



AMERICAN
SPEECH-LANGUAGE-
HEARING
ASSOCIATION

July 30, 2007

Dr. Celia R. Hooper, President
Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences & Disorders
University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
300 Ferguson Building, P. O. Box 26170
Greensboro, NC 27402-6170

Dear Dr. Hooper:

The Executive Board of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) has had time to carefully and thoroughly review and discuss, *Framework for Development of a Single Accrediting Body for Audiology (the White Paper)*, which emerged from a recent series of meetings facilitated by the Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CAPCSD). As a result, by overwhelming consensus, the ASHA Executive Board has determined that it cannot support the proposal in the White Paper for a revised structure and accreditation process for audiology and speech-language pathology programs.

The Board's decision stems solely from the perspective of what is in the best interest of academic programs in audiology and speech-language pathology, students in those programs and prospective students, professionals in the discipline of communication sciences and disorders, and the publics they serve. This interest is fundamental to ASHA's mission and values, which recognize the two autonomous professions of audiology and speech-language pathology within the singular discipline of communication sciences and disorders. ASHA is committed to representing both of these integrally related professions in governance, development and delivery of programs, products, and services including continuing education, advocacy, dissemination of practice policy documents, and the development and promulgation of professional standards.

In addition, the ASHA Executive Board's long-standing belief in and support for the accreditation model of the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) has only been strengthened by the Board's deliberations about the White Paper. The CAA is the only nationally recognized accrediting agency that focuses on the discipline of communication sciences and disorders. The interrelationship of speech, language and hearing and of the professions of audiology and speech-language pathology is of critical importance to the CAA, as reflected in its accreditation standards. ASHA endorses the principles identified by the participants during the facilitated meetings and notes that those principles are very consistent with the CAA's own principles of accreditation under which it has operated since its establishment in 1996. Also, the CAA continues to demonstrate its commitment to self-analysis and quality improvement, which the ASHA Executive Board also supports and commends.

ASHA fully recognizes and supports the autonomy of the standards and operations of the CAA which enable it to promulgate best practices in the accreditation of audiology and speech-language pathology programs. Additionally, ASHA looks forward to continuing to work with the CAA and the CAPCSD and its members on all matters pertaining to the educational preparation of our future professionals.

On behalf of the ASHA Executive Board, I want to thank you for the opportunity to participate in the CAPCSD facilitated meetings and for the focus they placed on the important role of academic accreditation in the education of our future professionals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Noma B. Anderson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Noma B. Anderson, PhD
2007 President