



Workforce

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Contents

Executive Summary	1
Demographics.....	2
Job Market.....	2
Population Density	2
Geographic Area	3
Impact of Shortage.....	3
Challenges	4
Survey Notes and Methodology	5
Response Rate.....	5
Geographic Divisions	5
Other Reports	6
Suggested Citation.....	6
Supplemental Sources.....	6
Additional Information	6
Figure	
Figure 1: Where Job Openings Exceed Job Seekers	3
Table	
Table 1: Rank Order of Greatest Challenges.....	4

Executive Summary

In the spring of 2006, the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) conducted a survey of speech-language pathologists (SLPs) in school settings. The survey was designed to provide information about school-based service delivery and to update and expand information gathered during previous Omnibus and Schools Surveys.

This report is based on responses from SLPs in five types of school settings: day/residential, preschool, elementary, secondary, and combined settings.

Overall Findings

- ◆ 68% said job openings were more numerous than job seekers.
- ◆ 73% in metropolitan/urban areas said job openings were more numerous than job seekers.
- ◆ Lack of applicants was most prevalent in the Pacific (90%) and Mountain (86%) states.
- ◆ The number one effect of the shortage of clinical service providers was increased caseload (79%).
- ◆ The greatest challenges were:
 - 80% - paperwork
 - 66% - lack of time
 - 58% - high caseload size

Demographics

Job Market

Population Density
Geographic Area

Impact of Shortage

Challenges

Survey Notes and Methodology

Response Rate
Geographic Divisions
Other Reports

Suggested Citation

Supplemental Sources

Additional Information

Demo- graphics

Respondents to the 2006 Schools Survey were an exact representation on some characteristics of the population of ASHA-certified, school-based SLPs from which they were selected. The vast majority of both groups were female (97%), non-Hispanic (97%), and white (95% in the survey, 94% in the population).

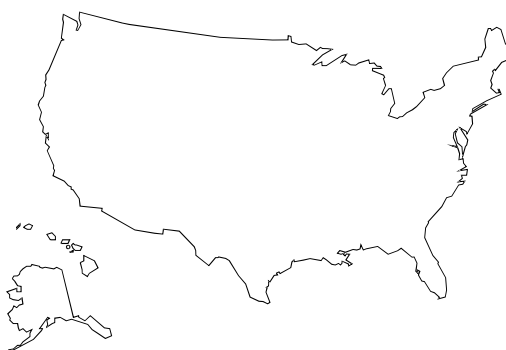
The respondents differed from the population on other characteristics such as the type of school in which they worked. Specifically, 13% of the survey respondents worked in a preschool as did 17% of the population, and 56% of the respondents worked in an elementary school compared with 46% of the population. Among the respondents, 91% were clinical service providers; in the population, 86% reported this primary function. The respondents were slightly younger than the population (median age of 43 vs. 46 years) but had more experience (16 vs. 10 years).

Job Market

When asked about the current job market for SLPs in their type of employment facility and in their geographic area, two thirds (68%) of the respondents said that job openings were more numerous than job seekers, that is, jobs were available but no one was applying for them. Most of the remaining SLPs (24%) said that job openings were in balance with job seekers, while the remainder (8%) said that job openings were fewer than job seekers.

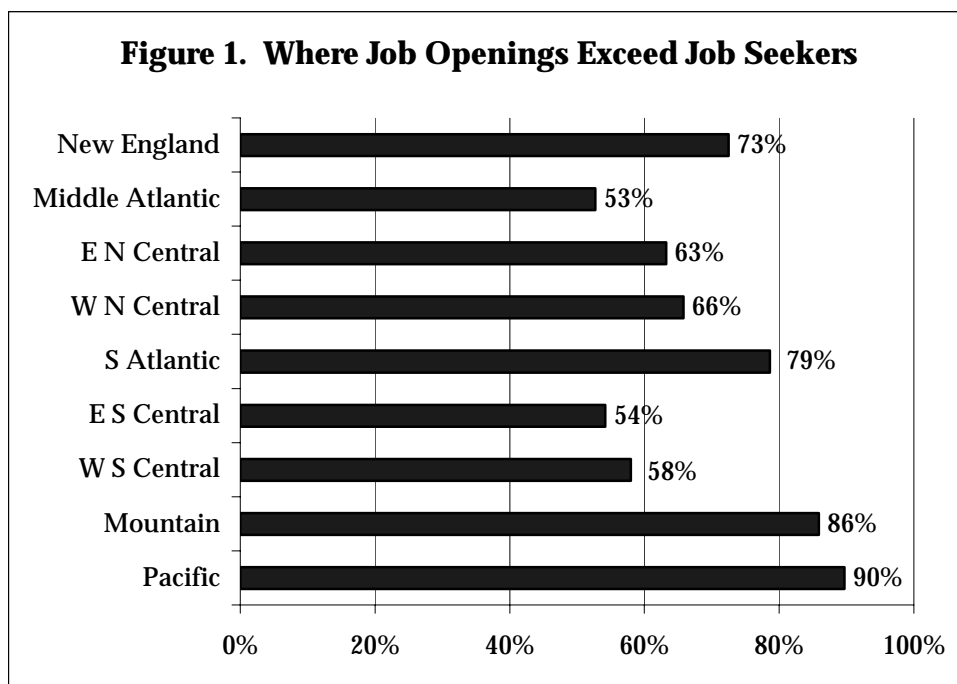
Population Density

The greater the population density, the more likely it was that there were job openings without applicants. In metropolitan/urban areas, 73% of the respondents described this as the situation compared with 67% in suburban areas and 63% in rural areas.



Geographic Area

A lack of applicants for existing job openings was most prevalent in the Pacific and Mountain states and least in Middle Atlantic and East South Central states (see Figure 1).



n = 2,327

Impact of Shortage

SLPs who said that there was a shortage of clinical service providers were asked what effect this had on them. Increased caseload was the most frequently mentioned impact (79%), followed by:

- ◆ 57% - decreased quality of service
- ◆ 55% - decreased opportunities for individual services
- ◆ 39% - less opportunity for networking and collaborating
- ◆ 38% - some students receive partial services or no services
- ◆ 27% - increased number of staff without ASHA certification/master's level training
- ◆ 23% - increased use of assistants

Challenges

When asked to identify the greatest challenges they faced, more than half selected the high amount of paperwork (80%), lack of time (66%), and high caseload size (58%) from among a list of 14 possible responses (see Table 1).

Table 1. Rank Order of Greatest Challenges

Rank	Challenge
1	High amount of paperwork
2	Lack of time for planning, collaboration, and meeting with teachers
3	High caseload size
4	Lack of others' understanding of my role
5	Low salary
6	Inadequate work space and facilities
7	Lack of parental involvement and support
8	Unfilled positions
9	Lack of administrative support
10	Lack of training for low incidence disorders
11	Lack of training for working with English Language Learners (ELLs)
12	Lack of materials and assessment tools
13	Ethical issues (e.g., Medicaid, supervision, clinical decisions)
14	Use of underqualified personnel

n = 2,561

Type of school facility, geographic region, population density, and years of experience influenced the percentage of respondents who selected the challenges listed above. For example:

- ◆ The selection of paperwork as a challenge ranged from 64% in secondary schools to 84% in elementary schools.
- ◆ Selecting low salary ranged from 17% in the Middle Atlantic states to 62% in the Pacific states.
- ◆ Lack of parental involvement and support was selected by 18% of SLPs in suburban areas but by 30% in rural and 31% in metropolitan/urban areas.
- ◆ Selecting lack of others' understanding of my role decreased with years of experience. It was chosen by 45% of SLPs with 1 to 5 years of experience and by 26% of those with 26 or more years.

Survey Notes and Method- ology

Response Rate

The 20-year-old ASHA Omnibus Survey has been retired, replaced by surveys specific to work settings and/or professions to better meet affiliates' needs. This 2006 Schools Survey is one of the replacements and melds topics from both the Omnibus Surveys and previous Schools Surveys.

The survey was mailed in February 2006 to a random sample of 4,140 ASHA-certified SLPs who were employed in school settings in the United States. Second and third mailings followed, at approximately one-month intervals, to individuals who had not responded to earlier mailings.

The sample was a random sample, stratified by state. Small states, such as Idaho and Wyoming, were oversampled. Therefore, where totals are reported, either in text or tables, they have been weighted to reflect the actual distribution of ASHA-certified SLPs in each state. The number of respondents (*n*) shown in the figure and table is the weighted number who responded to the question.

Of the original 4,140 SLPs in the sample, 66 were no longer employed in the field, 70 were retired, and 57 were ineligible for other reasons, leaving 3,947 possible respondents. The actual number of respondents was 2,561, resulting in a 64.9% response rate. The results presented in this report are based on responses from those 2,561 individuals.

Geographic Divisions

Middle Atlantic	NJ, NY, PA
New England	CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT
East North Central	IL, IN, MI, OH, WI
West North Central	IA, KS, MN, MO, NE, ND, SD
East South Central	AL, KY, MS, TN
South Atlantic	DE, DC, FL, GA, MD, NC, SC, VA, WV
West South Central	AR, LA, OK, TX
Mountain	AZ, CO, ID, MT, NV, NM, UT, WY
Pacific	AK, CA, HI, OR, WA

Other Reports

Results from the 2006 Schools Survey are reported in a series of reports:

- Caseload Characteristics
- Current Issues
- Salaries
- Workforce
- Frequency Report
- Survey Methodology, Respondent Demographics, and Glossary

Suggested Citation

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2006). *2006 Schools Survey report: Workforce*. Rockville, MD: Author.

Supplemental Sources

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2006). *Supply and demand for speech-language pathologists resource list*. Available from ASHA Web site: <http://www.asha.org/>

U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2006). *Occupational outlook handbook, 2006-07 edition, speech-language pathologists*. Available from <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos099.htm>

Additional Information

For additional information regarding the 2006 Schools Survey, please contact Kathleen Whitmire, Director of ASHA's School Services, at 301-897-5700, ext. 4137, kwhitmire@asha.org. To learn more about how the Association is working on behalf of school-based ASHA-certified members, visit ASHA's Web site at <http://www.asha.org/members/slp/schools>