

We Do



Or·di·nar·y

(ôr'dn-ěr'ē)

Adjective

1. with no special or distinctive features; normal.

Synonyms: usual, normal, standard, typical, common, average

Example: Each of our students wakes to an 'ordinary' day, full of promise and good things.



Mary Oliver's poem "The Summer Day," asks:
*Tell me, what is it you plan to do
With your one wild and precious life?*

Here at the Monarch School of New England, that question is being answered in any number of ways.

We are a school for students with significant disabilities, ages 5 to 21. What may be *ordinary* for a student in a 'typical' school is nothing short of *extraordinary* for a student at the Monarch School of New England.

Every morning, staff greets each student as they come off the bus. Time is taken to check in with each child or young adult, asking about their evening, their sleep and how they are prepared to start THIS day.

So what might a day look like for one of our students?

What are the tasks, challenges, joys and opportunities that a child at our Foss elementary / middle school site or a young adult at our Williams regional high school / vocational center, might encounter?

Explore with us, a day-in-the-life of four of our students: *Bella, Kara, Tyler and Hunter.*

Learn about education, assistive technology, therapies and work-based learning here at our school.

See how we take the *ordinary* and make it into the *extraordinary*.

your one wild and precious life...



Bella and Academics

Bella has been at the Monarch School of New England for a little over a year. Each day, she greets her classmates by name, and in some cases, their belongings as well: "Hi Gage," "Hi Gage's backpack ..."

Bella knows what's important to each person and wants to be sure that both—the person and his 'stuff'—are recognized.

A determined sixteen-year old, Bella is social, funny and loves to read. Like other high school students, there are topics she could care less about, while others, such as the weather, outer space, and technology, get her excited.

The Monarch School of New England's curriculum aligns with the New Hampshire Education Frameworks and Common Core Standards. Reading to learn about topics related to the curriculum, as well as for enjoyment, are important parts of Bella's academic program,

which has been created specifically for her.

Reading is also a comforting activity for Bella. The routine of turning and counting the pages is relaxing for her, especially if she is having a tough day. It is extraordinary that Bella has the opportunity to cultivate something she loves, not only for learning alongside her peers, but for her own enjoyment as well.

Bella



"Her greatest strength is her determination."

Kara and Assistive Technology

It is lunchtime in Kara's classroom.

She sits upright in a supported chair, with a wide tray table in front of her and wears a bright, blue stretchy vest over her shirt. She holds the built up red handle on her spoon to bring a bite of cottage cheese to her mouth, then sets the spoon back in her bowl, which is firmly attached to the tray. Kara locates her cup, reaching across her body to get a sip of water, and sets the cup gently back on the tray.

Around her are the sounds of her classmates as they too, eat lunch.

Kara is a happy, energetic fifteen year old who is always on the move. She is independent, likes to explore her surroundings on her own terms and prefers to have her own space.

Since starting at the Monarch School of New England, Kara's occupational therapy team, teachers and other therapists

have collaborated to help her learn how to calm her body so she can accept guidance, instruction and learning.

Movement breaks, adapted tools and equipment also support Kara's overall programming, making her more open to possibilities for learning throughout her day, and a more independent young adult who can now eat with her friends.

From ordinary to extraordinary: for Kara to recognize that her team is here to open up her world. And for Kara to be ready for it.

Kara



"Kara is a happy girl."



Monarch School *of New England*





"You'll never beat me!"

Tyler and the Therapy Program

Every Friday morning, with a therapy team nearby, Tyler gets on the stationary bike at the YMCA of Strafford County. His enthusiasm is contagious; he always greets staff members behind the desk and frequently challenges his fellow bike riders to race him.

Tyler is a tall, silly, hard working, fifteen-year old.

What is fairly common is that many fifteen-year olds are interested in going to the gym and exercising.

What is uncommon is that for a student like Tyler, his exercise program and academics both make up his school day. Through the physical therapy program, using the stationary bike and other equipment helps Tyler develop the strength, endurance and coordination needed to fully participate.

Physical Therapy and the other therapeutic programs Tyler participates in at the Monarch School of New England have helped him develop a newfound self-confidence and a willingness to try new activities, especially out in the community.

Tyler can now bring his truly extraordinary sense of pride in his accomplishments and joyful, competitive spirit to all aspects of his day.

Tyler



"I like working at Jarvis with Moe."

Hunter and Work-Based Learning

When Hunter arrives at Jarvis Cutting Tools in Rochester, New Hampshire for his 'internship,' as he calls it, he brings his A game.

As part of the Monarch School of New England's work-based learning program, Hunter is learning new skills with the goal of paid employment once he turns 21 and graduates from school.

Going to 'work,' motivates him.

At fifteen, Hunter is fun-loving and social, especially with adults. Yet he is also serious and focused, especially around topics he is passionate about. At Jarvis, Hunter incorporates his interests in technology, design and drafting into real world problem solving.

He brings what he is learning in the workplace to his studies at school. He connects his academics with his work experience in that using a web-based program in

the classroom, he designed a bit similar to a cutting tool he packages at Jarvis. Amazing...

THIS is the goal of our school's work-based learning program: to prepare our students for meaningful employment upon graduation.

Hunter is on his way.

Hunter



Throughout these pages, you have learned more about the spirit and beauty of the Monarch School of New England.

We are a unique school, with a focus on the abilities of children and young adults with significant disabilities.

Our key strength is our talented and dedicated staff—men and women who genuinely care about the lives of our students. From education to therapies, from assistive technology to work-based learning, each person works to ensure our students gain the skills to thrive.

My vision for this school is for us to be the best we can be at what WE DO.

What does this mean? Knowing our students and understanding what motivates them so we can

help them gain the skills to be successful in their daily lives. Preparing our students for life after they graduate, teaching them skills they will need to know for work and community placements.

And above all, believing in our students—these amazing children and young adults: in who they are and in what's possible for each of them.

This is the work WE DO. We are good at it.

“Unlimited possibilities for students with special needs.”

It's what we're all about.

Diane Bessey, M.Ed., PT
Executive Director



Monarch School of New England
Community Report

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Ex·traor·di·nar·y

(ĭk-strôr'dn-ĕr'ē)

Adjective

1. very unusual or remarkable.

Synonyms: remarkable, exceptional, amazing, astonishing, unbelievable

Example: We at the Monarch School of New England take this concept of 'ordinary' and turn it upside down, making a day 'extraordinary' bringing new learning, adventure and possibilities to our students.



Monarch School
of New England

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