

# Roles and Responsibilities of Speech-Language Pathologists in Schools



AMERICAN  
SPEECH-LANGUAGE-  
HEARING  
ASSOCIATION



## Policy Documents

- Position Statement
- Professional Issues Statement

Available from [www.asha.org/policy](http://www.asha.org/policy)

School-based speech-language pathology is at a crossroads where SLPs seek to contribute significantly to the well-being and success of children and adolescents in schools as ever-increasing demands are placed on them with an expanded scope of practice.



It is essential that SLPs' roles and responsibilities be redefined in light of substantive changes that have taken place in schools, as well as in the discipline of speech-language pathology.

### Critical Roles

Working Across All Levels  
Serving a Range of Disorders  
Ensuring Educational Relevance  
Providing Unique Contributions to Curriculum  
Highlighting Language/Literacy  
Providing Culturally Competent Services

### Collaboration

With Other School Professionals  
With Universities  
With the Community  
With Families  
With Students

### Position Statement:

Driven by educational reform, legal mandates, and evolving professional practices, it is the position of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) that based on their unique skill set, speech-language pathologists (SLPs) in schools (1) have integral roles in education and are essential members of school faculties, (2) help students meet the performance standards of a particular school district and state by assuming a range of responsibilities, (3) work in partnership with others to meet students' needs, and (4) provide direction in defining their roles and responsibilities and in ensuring appropriate services to students, as described more fully in the 2010 professional issues statement, Roles and Responsibilities of Speech-Language Pathologists in Schools. Further, it is anticipated that this position may require a realignment of existing roles and responsibilities in the context of a reasonable workload with appropriate professional preparation and lifelong learning.

### Range of Responsibilities

Prevention  
Assessment  
Intervention  
Program Design  
Data Collection and Analysis  
Compliance

### Leadership

Advocacy  
Supervision and Mentorship  
Professional Development  
Parent Training  
Research

### Who should know about these documents?

- Other SLPs in your school district
- The special education director in your district
- Your supervisor
- Your principal(s)
- Reading specialists, school psychologists, and other support personnel with whom you work
- RTI leaders in your district and building
- Leaders of local professional organizations or unions
- Teachers
- Parents

### WHAT IS NEEDED

Role and Responsibility Realignment  
Reasonable Workloads  
Professional Preparation  
Lifelong Learning

**Not one more thing!**

### What can you do to spread the word?

- Provide a hard copy or link to the documents for key stakeholders.
- Excerpt relevant sections for specific people.
- Provide an overview at a district professional development activity.
- Provide an overview at a faculty meeting.
- Post a blurb with a link on your school website.
- Engage in (or design) professional development to enhance implementation of these roles.
- Talk with your local university about how they prepare SLPs for these roles.

Replaces Guidelines for the Roles and Responsibilities of the School-Based Speech-Language Pathologist (2000)

Ad Hoc Committee on the Roles and Responsibilities of the School-Based Speech-Language Pathologist: Barbara Ehren (chair), Frances Block, Catherine Crowley, Ellen Estomin, Sue Ann Goldman, and Susan Karr (ex officio). Vice President for Professional Practices in Speech-Language Pathology Brian Shulman (2006–2008) and Vice President for Speech-Language Pathology Practice Julie Noel (2009–2011) served as the ASHA monitoring vice presidents, with contributions from ASHA staff member Deborah Adamczyk.