

SEAL Updates

2007

Jean Smith, SEAL

Retention Issues and Local Teacher Associations

As efforts at state and national levels continue to address personnel shortages, much information has been gathered and analyzed. Based on discussions held last March at the Education Caucus, members working in the schools requested specific action pertaining to retention in two areas:

1. Loan forgiveness and
2. Salary supplements.

Because the issue of loan forgiveness was already under study by the Governmental Affairs Coalition, specific attention turned to salary supplements.

In many school districts, negotiations for salaries and work conditions for certificated employees, including SLPs and Audiologists, often is a function of the local bargaining units rather than single professionals, agencies, or associations. Therefore, collaboration with local teacher associations who represent the bargaining unit is imperative in most instances.

Working with the Ohio Education Association, we were able to determine that 96 school districts in their association negotiated contracts that addressed this issue of supplements for National Board Certification. Examples of these agreements, in the form of monetary rewards, include:

- Fairfield Union-\$2,500/year for 10 years
- West Geauga-\$2,500 annual stipend
- Carlisle-.05 added to the member's indexed salary amount
- Seneca East-\$1,000 one time stipend
- Hudson-4% of BA, Step 0 added to salary each year employed by the board
- Worthington-\$1,000 one time stipend but will pay up to \$300 for application fees
- King local-\$1,500 bonus for 5 years
- Centerville-\$3,500 one time bonus

A total of 803 Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologist across Ohio also answered an online survey regarding negotiated teacher contracts which specifically benefited the SLP's or Audiologists within a given school district. These survey results indicated that:

- From a total of 803 respondents, 63% were members of a local teacher union, leaving 37% who were not members of a local teacher union.
- Teacher associations for 13.8% of 706 respondents had negotiated issues of specific benefit to the SLP/Audiologist, with 86% indicating the teacher association had not negotiated such issues other than pay scale or insurance benefits.
- Of the respondents listing issues that had been negotiated on their behalf, 16 responses listed supplements for CCC's, or 1.9% of the total sample. Supplements for CCC's were varied including one time payments or supplements given over a specified time period.

Clearly, grassroots efforts are required at the local level to address this issue. However, in conjunction with an ASHA Focused Initiative Grant, information is being compiled that will assist members in these efforts. Sample letters for advocacy to the local teacher associations, comparisons of National Teacher Certification and the Certificate of Clinical Competence, and bargaining information from the Ohio Education Association, in addition to other resources, was forwarded to members electronically by the end of November.

If you desire the information listed above but have not received it, or have other questions or concerns, please contact Jean Smith, ASHA Stated Education Advocate Leader for Ohio, at jeanbwt@aol.com.

Also, if you have not already provided specific information about successful negotiated agreements pertaining to the issue, please send that information to Jean as well.

SEAL Schools Report from ASHA 2007 Annual Conference

Reported by Jean Smith

Ohio's efforts in the schools were well represented at the ASHA 2007 Conference. Below are highlights provided by Barb Conrad who attended the meeting of State Advocacy Education Leaders.

IDEA/NCLB: Elizabeth Munding, Director, Federal and Political Advocacy, ASHA

NCLB

- Part C: Personnel qualifications do not require "highly qualified, but states can require more. ASHA is proposing states be required to hire, train and retain Highly qualified professionals.
- Definition of SLP under Early Intervention Services has been expanded to include: sign language, cued speech, and interpreting. ASHA is recommending those additions be a separate part of the definition rather than part of the whole.

IDEIA

- IDEA Part B: Funding for Special Education. Of all students on an IEP, 1 out of 3 have a communication disorder, original promise was that up to 40 % of education costs of students with disabilities would be paid by federal government in grants to states. Current federal funding is at 17.2%. ASHA is lobbying for 2 billion dollar increase to support need which would bring the funding up to 20%.
- SLPs must determine the impact of missed therapy sessions. If missing therapy impacts FAPE, then sessions must be made up. Make-ups should be decided on a case by case basis.

Bilingual issues in Schools: Andrea Moxley, Multicultural affairs, ASHA

- Intervention is best in whatever language the assessment was in.
- Interpreter should be provided. If not available, professional in allied field would be next likely choice, then someone in bldg is next preferred, then community or family friend. Least preferred is family member.
- SLP involvement in multicultural affairs is increasing and needs to continue.

Personnel Issues in Schools: Focused Initiative on Retention (See article by Jean Smith)

- ASHA co-chairs a national coalition with NASDE (NASPSO) that is working to collect data on personnel shortages across the professions
- NASPSO is launching a website pertaining to recruitment/retention for all related personnel in 2008.

The new alignment with ASHA's Strategic Pathway to Excellence was also discussed. The alignment will shift current focused initiatives to a direct liaison state model. Ohio is in the Northeast Region, with Rend Al Mondhiry as the ASHA contact at

ral-mondhiry@asha.org or. 1-800=498-2071, ext. 4284.

Thanks to Barb for her representation.