

ASHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING REPORT

ASHA's Board of Directors (BOD) met on October 18–20, 2024. Following are highlights of the Board's discussions.

PRESIDENT'S OPENING REMARKS

ASHA President Tena McNamara convened the in-person BOD meeting at 10:30 a.m. ET on October 18, 2024, and welcomed Board members and incoming BOD members to the fourth BOD meeting of the year.

CEO UPDATE

In addition to providing a written summary with the pre-meeting materials, Chief Executive Officer Vicki Deal-Williams shared the following updates:

Convention

ASHA's 2024 Convention planning is progressing smoothly as the Association tries to **ELEVATE!** all aspects of the event. ASHA is thrilled to announce an exceptional lineup, including Alison Levine as the Opening Speaker, Annie Award recipient Michael Kidd-Gilchrist, and Justin Osmond as the Closing Speaker.

Pre-opening and post-closing additions to the program are also planned to help officially kick off the upcoming Centennial year.

Payer Summit

ASHA hosted its sixth annual Payer Summit in Washington, D.C. on September 25–27, bringing together national payers, utilization management companies, and state Medicaid programs to discuss audiology and speech-language pathology coverage, coding, and policy issues. The Payer Summit allows ASHA to develop and maintain strategic relationships with key payers. This year, the Association increased the number of private payers and utilization management companies participating. In addition, Medicaid programs that attended were all from states where ASHA is prioritizing advocacy initiatives. The Summit focused on identifying challenges for ASHA members and payers alike and workshopped strategies to address key issues impacting our members. Topics discussed this year included the impact of payment rates and restrictive coverage on clinicians and patients; the value of audiology and speech-language pathology services across the lifespan; prior authorization; school-based Medicaid billing; caregiver training services; clinical guidelines, research, and other resources to support the efficacy and value of audiology and speech-language pathology services; and best practices to help clinicians navigate payer policies and processes.

Interstate Compact

The Audiology & Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact currently has 34 member states, with Alaska's recent adoption and Governor signing ceremony. The Compact Commission, along with the OT and Counseling Commissions, continues to work with Inspiring Apps to develop the compact data system. State licensing boards are expected to begin onboarding in spring 2025 and it is expected to begin issuing privileges to practice for those states that have completed onboarding by late summer 2025. States will onboard on different timelines, dependent on their capabilities. ASHA staff have begun planning for the 2025 legislative sessions and provided legislative updates at the National Council of State Boards meeting and at the Compact Annual Business Meeting in San Antonio, Texas.

ASHA Schools Virtual Town Hall

The ASHA Schools virtual town hall event, "Workload Management Strategies: Implementing Service Delivery Models in Schools" was held on August 28, with 472 attendees. The following ASHA members

served as panelists for this event: Christina Bradburn, Jyutika Metha, Terry “TJ” Ragan, Tracy Sippl, Miguelina Zapata, and Lyndsey Zurawski. They shared strategies and suggestions on how to leverage using a variety of service delivery models and scheduling to assist with workload management, increase collaboration, and improve generalization of students’ skills. The recording of the event, slides, and supplemental resource handout are now available on www.asha.org/events/town-hall/2024-topics-in-school-based-practice/.

Certification Applications

The number of applicants for ASHA certification is up approximately 3% through the first 9 months of 2024, which is attributable to the growth in CAA-accredited programs. Despite receiving over 10,000 applications and helping 60,000 certificants renew their certification, wait times never exceeded 5 weeks this summer and are now less than 3 weeks.

Assistant Certification Program

Since inception, the program has awarded over 1,250 certifications and there continues to be a steady pool of applicants. In addition, renewal for 2024 was over 90%. The Maintenance of Certification Assessment was launched earlier this year and has been completed by over 400 C-AAs and C-SLPAs. In November, another group of C-SLPA and SLPA educators will be meeting at the National Office to develop two new exam forms for 2025.

A total of 14 states recognize or align with the C-SLPA certification standards for licensure, and multiple states will likely propose similar updates to their SLPA licensure in early 2025. Similarly, there are now 6 states that license or register Audiology Assistants and recognize or align with the C-AA certification standards.

A volunteer group of C-SLPAs and SLPA educators completed the SLPA Model Education Program resources to help guide current and future 2- and 4-year SLPA programs’ development of coursework and a clinical practicum for future SLPAs.

Specialty Certification

The Committee on Clinical Specialty Certification (CCSC) completed the update of the application for the Clinical Board Specialty Recognition and the document is now available for petitioning groups. The American Board of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AB-AAC) is in the third and final stage of the application process and has submitted the final manual for review, which will occur during the October CCSC meeting. In response to feedback from the specialty certification boards (SCBs), the CCSC will submit an article to *The ASHA Leader* on the topic of clinical specialty certification with the goal of continuing a series of articles that highlight each of the SCBs and the benefits of board specialty certification for ASHA members.

The CCSC will present “Exploring Specialty Certification in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology: Benefits, Obstacles, and Opportunities” in collaboration with leaders from the SCBs on Saturday, December 7 at the ASHA Convention, and there will be a sponsored booth in the exhibit hall to provide members with information and resources to learn more about opportunities for clinical specialty certification.

Dues Renewal

Renewal for the 2025 membership/affiliation year is now open. Most members received their first notification via email in September and will receive a physical invoice in October. Payment for the 2025 membership/affiliation year is due December 31, 2024.

ASHA Stream September Top Content

Post Title	Plays	Time Watched
Interprofessional Practice (IPP) in Action: Public Schools	482	88,666
Evidence-Based Decision-Making Series: EBP Basics and Tools for Practicing Clinicians 1.1	341	62,901
ASHA’s Developmental Milestones: Communication (Hearing, Speech, and Language)	270	30,834
Evidence-Based Decision-Making Series: EBP Basics and Tools for Practicing Clinicians 1.2	207	46,409
ASHA Exchange Live: Through Thick and Thin - A Panel Discussion on Pediatric Thickeners and Aerodigestive Disorders [Sponsored by Gelmix]	197	147,397
Careers in Hearing & Speech - Inspiration for Life-Changing Work	163	23,782
Evidence-Based Decision-Making Series: EBP Basics and Tools for Practicing Clinicians 1.3	159	30,527
Redefining the Work: Passion, People, and Perspective	146	163,194
Evidence-Based Decision-Making Series: ASHA's Evidence Maps 2.1	126	16,566
Why I Chose Speech-Language Pathology (Bernice Dinh)	121	9,655

2024 AND 2025 BOD BEST PRACTICES

Based on the 2023 BOD self-assessment results, the BOD established 2024 and 2025 Best Practices at 2023 year-end. President Tena McNamara reviewed the BOD Best Practices that cover three areas: communication, emerging trends, and diversity, equity, and inclusion. Key board members shared their insights on successful teaming in relation to best practices.

STRATEGIC PATHWAY UPDATE

An update on ASHA’s Strategic Pathway to Excellence was provided and comprised two distinct segments. Vice President for Planning Akilah R. Heggs was joined by Chief Executive Officer Vicki Deal-Williams and Senior Director of the Office of Business Excellence Rozsa Felix to provide this update to BOD members.

The first segment focused on reviewing the Strategic Objectives’ Annual Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These KPIs are short-term performance metrics that track, monitor, and assess the success of a major objective or focus area for the year. The Strategic Objective Owners identified KPIs for 2024, and the statuses of these KPIs at the end of Q3 2024 were reported to the Board.

In the second segment, major accomplishments for ASHA’s Strategic Objectives were highlighted. Detailed information about the ongoing work and accomplishments to date is available on ASHA.org under [Strategic Pathway to Excellence: Strategic Objective Highlights](#), which is updated biannually.

ASHFOUNDATION ANNUAL REPORT TO THE BOD

A report from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Foundation was presented by ASHFoundation President Stacy Williams and ASHFoundation Executive Director Sharon Moss. The presentation provided a snapshot of the ASHFoundation’s diverse—and increased—revenue streams, along with program initiatives and their efforts to continue to establish a culture of foresight. It was noted that a comprehensive assessment of the New Century Scholar (NCS) scholarship and research grant

mechanisms was conducted this year; the results having informed the design of an NCS 2.0 to be launched in 2025.

Examples of efforts to increase awareness of the ASHFoundation's mission and programs, and to enhance engagement were highlighted, including the newly revamped University Engagement Program.

The ASHFoundation will award 70–75 individuals over \$680,000 to support research, education, and clinical excellence at this year's ASHA Convention, including two NCS grants and four New Investigator grants being awarded this year in response to a special announcement to support inquiry in artificial intelligence.

2025 PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA

The proposed 2025 Public Policy Agenda (PPA) was presented by Vice President for Government Affairs and Public Policy (GAPP) Deborah Ross Swain and Senior Director for Advocacy Communications and Administration Michelle Hostler. They reminded the BOD that the PPA—developed annually by the Government Affairs and Public Policy Board (GAPPB)—outlines the key public policy priorities that guide advocacy efforts undertaken by the Association. The GAPPB uses information obtained from multiple sources, including a membership survey; consultation with various boards, committees, and councils; and ASHA staff. The 2025 PPA identifies policy priorities designed to address the challenges that members have identified as critical to their ability to do their jobs efficiently and effectively. Based on the input received from ASHA members, the GAPPB identified three primary focus areas: (1) payment and coverage, (2) service delivery and access, and (3) workforce. The BOD approved the 2025 PPA.

GENDER AFFIRMING CARE FOR TRANSGENDER MINORS: BACKGROUND

The Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) will be addressing the topic of gender-affirming care for transgender minors by agreeing to address challenges to a law in Tennessee that seeks to restrict it. SCOTUS is expected to hear oral arguments and make a ruling in its upcoming term, which starts in October 2024 and will end in June 2025. Associate Director, Multicultural Practices Deedee Moxley provided background information on the topic and, along with Rebecca Bowen, Director of Health Care Policy, Value & Innovation, answered the Board's questions regarding the services members provide and related legislation.

CONSIDERING GENDER-AFFIRMING CARE FOR TRANSGENDER MINORS THROUGH THE DECISION-MAKING FRAMEWORK: ASHA VIEWPOINT

The Board used the [Decision-Making Framework: ASHA Viewpoint](#) to discuss the Association's position related to providing gender-affirming care for transgender minors, as well as potential actions for the Association in advance of a Supreme Court Ruling. Chief Executive Officer Vicki Deal-Williams and Chief Staff Officer for Communications Selena Ramkeesoon provided guidance on the use of the Decision-Making Framework and facilitated the Board's discussion.

GENERATIVE DISCUSSION: EMPOWERING WOMEN

ASHA's BOD conducts generative discussions during each BOD meeting. At this meeting, Chief Staff Officer for Science and Research Margaret Rogers facilitated a generative discussion on the topic of Empowering Women. The Board discussed trends related to this topic to consider their future impact, to guide future decision-making, and to help identify future challenges to the Association's mission, members' livelihood and their ability to provide needed services, and advancement of the discipline through education, research, and advocacy.

FINANCIAL REPORT

ASHA's August 2024 financial report was presented by Vice President for Finance Lawrence (Larry) Molt. Total revenue is \$49,321,803 and total expenses are \$41,898,486, with a net revenue (revenue over expenses) of \$7,423,317, which is lower than last year, due primarily to the increase in costs associated with inflation in repair and maintenance. Molt cautioned the BOD that larger expenses expected in the 4th quarter of the year will likely impact the bottom line.

In addition, the 2025 proposed budget was presented, which had been previously reviewed in detail and subsequently recommended for approval by the Financial Planning Board (FPB) during its September meeting. The BOD approved the 2025 Budget, which reflects total revenue of \$76,566,199 total expenses of \$76,452,470 and net income (revenue minus expenses) of \$113,729.

Molt also provided additional FPB recommendations to the BOD from the special opportunities fund to approve funding for 2025 budgeted strategic objective and special projects totaling \$745,856. The BOD also received ASHA's 2023 Form 990.

AUDIOLOGY SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

The BOD Audiology Subcommittee met on October 18, 2024, as a part of the October BOD meeting, with Board Member At Large for Audiology Anita Vereb facilitating. The following topics were discussed:

ASHA Senior Director, Federal & Political Affairs, Jerry White provided an update about ongoing audiology-related advocacy, specifically the Medicare Audiology Access Improvement Act (MAAIA). ASHA, along with the Academy of Doctors of Audiology (ADA) and the American Academy of Audiology (AAA), continue to collaborate in their efforts to obtain bipartisan co-sponsors, both in the House and Senate. Information was also shared regarding upcoming ASHA Advocacy Webinars:

[Register Today](#)

- Election 2024: Pre-Election Policy and Political Forecast – October 22, 7:00–8:00 p.m. ET
- Navigating New Civil Rights Regulations in Health Care: What Audiologists and SLPs Need to Know – October 29, 7:00–8:00 p.m. ET
- Navigating 2025: Your Roadmap to Audiology Coding and Billing Success – November 6, 7:00–8:30 p.m. ET
- Navigating 2025: Your Roadmap to Speech-Language Pathology Coding and Billing Success – November 13, 7:00–8:30 p.m. ET

ASHA Director of State Health Care and Education Affairs Tim Boyd discussed progress and requested feedback from BOD Audiology Subcommittee members on the ASHA School Hearing Screener Tracker. This online resource will provide information and links to individual state laws and guidelines regarding school hearing screenings.

ASHA Chief Staff Officer for Audiology Donna Smiley shared that ASHA has a new [CMV \(cytomegalovirus\) explainer video](#) that others can use in their newsletter, waiting rooms, and websites. Additionally, trends in the types of technical assistance calls that are received by the Audiology Practices unit at ASHA were shared with the Subcommittee.

Lastly, the group reviewed the various [Audiology Events](#) at the upcoming ASHA Convention in Seattle (December 5–7, 2024).

SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

The BOD Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) Subcommittee met on October 18, 2024, as part of the October BOD meeting. Chief Staff Officer for Speech-Language Pathology Monica Sampson facilitated the session.

The committee reviewed the InTouch Summary report over the last quarter, analyzing potential trends. A significant portion of the meeting was dedicated to discussing the role of ASHA in collective bargaining for school-based SLPs. A contextual overview to guide these discussions was provided by Incoming Board Member at Large in Speech-Language Pathology Julie Malone; Senior Director, School Services in Speech-Language Pathology Tiffany White, and Director of Education Policy Bill Knudsen.

The meeting allowed for thoughtful and in-depth engagement on emerging trends and challenges specific to the speech-language pathologist profession. The subcommittee remains committed to addressing these important topics to support the growth and evolution of the field.

COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES DIVERSITY METRICS

Since 2015, the BOD has been working to increase the diversity of committees, boards, and councils with regard to dimensions such as age, years of affiliation, profession, gender, employment setting, race/ethnicity, and other key considerations. Chief Staff Officer for Multicultural Affairs Megan-Brette Hamilton updated the BOD on their progress toward diversity metrics for 2025 Committee on Committees (CoC) appointments. Progress was noted across a number of dimensions toward the BOD's goals. The BOD reviewed their goals and progress to date and discussed areas for continued focus.

Q&A SESSION

The following topics were posted prior to the BOD meeting for review by each BOD member, with the opportunity to provide feedback or have questions answered during the BOD meeting.

InTouch Report

[InTouch Forms](#) and member feedback are summarized monthly and reviewed with the BOD at Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Subcommittee meetings and at each BOD meeting. InTouch Forms received from members since the last BOD meeting, along with a cumulative summary of the messages, were shared prior to the meeting. Chief Staff Officer for Communications Selena Ramkeesoon answered BOD members' questions regarding topics covered in the InTouch forms.

NSSLHA UPDATE

National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA) National Advisor Belinda Daugherty provided updates related to the 2024–2025 National NSSLHA student leaders, membership trends and activities, events and programs, and upcoming student opportunities.

- **Student Volunteer Leaders**
As of July 1, six students began their 2-year terms on the National NSSLHA Executive Council. More information about student leaders and volunteer opportunities is available on the [National NSSLHA website](#).
- **Update on 2024 Membership Counts**
On August 31, NSSLHA's 2023 membership year closed with a total of 10,433 National NSSLHA members.

- 2024 Membership Campaign**
 In September, National NSSLHA launched a Membership Campaign focusing on new-member recruitment. They spotlighted key member value areas, such as academic resources, community, ASHA Convention Discount, and the NSSLHA to ASHA Conversion Discount. As an incentive, new and renewing members were entered into a \$100 gift card grand prize drawing.
- Recognitions and Collaborations**
 National NSSLHA partnered with SAA and SADA to host a virtual event focused on audiology clinical experiences, and the [event recording](#) is available on YouTube. The National NSSLHA IDEA Work Group worked with students and professionals to recognize [Hispanic Heritage Month](#) and [Deaf Awareness Month](#) through social media posts and a video.
- Hurricane Helene Response**
 National NSSLHA reached out to students and chapters via local NSSLHA chapter advisors who were in the path of Hurricane Helene to offer resources and support and connect chapters interested in hosting drives for the impacted communities. In addition, National NSSLHA has offered students impacted by Hurricane Helene [Membership Scholarships](#) to provide them free National NSSLHA membership.
- Upcoming Student Opportunities**
 Student Advocacy Day will take place on October 24. This is the perfect opportunity for students and NSSLHA chapters to get involved in legislative advocacy. More information about upcoming [virtual events](#) and [NSSLHA events at ASHA Convention](#) is now available on the National NSSLHA website.

BOARD ACTIVITIES AT CONVENTION

ASHA Board of Directors Manager Marty Moore reviewed with the BOD the expectations regarding Convention activities, including the Leadership Q&A—an opportunity for ASHA Convention attendees to ask questions of ASHA leaders. This year’s Leadership Q&A will be held on Saturday, December 7, from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at Arch at 800 Pike Seattle Convention Center, in rooms Tahoma 3–4.

The Board of Directors meeting was adjourned on October 20 at 11:55 a.m. ET.