



February 3, 2020

The Honorable Representative Jeff Shawan
201 W. Capitol Ave., Rm 415-B
Jefferson City, MO 65101

RE: HB 2095

Dear Representative Shawan:

On behalf of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, I write to offer support for HB 2095, which proposes a change to the accreditation language for university training programs in audiology and speech-language pathology. ASHA supports the additional language of "accreditation candidate status" to licensure eligibility criteria in section A: 345.050 of the RSMo.

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) is the national professional, scientific, and credentialing association for 204,000 members and affiliates who are audiologists; speech-language pathologists; speech, language, and hearing scientists; audiology and speech-language pathology support personnel; and students. Over 4,100 ASHA members reside in Missouri.

Accreditation Candidate Status Through the Council on Academic Accreditation

Academic programs are required to submit an application before they enroll students in order to apply for candidacy status with the Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA). Before the CAA will award candidacy, the application must include a detailed development plan to demonstrate compliance with and implementation of the Standards for Accreditation. The remaining phase of the candidate status requires the program to maintain compliance with all the standards. It also allows the program to collect and analyze data on student and program outcomes to document compliance with those standards. Full expectations of compliance are illustrated in the *Accreditation Handbook*; Appendices; Standards Compliance Continuum for Candidacy.¹

The implementation of the revised standards for ASHA certification linked academic accreditation with an individual's eligibility for ASHA's Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC). The "Accreditation Candidate" status allows students enrolled in newly established academic programs to be eligible to apply for the CCC upon graduation, without penalizing the first class of students graduating from those new programs.

In 2007, the CAA implemented modifications to its "stepwise" model for the candidacy program. Two key features of the revised model include:

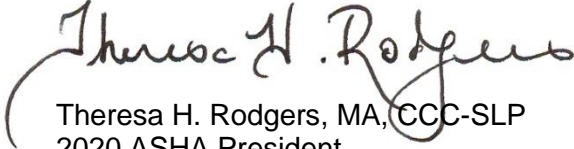
- 1) limiting eligibility for the candidacy process to new graduate education programs that agree to not enroll students until candidacy is awarded by the CAA, and
- 2) conducting an on-campus site visit as part of the CAA's decision-making processes, which has added an additional level of scrutiny regarding the quality of the program.

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The CAA believes that these changes have made the candidacy process more effective and facilitates compliance with the Standards for Accreditation.

ASHA urges the Missouri legislature to adopt the additional language in HB 2095 and appreciates your support of this important change. If you or your staff have any questions, please contact Janet Deppe, ASHA's director of state affairs, at jdeppe@asha.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Theresa H. Rodgers". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "T".

Theresa H. Rodgers, MA, CCC-SLP
2020 ASHA President

¹ Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2020). *Accreditation Handbook*. Retrieved from <https://caa.asha.org/wp-content/uploads/Accreditation-Handbook.pdf>.