



AMERICAN
SPEECH-LANGUAGE-
HEARING
ASSOCIATION

Proposal to Provide an Annual Salary Bonus for Nationally Certified and State Licensed Speech-Language Pathologists
Strategies to Recruit and Retain Qualified Speech-Language Pathologists in the

Submitted By: _____

Date: _____

Proposed Action

It is recommended that the School District provide an annual salary supplement of \$ _____ to nationally certified and state licensed Speech-Language Pathologists in order to recruit and retain highly qualified SLP professionals.

Background Information

For the past three years, the Department has been faced with the difficult task of filling open positions for Speech-Language Pathologists (SLP). Considerable funds and time were spent advertising and interviewing prospective SLPs for these open positions but to no avail. Salary and location were cited as two of the top reasons for offers declined. Due to this inability to hire staff SLPs, _____ has been forced to utilize costly contractual based services. These services have also proven to be difficult to find. In addition to the current shortage already experienced by _____, the national shortage can only be expected to continue. According to a recent survey by the American Speech, Language and Hearing Association (ASHA), 62% of the SLP respondents reported that job openings are more plentiful than job seekers in their schools. Furthermore, the growth rate for SLPs will exceed the average growth rate for professions over the next 6 years. As a recent article in US News and World Report stated, "Members of the baby boom generation are now entering middle age, when the possibility of neurological disorders and associated speech, language, swallowing, and hearing impairments increases. Medical advances are also improving the survival rate of premature infants and trauma and stroke victims, who then need assessment and possible treatment. Many States now require that all newborns be screened for hearing loss and receive appropriate early intervention services. Employment in educational services will increase along with growth in elementary and secondary school enrollments, including enrollment of special education students. Federal law guarantees special education and related services to all eligible children with disabilities. Greater awareness of the importance of early identification and diagnosis of speech, language, swallowing, and hearing disorders will also increase employment. The number of SLPs in private practice will rise due to the increasing use of contract services by hospitals, schools, and nursing care facilities. In addition to job openings stemming from employment growth, a number of openings for SLPs will arise from the need to replace those who leave the occupation."

Growing Response Trend

In response to this rise in demand for SLPs, an initiative for retention and recruitment of SLPs has been the focus of many organizations across the country. ASHA has helped to spearhead the National Coalition on Personnel Shortages in Special Education and Related Services to help "recruit and retain qualified personnel in schools." Many states,

counties and school districts have implemented salary bonuses for SLPs who hold national certification (ASHA Certificates of Clinical Competence). To date, at least 80 districts in 21 states have achieved a salary bonus for school-based SLPs.

Note:

Visit the ASHA Website at <http://www.asha.org/about/legislation-advocacy/state/state-policy.htm> for the most up-to-date information on the number of states and local districts that have salary supplement initiatives

The following excerpts outline some of the states' successes related to the *ASHA Initiative for Salary Supplements*:

- Mississippi Governor Kirk Fordice signed a provision into law on April 5, 1999 which provides an annual \$6,000 salary supplement for ASHA-certified audiologists (CCC-A) and speech-language pathologists (CCC-SLP) who work in school settings. The supplement will be in addition to any other compensation the employee receives.
- The Oklahoma Speech-Language-Hearing Association (OSHA), in partnership with ASHA's SEAT, convinced the Oklahoma legislature to pass a bill authorizing a \$5,000 salary supplement for school-based SLPs, audiologists, and school psychologists.
- Nevada concluded a more than five year initiative with enactment of A.B. 580 that provides a 5% salary increase to school SLPs who are also licensed by the state's Board of Examiners for Audiology and Speech Pathology and who hold ASHA's Certificate of Clinical Competence.
- Indiana had a different, and quite clever, approach. The successful amendment of the licensure law (H.B. 1098) included language that would provide a salary supplement to school audiologists and SLPs who have held the ASHA CCC for at least three consecutive years and have at least three years of professional experience in the schools. Successful passage of the licensing amendments then also provided the salary supplement.
- West Virginia legislature passed legislation in 2006 that provides a salary supplement of \$2,500 per year for ASHA certified SLPs, Audiologists, and nationally certified school counselors who are employed in the WV public schools. In addition, new graduates (Clinical Fellows) are eligible for fee support up to \$600.
- In Arkansas, an incentive bonus of \$5,000 was approved for school SLPs who hold the CCC.
- Delaware, Mississippi, and Missouri already provide salary supplements for school audiologists and/or SLPs with the CCC. Like Arkansas, Louisiana, and Oklahoma have approved a salary supplement in principle but still need to appropriate funds.

Proposed Action

In order to recruit and retain qualified SLPs it is recommended that _____ provide an annual salary supplement of \$_____ for current and newly hired SLPs employed by the school. The guidelines for this salary supplement would be as follows:

- a.) The SLP must hold an ASHA Certificate of Clinical Competence
- b.) The SLP must hold _____ State Licensure
- c.) The SLP must possess two years of experience with _____
- d.) The SLP must complete a minimum of 10 continuing education hours within one licensure year