meeting. While there are no new membership applications to review currently, the group plans to address some housekeeping items, including the lack of response from the Governor's Office on recent nominations.

Marissa received a message from Representative Stringham, who expressed interest in how the Council is doing. He had previously supported last year's proposed legislation. Marissa shared updates on the Council's current work and asked if he could advocate for the Governor to approve the pending membership appointments currently awaiting action on her desk.

We can continue to nominate, as we have a couple of vacancies.

Meeting planning

Since the regularly scheduled November and December meetings fall very close to Thanksgiving and Christmas, December 5th has been proposed as a combined meeting date to cover both months.

Isadora motioned to cancel the regularly scheduled November and December meetings and instead, hold one combined meeting on December 5, 2025, from 12:30 PM to 2:00 PM. Deirdre seconds.

- ✓ Motion passes with a combined meeting to be held on December 5th, 2025, from 12:30 to 2:00, all in favor: Deirdre Dunn, Amanda Merrill, Jessica Gorton, Lesley Blecharezyk, Shelly Fagan, Isadora Rodrigues-Legendre, Amy Frechette, Marissa Berg, Vernon Clough, Gina Cannon, Kathryn Greenslade,
 - Michelle Roayne left before meeting ended.

Meeting Adjourn

Kathryn motioned to adjourn the meeting. Isadora seconded. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 2:04