

2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT

EB Office:

Vice-President: Public Schools – Michele Montmorency

Primary Accomplishments in the year 2021-2022: Established a Public Schools Committee. This committee met monthly to discuss a variety of current issues/concerns impacting the public school SLP. Some topics included:

- AAC - standardization needs for evaluations.
- How has the virtual school year impacted this school year?
- Conversation on SEL in our schools.
- Para professionals within our buildings (turn over, etc.)
- How the lack of understanding/knowledge of “special education” with administration, union reps and general education teachers impacts our role.
- MEA has a strong presence for general education teachers, but we feel underrepresented by the union!
- Need for stronger SLP union representation within public schools (advocating for our salary, based on rigorous master’s program and responsibilities within the school, vs other salaried staff with less credentials). Ideas on how to work WITH administrators to gain more support within our districts.
- Overages - payments for overages ... looking for any contract language
 - a. Contract language was not found to support overages in our schools. The request came from an SLP working in the Detroit Public Schools.
 - b. Some districts are considering hiring SLP on a “contractual” basis for overages. Discussion was had regarding the potential need for an LLC, tax implications, can one work beyond a full-time position and how would that look? - Saturdays, before/after school, etc.
- Discussion on our list of duties and responsibilities. The list gets longer and longer. How can we advocate for ourselves with administration and during contract negotiations? We need a strong advocate to support SLPs in the school setting. We are already overwhelmed and not experts in advocating for our needs with folks who don’t understand the legal complexities of our daily duties (Medicaid billing, service delivery minutes, etc.) along with maintaining our licensure and certification.
- Medicaid - A big topic today regarding time spent on billing, parameters placed on us by Medicaid for billing purposes (size of a group, time minimums, etc.) *Some SLPs are spending up to 2 hours/day on Medicaid billing. How can this be simplified and less draining on the SLPs?
- Need for basic “negotiation” training at the university level (union contracts and base salary).

- Muskegon County is finishing up their revised guidelines for SLPs in the schools. Many counties are creating their own guidelines. *There continues to be a desire for MSHA to update the state guidelines

(AAC, articulation norms, etc. have changed since last update.) Members pay dues expecting the state organization to provide this basic need. However, there is a lack of folks to work on it (for many reasons, time commitment is a big one) ...how can we incentivize volunteers to commit to this project?

- Active Shooter training - This topic was brought up by our SLP from Oakland county. There is a need for visual supports for our special need's students during active shooter drills and/or the real thing:("Story Board That" was suggested as well as "Board maker" for creating visuals to be used for this situation. Does ASHA have anything in this regard??

1. **Major Challenges:** The logistic of finding a meeting time that worked for everyone was logistical challenge for the committee. Our monthly meetings alternated between 5:00-7:00pm.

Within our meetings, some of our identified challenges within the public schools included a lack of a union representative with a Special Education background at the State level and District level. Most representatives are well versed and supportive of the general educators needs, and lacking in the understanding of the needs of folks in special education. Greater representation would serve us well.

Another area that was discussed included the desire to gain greater skills/training in negotiating our contracts. Many ideas were exchanged among committee members.

An updated MSHA guidelines continues to be desired, however lack of volunteers impacts the progress.

2. **Plans/Directions for 2022-2023:** A new Vice President of Public Schools (Anthony Trevett) will take over the Vice President of Public Schools position beginning in March, 2022 at MSHA's annual conference.