

Speech Language Pathologist

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Advocating for our profession

What is a Speech Language Pathologist?



Speech-language pathologists (SLP's) work to prevent, assess, diagnose, and treat speech, language, social communication, cognitive-communication, and swallowing disorders in children and adults

"Who Are Speech-Language Pathologists, and What Do They Do?" *American Speech-Language-Hearing Association*, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, www.asha.org/public/Who-Are-Speech-Language-Pathologists/.

Scope of practice

SLP's work with people of all ages, from babies to adults. SLP's treat many types of communication and swallowing problems. These include problems with:

- Speech Sounds
- Language Disorders
- Literacy
- Social Communication
- Voice
- Fluency
- Cognitive Communication
- Feeding and swallowing



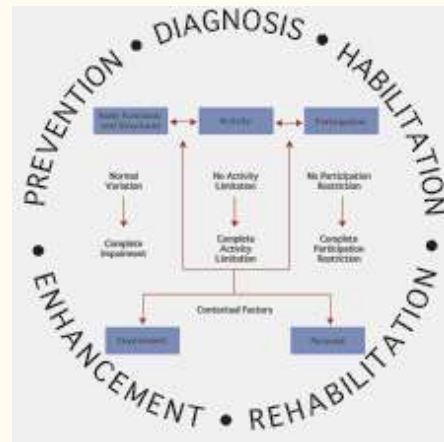
Responsibilities of school based SLPs

Professional practice responsibilities

- Advocacy and outreach
- Supervision
- Education
- Administration and leadership
- Research

Service delivery responsibilities

- Collaboration
- Counseling
- Prevention and wellness
- Screening
- Assessment
- Treatment
- Modalities, Technology, and Instrumentation
- Population and Systems



"Scope of Practice in Speech-Language Pathology." *American Speech-Language-Hearing Association*, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 1 Jan. 1970, www.asha.org/policy/SP2016-00343/.

The Journal of School Leadership job description for SLP's

“In addition to direct service provision, SLPs are responsible for prevention, assessment, program design, and complying with federal and state mandates related to individualized education plan development, Medicaid billing, and report writing. SLPs are also expected to collaborate with other service providers in the school (e.g., general education teachers, reading specialists, para-educators, special education teachers, occupational therapists, physical therapists) to support the overall educational goals of students. These collaborations may take on a variety of team teaching approaches, in which each service provider has a specific role in supporting a student's skill development towards an educational goal.”

F Farquharson, Kelly, et al. “How to Recruit, Support, and Retain Speech-Language Pathologists in Public Schools.” *Journal of School Leadership*, Oct. 2020, doi:10.1177/1052684620966062.

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1052684620966062>

Organizations that hire SLPs

SLP's have the option to work in several different capacities. Some of these include:

- Private Practice
- Physician's offices
- Pediatric Hospitals
- Acute care hospitals
- Schools
- Colleges and universities
- Rehabilitation centers
- Long term healthcare facilities.
- Contractual agencies
- Early childhood centers

Requirements to become an SLP

A speech pathology license in California requires:

- Specialized master's degree in communication disorders
- 60 credit hours in masters degree courses
- 36 weeks of post graduate experience through a clinical fellowship program totalling a minimum of 1,260 hours
- Pass the Praxis Speech Language Pathology Exam for national certification
- Apply for license and keep license current
 - 24 hours of Continuing Education Classes every two years for state licence and 30 hours every three years to keep current with ASHA certification

"Online Speech-Language Pathology Graduate Programs in California: SLP Schools and Degrees in CA." *Online Speech-Language Pathology Graduate Degree Programs | Your Guide to Communicative Science and Disorders Education*, 30 Apr. 2021, www.speechpathologygraduateprograms.org/california/#gain-experience.

Side by side comparisons of national certification across educational professionals

Includes a look at requirements for certification, cost for maintenance, renewal requirements and reasons to become nationally certified. The below chart compares National Board Certified Teachers, School Psychologists, Speech Pathologists, Occupational Therapists and School Counselors.

[A Comparison of National Certifications Across School Professionals](#)

Requirements for SLP versus School Psychologists

SLP (education)	School Psychologist (education)
Master's degree	Master's degree
Complete 475 hours of direct clinical treatment prior to master's degree (unpaid)	Requires 450 hours of practicum (unpaid).
Complete Clinical Fellowship Year following receipt of master's degree (paid) under the supervision of a licensed SLP. A minimum of 1,260 hours and a 36 week practicum to achieve licensure.	A 1,200 hour practicum is required for license.
Receive a passing score on the PRAXIS exam in Speech Language Pathology for national certification.	Receive a passing score on the School Psychologist PRAXIS exam for national certification.

CUSD Responsibilities of SLP versus School Psychologist

SLP (job duties)	School Psychologist (job duties)
Initial speech-language evaluations	Initial cognitive-behavioral evaluation
Triennial SL evaluations	Triennial CB evaluations
Write evaluations	Write evaluations
Develop measurable goals	Some perform counseling with a small number of students
Case carry speech-only students and develop their IEP's	
Provide Tx (per services listed in IEP) to up to 55 students	

How to recruit, support, and retain SLPs

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Why is there a national shortage of SLP's?

Over the past two decades, there has been a persistent shortage of qualified speech-language pathologists (SLPs) across the United States (US; Edgar & Rosa-Lugo, 2007). This shortage is predicted to continue, as data reported by the American Speech Language Hearing Association (ASHA) from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that there will be a 27% increase in job openings through the year 2028 (ASHA, 2020).

Reasons for shortages include

- . Limited graduate programs with only so many faculty members qualified to teach
- . Extensive training needed to become an SLP
- . Increasing need for SLP services due to aging populations, better early identification, advances in healthcare that improve the survival rate of premature infants, increasing scope of practice, increases in school enrollment.

"What's Driving the Demand for Speech-Language Pathologists?" *AMN Healthcare*, www.amnhealthcare.com/latest-healthcare-news/speech-language-pathologists/.

Squires, Katie. "Addressing the Shortage of Speech Language Pathologists in School Settings." *Education Resources Information Center*, 2013.

California **insert your state here**

According to the National Bureau of Labor and Statistics, California has the highest employment level in Speech Language Pathologists but it also has the greatest need and shortage of SLP's.

<https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes291127.htm>

Currently on EdJoin there are 708 job vacancies for SLP's in California.

LEA Billing

SLP's participate in LEA billing. LEA Medi-Cal billing provides reimbursement to LEA's for health related services provided by the licensed speech pathologist to Medi-Cal eligible students under the age of 22. Billing for these services is done blindly, requiring us to document and bill for every student on our caseload. We bill for each assessment performed as well as each therapy session. We also periodically participate in Random moment time surveys for Medi-Cal Administrative Activities (SMAA).

Billing for Medi-Cal allows the district to bring in additional funding to help support special education services. In past reports the SLP group generated the most funds of all special education service providers in our district.

Why are we struggling to recruit
and retain SLP's in our district?

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Lack of Qualified Applicants

We receive very few applications for our open positions each year. When we do get an applicant, 95% of them are Clinical Fellowship applicants. This requires a veteran SLP to volunteer to supervise this student for a year. Supervision requirements of a CFY are rigorous.

CFY Supervisor requirements

- Possess a California SLP license
- **Provide minimum of 8 hours of DIRECT monitoring per month**
- Complete a six hour continuing professional development course in supervision training.

Feedback from SLP's that have resigned or declined

Our experience is here... Insert your experience here...

Since 2016, 5 CFY students were hired and once they received their certification, they moved to another district. Each student has shared with us that the reason they left was income. Two students that recently left reported back that,

- “I love but my student loans to become an SLP are in excess of 65K. I have to be able to pay off those student loans and therefore need to obtain a job with a higher salary.”
- “I enjoyed working in ... but I want to buy a house and support myself. I found that moving to ... district would relieve a lot of the financial burden that I currently have.”

Feedback from other districts

- **Fill in local commentary here..** An example or ours- Coordinator at Unified when asked if changing their salary schedule was effective she said, “Our Director worked with HR as we at one time had over 30 agency SLPs; we are a large district. Since the salary increase, we have been able to hire 18 new District SLps over the last two year and our goal is to have the SLP positions fully covered with District hires. We are down to a handful of contracted SLPs.”
- Claudia Dunaway from San Diego Unified said “We focused primarily on the steps between 1 and 10 years of service. We also added a \$2,000 stipend for SLPs who had either their CCC’s or a California State license...which allowed us to hire 60 district SLP’s. We now depend on contracted SLPs to cover only leaves of absence. WE no longer have a shortage, and we saved the district money. **(this is a published article here** <https://www.asha.org/slp/schools/salaries/success-dunaway/>)
- **Insert more commentary here-** had an opening for the 2021-2022 school year. They had numerous applicants and moved 15 applicants to first round interviews. They flew and filled the position in May.

Feedback from local university programs

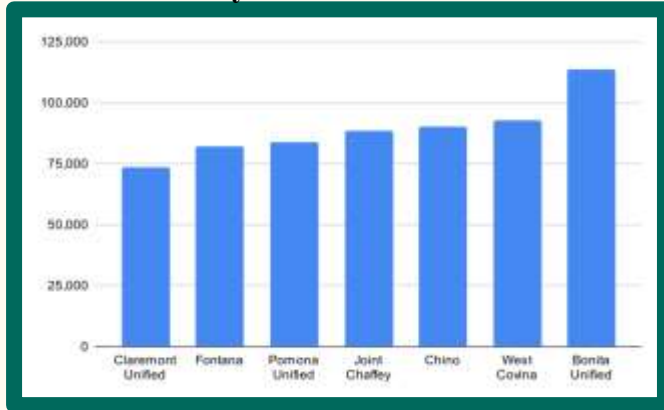
We put our feedback here from Fullerton

- "There is a projected shortage of SLP's into the future. There is no end in sight. At CSHA someone asked about increasing graduating classes by 10% to be able to put out more graduates and the current consensus is no because it isn't feasible. "
- "Each university that has a program puts out about 25 graduates a year. Fullerton will have 25 this year."
- "There will be a large number of SLP's retiring soon which will increase the shortage of SLP's. "
- "Districts all around California are raising their salaries to stay competitive."
- **"If you want to get and keep good SLP's you need to raise your salary schedule."**
- "One Fair Hearing due to unserved students will cost the district.... Districts are seeing this happen more due to children not being served and not being served adequately. Especially districts in more well to do areas like Claremont."
- "The new trend is districts are starting to lose their seasoned SLP's because people want to increase their salary."
- "Using contracted agencies is not fiscally responsible."
- "Districts end up saving money by raising salary schedules. "

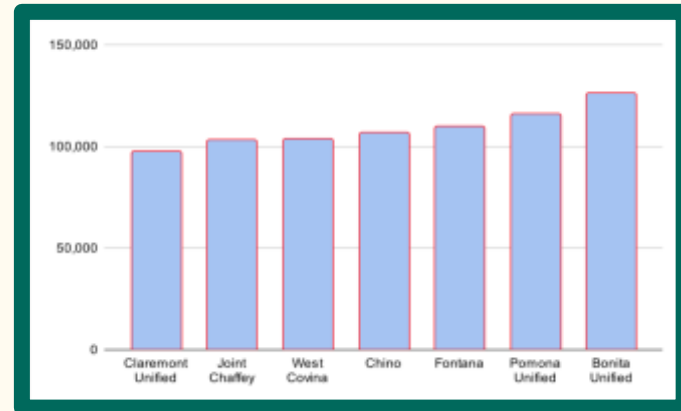
Neighboring Salary Schedule Comparison Year 2 vs 10

Surrounding districts to us have made changes in order to improve their recruitment and retention. When comparing surrounding districts consistently pay their SLP's 10-15 thousand dollars less across the salary schedule. We inserted comparison charts here I included them as an example

Salary Schedule Year 2



Salary Schedule Year 10



Neighboring Salary Schedule Comparison Year 2 vs 10

Insert graph here with salary comparisons if it applies otherwise delete comparison slides....

ASHA advocates for increasing SLP salary

- Increased salaries assist in **recruiting and retaining qualified professionals**, especially when neighboring districts or states pay more. Salary increase and other compensation are then needed for recruitment and retention to be competitive.
- Extra pay is needed as **compensation for extra time spent on required paperwork**, including Medicaid reimbursement. Some districts increase contract time per day, with pay, for paperwork. Other districts may add extra days of pay at the end of the school year.
- Extra pay may be needed to make the **salaries** of speech-language pathologists and audiologists **comparable to those of other related personnel**. For example, **if school psychologists are paid on a higher pay scale than speech-language pathologists and audiologists, the salary of speech-language pathologists and audiologists should be raised to this higher level.** Such a change may require longer work hours or a longer contract year.
- Increased salaries may be offered to **meet unique local needs**, such as staffing or providing bilingual/bicultural services.

Proposals

Our first proposal to help with recruitment and retention is to align SLP and school psychologist salary schedules. We require the same amount of training and have comparable licensure to practice. SLP's are in high demand with CUSD receiving very few applicants (if any) for open positions. This would greatly increase our recruitment and retention of qualified SLP's.

Insert graph here showing comparisons...

Another Proposal

Add 20% to current salary schedule to increase recruitment and retention. This would make Claremont competitive with surrounding districts such as Pomona Unified.

Insert graph here showing what that would look like

Summary

- CUSD is falling behind with recruitment and retention of SLP's. We are currently not able to hire experienced and tenured SLP's. Every year we struggle to obtain any applicants for our open positions.
- We are undervalued as compared to our professional peers with comparable education, licensure and training.
- A change needs to happen to ensure that we are able to hire to provide federally mandated services to our populations.
- Hiring qualified SLP's will save the district money in the long run by avoiding costly lawsuits and expensive contracted SLP's.
- Having the ability to hire quality SLP's will allow us to provide better services to our families and students.

References

ASHA. (2020). Supply and demand resource list for speech-language pathologists. 627 www.asha.org.

“Scope of Practice in Speech-Language Pathology.” *American Speech-Language-Hearing Association*, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 1 Jan. 1970, www.asha.org/policy/SP2016-00343/.

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Squires, Katie. “Addressing the Shortage of Speech Language Pathologists in School Settings.” *Education Resources Information Center*, 2013.

Additional slides
below that may help
you when
advocating in other
areas.

Slides Advocating for Flexible Schedule (or 3:1 Model)

These were developed by an SLP in Texas. They call their IEP meetings ARD meetings.

Requirements to be an SLP:



- 400 therapy hours (in hospitals, schools, and private clinics) in grad school
- Minimum of a Master's Degree
- 132-question, timed praxis test we must pass
- Certificate of Clinical Competence from national governing board (ASHA)
- License from the state of employment (Texas)
- Work under a licensed SLP for nine months after graduation as a Clinical Fellow, continuing to be observed and evaluated every twelve weeks
- Maintain 10 hours continued training each year including one hour in ethics related course

Effective Practice:



- Extensive training in effective therapy techniques; we conduct Evidence Based Practice
- Therapy may look like play, reading, movement, a specialized curriculum, consultation etc. and we have been trained to adapt almost any type of activity into a teaching moment
- Indirect services are a *crucial* part of therapy (thus flexible service delivery)
- We are governed by our state licensing board and a national organization ([ASHA](#)), so that we have resources to learn and grow our practice as well as a [code of ethics](#)
- More therapy time is not the key; EFFECTIVE therapy is the key. More time in regular class = better progress.
 - Link to presentation of research from Region 13: [How Much Therapy Is Enough?](#)

Science Behind Flexible Service Delivery (previously “Consult Week”):

- SLPs reported increased job satisfaction; ethical practice; ability to meet ARD schedule; and more effective therapy time
- **Teachers** who participated in a collaborative speech-language pathology program were **more aware of the impact of the communication disorder** on their student's abilities and **made more appropriate classroom adaptations** (Ebert & Prelock, 1994).
- **Students** who received a comprehensive classroom teacher and SLP collaborative intervention program achieved **higher scores in listening and writing, and higher abilities in understanding vocabulary** when compared with control peers (Farber & Klein, 1999).
- The collaborative model was **more effective for teaching curricular vocabulary** to students who qualified for speech-language services **than (a) a classroom-based model (with the SLP and classroom teachers working independently) or (b) a traditional pullout model** (Throneburg, Calvert, Sturm, Paramboulas, & Paul, 2000).
- Classroom-based services may be **more effective with regard to generalization than pullout therapy services** for some areas of language intervention and may result in greater generalization of new skills to other natural settings (Cirrin et al., 2010; McGinty & Justice, 2006).
- “Education law (the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, **IDEA 2004**) **supports serving students in the least restrictive environment (LRE)**, which can be interpreted not only as a place but also as inclusion with typical peers.”([Flynn, 2010](#))
- “By adjusting service delivery in such a way that **consultation becomes the primary mode of service delivery speech therapists effectively duplicate themselves**. By extension, the therapist then makes a greater amount of impact to more educators and, more importantly, to more students”. (Bugaj, 2010.)
 - [ASHA Presentation on Flexible Service Model](#)

Speech Teacher (That's Not What We Are):



- Why are Speech-Language Pathologists not called Speech Teachers? A Speech Teacher teaches public speaking and is trained in pedagogy. A Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) is a health care professional who evaluates and treats communication and swallowing disorders and studied Anatomy and Physiology, Neurology, Swallowing, Motor Speech Disorders, Assessment, Audiology, Phonetics, Articulation & Phonology, and Pediatric and Adult Language Disorders
- Misnomer focuses on articulation and removes all the other things we do such as facilitate language (expressive, receptive, pragmatic, AAC)
- Swaps “pathologist” for “teacher”--we do teach in a way, but we do SO MUCH MORE
- Is a Physical Therapist a Physical Teacher? Is an Occupational Therapist an Occupational Teacher? Is a Nurse a Health Teacher?
- Don't assume because the SLP isn't with students or is on the computer, that she isn't working
- When a student misses instruction time in class due to assemblies, party day, field trips, STAAR testing, etc. there is no expectation that this will be made up, however there is an expectation that an SLP will make up therapy time that is missed for activities such as these

Plan Time, Customer Service and All the Rest:



- To determine the workload, teachers can count students and evaluators can count assessments. This does not work for the SLPs because they do both activities and so much more!
- Average of 24 hours are spent directly in weekly face to face therapy with 50-55 students or more. This direct time is inflexible from the students' ARD schedules
- The rest of the week is filled with ARD meetings (average of 3 per week), paperwork, assessment, billing, making up therapy -- with a small amount of time (hopefully) dedicated to lunch and planning
- Speech Therapy is a billable service and time is needed to complete documentation and billing in a timely manner in a very complicated system
- Indirect services including consultation with parents/staff, programming devices, professional development, paperwork, billing and lesson planning are crucial to the students' care

Where does the typical day go for an SLP?



Prepare therapy materials
Provide direct therapy sessions
Compile attendance and therapy data
Respond to teacher/admin questions
devices
Respond to parent questions
emails/voicemail
Attend staffings
rare disorders
Prepare ARD paperwork (write IEPs)
practices
Attend ARD meetings
Collaborate with assessment staff
Attend SST meetings
classroom/student visual supports
Schedule (and reschedule) students for therapy
Assist with referral folders

Evaluate
Write e
its
is

Update IEPs
Program communication

Read/Respond to

Research

Research evidence-based

Make

Bill medicaid

Mentor new hires

Responsibility Comparisons (not an exhaustive list)

	<u>SLP OT/PT</u>	<u>LSSP/Diag</u>	<u>ARD Facilitator</u>	<u>SpEd Teacher</u>
Staffings			X	X
		X		X
Schedule ARDs		PEAR/APPLE		X
Complete ARD paperwork		X		X
X	X		X	
Run ARDs			X	X
X				
3rd ARD Notice			X	X
X		X		
Send ARD Paperwork Home		X		X
X	X			
Process ARD		X		X
X				
Track returned ARD Paperwork		X		X
X				
Assist With Referral Paperwork		X		X
X	X			
Consent for Assessments		X		X
Conduct Assessments		X		X
			X	
Write Assessment Reports		X		X

X

Therapy Space

- A designated therapy space is crucial for students
- SLPs work with students that need a specialized skill in order to learn
- Many students require minimal distractions
- A private area to work is beneficial for self conscious students
- Tables off to the side in LID classrooms, rotating meeting rooms inside libraries, spaces in motor labs and random offices are not conducive to learning or student participation
- Shared spaces with ARD and Assessment staff don't result in solid testing results or effective therapy
- What we do is confidential, and the student should be afforded privacy
- To violate students' privacy is to violate FERPA