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## From the President

Hello MSHA Members,

I am incredibly honored and excited to introduce myself as your new President of the Michigan Speech-Language Hearing Association. I look forward to serving this dedicated community and working alongside you to advance our profession across the state. I am the Director of Autism Programming for Comprehensive Speech and Therapy Center in Jackson.



I have been an active member of MSHA for many years and have served on the Executive Board during that time. This experience, coupled with my passion for our field, will allow me to continue the incredible forward momentum and vision initiated by our Past President, Ana Claudia Harten. On a personal note, I am married to my incredibly supportive husband, Matt, and together we are raising three wonderful children: Madison, Seth, and Gavin.

Our recent virtual conference was a resounding success! A major highlight was the official unveiling of our new MSHA logo during the event, as you'll see featured in this newsletter. Thanks to the hard work and commitment of our planning committee and presenters, we were able to offer more continuing education credits than in the past two conferences. I sincerely hope that everyone took advantage of the wealth of knowledge and opportunity available through the On-Demand sessions. Moving forward, please watch the MSHA newsletter and our social media channels for announcements. We are continually working to secure more continuing education opportunities throughout the year, and these will be the primary sources for updates.

I encourage you to consider taking a more active role in MSHA. We currently have open positions on the Executive Board, which is an excellent opportunity to directly shape the future of our association. There are also many supportive positions and committees within the association that offer a gentler introduction to leadership. Even the smallest contribution of your time and expertise helps us to work toward our core goals: influencing public policy and awareness, creating professional development opportunities for all members, and fostering future leaders in the profession. Your input is invaluable, and we need your passion and perspective to continue growing!

I look forward to connecting with many of you in the coming months and continuing to build on MSHA's legacy of excellence. Thank you for the trust you have placed in me; I am humbled and ready to serve as your President.

*Sarah Killinger, M.A., CCC-SLP, BCBA*  
MSHA President

## Advocacy Updates

### National Updates

Click the links for important information and resources from ASHA:

- [Executive Orders Impacting Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology](#)
- View other updates: [Advocacy News](#)

### Update on Proposed Definition of "Professional Degree" Programs

- The proposed definition of "Professional Degree" programs would exclude audiology and speech-language pathology
- ASHA submitted two comment letters and two petition letters to the Department of Education to urge it to categorize audiology and speech-language pathology as professional degrees. Final rule is expected this summer. Professionals are encouraged to contact their legislators about this issue. Check for updates [here](#).



## Support Our Mission

Your donation helps us connect, empower, and advance our community through meaningful programs, advocacy, and resources. Every gift makes a difference - thank you for supporting our work! To make a donation via credit card, please scan the QR code or click [here](#).

Check donations can be sent to:

MSHA  
P.O. Box 45,  
Buchanan, MI 49107-9998



*The Michigan Speech-Language-Hearing Association (MSHA) is a tax-exempt 501(c)(6) organization, EIN 23-7179613. Contributions to MSHA are not tax-deductible. No goods or services will be provided in exchange for the contribution.*

## In Memory of Sandy Glista



The Michigan Speech-Language-Hearing Association has lost one of its most beloved and influential members. Sandra "Sandy" Glista passed away peacefully at home on Sunday, February 1, 2026 surrounded by her family. For those of us fortunate enough to know her, Sandy was a force of nature, a trusted mentor, and a tireless advocate who fundamentally shaped speech-language pathology services in Michigan.

Michigan's speech-language pathology profession is forever changed because Sandy Glista was here. She built the foundation that allowed our profession to thrive—from licensure to the scholarship programs that support students today. She trained generations of clinicians who now serve families across our state. She showed us what it means to fight for what matters while never losing sight of the people at the heart of our work.

Sandy's Life Story Service was held on Saturday, March 7, 2026. You can view Sandy's Life Story/Obituary [here](#).

## MSHA 2026 Virtual Conference

As I conclude my term as Vice President of Professional Development and Education, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all who contributed to the success of this year's annual conference.

This year's conference looked quite different from those in the past. The decision to transition to a fully virtual format was not made lightly, but it was a necessary step. I am appreciative of the MSHA Board for their flexibility and support throughout this process.

I would also like to extend my thanks to MI Digital, whose team provided exceptional service in developing the virtual platform and offering technical support during the event. Their professionalism and responsiveness were invaluable both during the planning stages and throughout the conference itself.

To our presenters, thank you for delivering engaging and insightful sessions. Your expertise created meaningful opportunities for learning and professional growth. Our speech language pathologists and audiologists gained valuable knowledge that they can carry forward into their daily practice.

I would also like to recognize our sponsors and exhibitors. Your support made this conference possible and provided attendees with access to important resources and information.

As in previous years, the conference held a poster session that was well received, where students successfully showcased their projects and research.

A special thank you goes to the conference planning committee—Leslie DeNardis, Ana Claudia Harten, Scott Thorbjornsen, Sarah Killinger, Marissa Swanson, and Lisa Register—for their dedication and countless hours of work behind the scenes. Their commitment ensured a high-quality experience for all involved.

Most importantly, thank you to our attendees for joining us for two days of live sessions, along with additional on-demand content. We were pleased to welcome 250 participants this year. The feedback we have received thus far has been overwhelmingly positive, particularly regarding the speakers, schedule, and virtual platform. It is truly rewarding to know that our efforts resulted in a meaningful and engaging experience.

We highly value your input and encourage you to share any additional feedback. Suggestions for future topics and speakers are especially appreciated, as they play a vital role in shaping upcoming conferences. Please feel free to contact us at [conference@mislha.org](mailto:conference@mislha.org) with any comments or recommendations.

As we move into the spring season, I wish you continued growth and joy in both your professional and personal endeavors.

Sincerely,

Justine Walker  
Past VP of Professional Development



MSHA 2026 VIRTUAL CONFERENCE:

# LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

EMBRACING CHANGES FOR GROWTH

# MSHA

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE MSHA 2026 CONFERENCE



AbleNet



## Public School Committee Updates

### Thank you, Public Schools Committee Members!

- Thank you to our 2025/26 MSHA Public Schools Committee (PSC) members for your voice, advocacy and professional learning supports across this past year!
- Many thanks to Mallory Friank, Christina Frenzel, Angela Wells, Jennifer Ellis, Heather Knudson, Cassandra Griffin, Hannah High, and Diane Katakowski who met monthly via zoom to ensure that MSHA members working in Michigan Public Schools had the guidance, professional learning, and professional practice tools they needed to advocate for their work and students!

### Highlighted accomplishments of the PSC this year included:

- Foundational professional learning for the 2025 MSH Guidelines, including sessions at the 2025 and 2026 MSHA Conference, the MAASE 2025 Summer Institute, the Fall MSHA Public Schools Conference, and on-demand guided reading PL slides for SLP Teams in Schools
- Administrator advocacy via the 2025 Guidelines Administrator Need to Know Smore
- MI School SLP Survey for MSHA members
- Conferring of the Outstanding School Clinician Award

### Looking for 2026/27 Public School Committee Members

- Are you an SLP working in a Michigan public school? Are you looking for ways to share your voice and insight across the state as a MSHA member?
- The MSHA Public Schools Committee is recruiting members for 2026/27! Please read all about the priorities and work of our PSC and indicate your commitment via this form: <https://forms.gle/BGB9EtW5eqvoStSu9>
- Response deadline is April 7, 2026.

### ASHA 2026 Schools Survey

- Every 2 years ASHA conducts the Schools Survey to gather information about professional issues affecting school-based speech-language pathologists. Results from this survey are presented on the ASHA Website.
- If you have not already done so, please share your voice in ASHA's 2026 Schools Survey.

### ASHA's Guidance on Generative AI Use in Professional Practice Settings

- Questions about ethical, responsible use of AI in your school practice? Check out ASHA's Artificial Intelligence (AI): Additional Resources and Guidance.

## Outstanding School Clinician Award



Congratulations to Bridgette Pletz, MSHA's 2026 Outstanding School Clinician! This award celebrates MSHA members working in Michigan public schools who go above and beyond in their provision of school-based services.

Bridgette was chosen as the 2026 winner because of the exceptional school she provides at her elementary school in Macomb County. Not only does Bridgette support students with IEPs in her K-5th grade classrooms, she also supports students with more complex communication needs receiving core instruction from a special education teacher and has created strong systems of prevention for all students, especially those at risk for language and literacy learning delays.

She has taken the time to build positive, supportive relationships with students, parents, colleagues and administrators; her commitment to ongoing professional learning and growth is an inspiration to all of us working in schools.

Congratulations, Bridgett, on your achievement!





## Therapy Provider Liaison Meeting

Therapy Provider Liaison meetings are an opportunity to review Medicaid policy updates and FFS procedural changes or provider concerns in an open forum.

Please join the Medicaid ListServ to subscribe for additional details--either the The Pro\_Prov, Clinics, or Inst\_Prov would receive the official Medicaid L-Letter Meeting notice.

To make your selections visit:

<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/MIDHHS/subscriber/new>



## Volunteer

MSHA is made possible by people like you! Volunteer today with the following MSHA committees to help us continue our work.

- Professional Development & Education
- Public Schools
- Finance
- Advocacy
- Membership
- Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion
- Healthcare
- Public Relations
- Student & University Affairs



## Dues Reminder

To maintain uninterrupted access to member benefits, please submit your annual member dues:

- Individual Membership - \$80
- Student Membership - \$40

To renew your membership, log into your [account](#) and follow the instructions. If you are a new member, you can click [here](#) to register.



## Contact Us

P.O. Box 45, Buchanan, MI 49107-9998

**General Inquiries:** [info@mislha.org](mailto:info@mislha.org)  
**Conference Inquiries:** [conference@mislha.org](mailto:conference@mislha.org)  
**CE-Related Inquiries:** [CEAdmin@mislha.org](mailto:CEAdmin@mislha.org)

Executive Board & Advisory Assembly

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