ASHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING REPORT

ASHA’s Board of Directors (BOD) met virtually on July 16–17, 2021. Following are highlights of the Board's discussions.

PRESIDENT’S OPENING REMARKS
President A. Lynn Williams convened the BOD meeting at 10:34 a.m. ET on July 16, 2021, and welcomed Board members.

President Williams shared a quote from Patrick Lencioni to set the tone for the meeting. “The majority of meetings should be discussions that lead to decisions.” She encouraged BOD members to use this quote to guide them throughout their comprehensive and responsible agenda for this meeting.

CEO UPDATE REPORT
In addition to providing the written summary with the pre-meeting materials, Chief Executive Officer Arlene Pietranton shared the following with the BOD:

ASHA Schools Connect
ASHA Schools Connect (July 14–26, 2021) has already broken the record for highest registration for an ASHA online conference. Over 1,250 members have signed up, which is more than last year’s combined Connect conferences and greater than any prior in-person School’s conference.

ASHA Convention
As previously announced, ASHA will require vaccinations for attendees at the in-person programming of the ASHA Convention in Washington, D.C. in November. Appropriate ADA accommodations, as well as accommodations for individuals with closely held religious beliefs, will be available. Mask use indoors will be encouraged, but not required, for all fully vaccinated attendees.

This decision is in keeping with the Association’s Duty of Care—to make determinations about reasonable and appropriate levels of care and safety for large numbers of people—as that is always ASHA’s first and highest concern during the ASHA Convention. An easy and free-to-attendees system for validation of vaccination via a third party is being implemented that will involve a required step during registration. Attendees will also agree to a statement of personal responsibility and accountability as a part of the registration process.

A Virtual Library will be available as an alternative to the in-person convention, with “live” CE available via poster chats managed digitally. The virtual option will offer a significant amount of continuing education at a reduced rate and access to commercial partners via a feed to the exhibitor listings that will be enhanced this year.

The pandemic scenario continues to evolve, as does guidance, requirements, and protocols. Adjustments will continue as needed and information shared to keep ASHA members informed.
**Assistants Certification Program**
ASHA’s Assistants Certification Program (ACP) launched in December 2020. In the first 6 months, 400 paid applicants were received. There are 20 Certified Audiology Assistants (C-AAs), 225 Certified Speech-Language Pathology Assistants (C-SLPAs), and 150 applicants who have paid but have not taken the exam yet.

Four states (Arizona, Maryland, North Carolina, and Tennessee) have proposed or made changes to their SLPA regulations to align with and/or recognize the C-SLPA. The Army, Navy, Coast Guard, and Department of Defense’s Civilian Credentialing Opportunities Online (COOL) programs have accepted the Certified Audiology Assistant credential as a qualifying program/profession they will pay for their personnel to obtain. The latest information is available at [www.ashaassistants.org](http://www.ashaassistants.org) or by emailing [assistants@asha.org](mailto:assistants@asha.org).

A staff working group will be making recommendations to the BOD for future initiatives, programs, and services related to assistant personnel stakeholders later this year.

**ASHA Teaching Symposium**
ASHA sponsored a virtual *Teaching Symposium on Foundational CSD Science Courses, Innovations in Teaching and Learning: Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences*, May 17–28, 2021. Topics addressed the future of learning, the scholarship of teaching and learning, innovative teaching strategies, student engagement, formative assessment, culturally responsive teaching, student accessibility, CSD science and research across the curriculum, and cutting-edge technology that is shaping teaching of the CSD sciences. More than 800 individuals registered for the event.

A year-long learning community for discussion, networking, and sharing information about the application of evidence-based teaching/learning principles in CSD will be facilitated by ASHA’s Academic Affairs Board (AAB) during the 2021–2022 academic year. Additional faculty may access the symposium content and join the learning community at this time by going to the [ASHA Community](http://www.asha.org) and signing in using their ASHA website username and password to join the “CSD Science Teaching Symposium” (continuing education credit is not available following the conclusion of the symposium on May 28, 2021).

**Empowering SLPs in Health Care: Breaking Barriers and Shaping Solutions Online Conference**
SLPs in all health care settings are faced with the paradox of providing patient-centered care and maximizing patient outcomes while wrestling with workload demands and economic pressures that can affect SLPs’ independent clinical judgement and contributions to patient care.

This online conference, which took place June 2–14, 2021, focused on understanding the business of health care and the impact of for-profit health systems on SLP services across the continuum of care. Clinicians, administrators, and payers brainstormed potential solutions to

- understand and navigate the business of health care,
- balance patient-centered care with workload demands,
- adapt clinical practice to health care and reimbursement trends,
- advocate effectively for patients’ access to care,
• build a plan for sustainable, meaningful career growth.

Recorded sessions from this conference and other related courses can be accessed via the ASHA Learning Pass.

Interstate Compact
Now in its second legislative year, the Audiology & Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact (ASLP-IC) continues to progress at a rapid pace. Sixteen states have introduced bills to adopt the ASLP-IC, with eight states adopting the legislation: Alabama, Colorado, Georgia, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Nebraska, and Ohio. Legislation has also passed in New Hampshire and is awaiting the Governor’s signature. Preparations are being made for the 2022 legislative sessions, including the third annual legislative summit for state legislators and licensing boards. Plans are underway for the inaugural Compact Commission meeting in 2021 to develop bylaws and rules and to create the coordinated data system to bring the ASLP-IC into operation.

Payer Portal
Initial plans for the online Payer Portal included development of one or two additional condition/intervention-specific pages in 2021 to supplement the existing autism-specific page. Cognitive interventions and aural rehabilitation were chosen as likely topics because they are areas of scrutiny by payers and because ASHA is developing evidence-based clinical practice guidelines on those topics. Because of the pandemic’s effect of elevating the importance of telepractice to members’ work and payers’ policies, it was decided instead to proceed with the development of a telehealth-specific page within the payer portal.

ASHA’s Government Affairs and Public Policy staff has begun systematic advocacy with public and private payers across the country to expand telepractice coverage, and the development of a Payer Portal page to support and build upon those efforts is an especially good fit and opportunity at this time. The goal is to complete and publish the telepractice page before the end of 2021.

IPE/IPP Site Update
The IPE/IPP webpages have been updated and expanded. The new pages provide a comprehensive and user-friendly resource with practical "how-to" resources to help members learn more about IPE/IPP and incorporate it effectively and successfully into their practice. The new webpages include sections that define IPE/IPP, explore the benefits of IPE/IPP, and feature case studies, videos, and other resources. A "Phase II" for the site is in progress, with additional content and resources, including research, evidence, and funding, and will incorporate the recently developed IPE/IPP evidence map and a special collection of IPE/IPP resources from across ASHA publications. The new pages are at www.asha.org/practice/ipe-ipp/.

Returning to the National Office
The National Office moved into a “Soft Reopening” phase on May 1, along with the option for staff who wish to continue to work remotely to do so through Labor Day.
The current and evolving situation around the Delta variant is creating additional unknowns; the situation continues to be monitored closely and policies will be adapted as needed. This is an evolving situation, and we will continue to monitor official guidance and make decisions based on that information and the best interests of ASHA’s business continuity and the safety of staff.

2021 Awards Received to Date
For the seventh time, the ASHA National Office was recognized by The Washington Post as a great place to work. Also, for the second time, ASHA received a 2021 Employer Recognition award for Telework from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments’ Commuter Connections program.

In June, ASHA was awarded five Bronze Excel Awards for the ASHA Learning Pass, ASHA Voices (in three categories), and the book Exploring Cultural Responsiveness: Guided Scenarios for Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) Professionals. ASHA Voices also received a Silver Excel Award for the podcast Ijeoma Oluo Talks Race, Conversation, and Microaggressions.

The following staff earned the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) Certified Association Executive (CAE) credential during the past year: Susan Adams, Nikki Beidler, Gretchen Ehret, Laura Henning, Leslie Katz, and Michael Providence. In addition, Alexis Redmond is a current ASAE Diversity Executive Leadership Program (DELP) scholar and Tori Liu and Evan Reid have been named 2021 Association Tech and Innovation Leaders by DCA Live.

Certification Administration
Application volumes have returned to normal levels following the surge of applications in 2019, prior to the 2020 standards changes and subsequent anticipated drop-off in 2020. Through June 28, we are about 8% ahead of 2018’s volume, which was the last application year not affected by standards changes. The increase reflects a 1%–2% annual increase in new CCC applications as more CAA programs are created, resulting in more students graduating.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, the annual retention of ASHA certificate holders for 2021 remains slightly ahead of previous years. As of June 28, 196,500 of the 202,000 certificate holders have successfully renewed (97.25%).

At the start of the pandemic, the Educational Testing Service (ETS) began offering the Audiology and SLP Praxis Exams with an “At Home” option for those who do not want to test at a traditional testing center. ETS recently announced that the At Home option will continue to be offered.

STRATEGIC PATHWAY UPDATE
Vice President for Planning Craig Coleman was joined by the Chief Staff Officer for Multicultural Affairs Vicki Deal-Williams and Director of the Office of Business Excellence Rozsa Felix to present an update on ASHA’s Strategic Pathway to Excellence. The update had three segments.
The first segment focused on the Strategic Objectives’ Annual Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The KPIs are short-term performance metrics that track, monitor, and assess the success of a major objective/focus area for the year. The Strategic Objective Owners identified one to three KPIs for 2021 and the status of these KPIs as of the end of Q2 2021 was reported to the Board.

The second segment of the update was an overview of suggested changes to Performance Measures (PMs) #1 and #5 for Strategic Objective 5, Increase Influence and Demonstrated Value of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Services. PMs are long-term performance metrics and are used to track, monitor, and assess the success of the Strategic Objectives. The recommended changes were discussed and a motion was submitted to the Board of Directors for approval.

In the third segment of the update, major accomplishments and changes were reported for Strategic Objectives #2, #3, #4, and #7. Information about the work underway and a more detailed description of all accomplishments to date can be found on ASHA.org: Strategic Pathway to Excellence: Strategic Objective Highlights, which is updated biannually.

INTEGRATING THE FUTURE OF LEARNING IN THE STRATEGIC PATHWAY
The ASHA BOD has discussed and explored the need to review and reframe all aspects of learning across the Association and the discipline. The intent is to
- facilitate personalized learning opportunities,
- foster members' active pursuit of ongoing professional excellence,
- identify and address bias in all its forms, and
- promote diverse, relevant, timely, evidence-based, practice-centered content.

The Board determined at the June BOD meeting that a new Strategic Objective is needed in the Strategic Pathway to Excellence to transform learning across the discipline. Vice President for Planning Craig Coleman was joined by Chief Staff Officer for Multicultural Affairs Vicki Deal-Williams, Chief Staff Officer for Audiology Donna Smiley (the Strategic Objective #9 Owner), and Director of the Office of Business Excellence Rozsa Felix to present the new proposed Strategic Objective (SO) #9. The presentation included a discussion of the proposed objective, outcome, PMs, and transformational initiatives.

ASHA STREAM AND SOLUTION CENTER
Director of Creative Media Martine Stein and Director of Asset Sales Pam Leppin presented an update on the newly created ASHA Stream and Solution Center platforms to the Board. They introduced the platforms to the board and explained that ASHA Stream is a new video platform that will house profession-specific, curated video content specifically for members—essentially, ASHA’s private YouTube channel. The newly created Solution Center is a sister platform geared toward connecting members and vendors to help solve practice-related problems through vendor solutions. Both platforms are currently being built and will launch in late 2021. The Board was informed of the background and progress of both platforms.
**BOD VIRTUAL HILL DAY**
Vice President for Government Affairs and Public Policy Doanne Ward-Williams and Director of Government Affairs and Public Policy Jeffrey P. Regan provided details about an upcoming virtual BOD engagement with federal lawmakers that is scheduled for Tuesday, September 21, through Thursday, September 23.

**REVIEW OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE TO DEVELOP GUIDANCE FOR MEMBERS AND STUDENTS ENGAGING GLOBALLY IN CLINICAL, SCHOLARLY, AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES**
Chair Brooke Hallowell of the Ad Hoc Committee to Develop Guidance for Members and Students Engaging Globally in Clinical, Scholarly, and Other Professional Activities provided an overview of the committee’s report. The committee was established in April 2019 and was charged to develop guidance for members and students for engaging globally in clinical, scholarly, and other professional activities.

The Board discussed the Committee’s report and the recommendations that are related to the following:
- use of terminology that affects thinking, communication, and action in global engagement;
- engagement in clinical practice, supervising U.S.-based student clinicians, carrying out service projects, and participating in humanitarian efforts outside the United States;
- global consulting, assistance in the development of academic and clinical programs, and the teaching and advising of non-U.S. students and colleagues;
- global engagement in research and other scholarly endeavors;
- global education of U.S.-based students; and
- recognition of excellence in global engagement—ASHA’s awards and highlights across publication platforms.

A draft workplan will be developed to determine resources and timeframe for moving forward on the recommendations.

**AUDIOLOGY NATIONAL OUTCOMES MEASUREMENT SYSTEM (NOMS) REGISTRY**
In May the Audiology NOMS Registry was launched. Previously (October, 2016) the ASHA BOD made the decision to allow participation in this registry by all certified audiologists (CCC-A and/or ABA). ASHA members will not be charged to participate; nonmembers will be charged $100/year to participate. Since the launch of this registry, ASHA has been approached about changing the participation criteria to include non-certified audiologists. The BOD discussed the issue at length and reaffirmed its decision from 2016 to limit participation to certified audiologists to assure the data in the registry is submitted from individuals who are confirmed by virtue of certification to be qualified audiology practitioners.

**GENERATIVE DISCUSSION: HEALTH CARE DISRUPTION**
ASHA’s BOD typically engages in generative discussions at each BOD meeting that are intended to engage Board members in deliberations that inform their decision-making and help to define issues and frame challenges. At this meeting, Chief Staff Officer for Multicultural
Affairs Vicki Deal-Williams facilitated a generative discussion related to health care disruption. The Board discussed projected trends related to changes in the health care industry, including the unbundling of services, new and nontraditional service delivery mechanisms, and the growing use of technology to support and supplement health care service delivery. The BOD discussed the effects of these changes on members and the Association, as well as challenges and opportunities.

FINANCIAL REVIEW
Vice President for Finance Ann (Bernadette) Mayfield-Clarke presented the financial report through May 2021. Total revenue is $27,695,114 and total expenses are $20,627,942 with net revenue (revenue minus expense) of $7,067,373. This is higher compared to the May 2020 net by $3 million due to the impact of COVID-19 on revenue-generating activities at this time last year.

Mayfield-Clarke also provided a Financial Planning Board report. She presented a recommendation from the Financial Planning Board to the BOD to approve funding ($70,200) from the Special Opportunities Fund to engage a User Experience Designer on retainer and funding ($20,000) to produce new webinars for the Leadership Academy.

Mayfield-Clarke then provided an Audit Committee report. ASHA received an unmodified opinion, which is the best audit opinion an organization can receive. A motion was made and passed to acknowledge and accept the 2020 Annual Audit Report. The BOD also approved a motion that the 2022 ASHA dues will remain at the same rate as the 2021 dues. The last time that ASHA’s dues increased was in 2010.

BOD EDUCATION: MICROAGGRESSIONS
Chief Staff Officer for Multicultural Affairs Vicki Deal-Williams facilitated Part II of a workshop for BOD members and CSOs focusing on inclusive leadership in response to microaggressions. The overall objective is to help BOD members encourage and model effective interactions when microaggressions occur in Association-related functions, and uses ASHA’s Micro Course series as a foundation. In Part I, conducted at the June BOD meeting, the focus was on recognizing microaggressions. This session offered practical strategies for addressing microaggressions when they occur, and expectations for responding. The final segment will be offered at the October BOD meeting and will focus on eliminating interpersonal and institutional microaggressions and championing equity and inclusion.

BOD SELF-ASSESSMENT FINDINGS
The BOD engaged in the biennial (conducted in the odd-numbered years) self-assessment exercise in May 2021. Each BOD member also completed an individual BOD self-assessment that identified areas of strength as well as growth opportunities. At this meeting, Director of Association Governance Operations Andrea Falzarano provided background and reported the results of the assessment. ASHA President Lynn Williams facilitated a discussion of the key findings. From this discussion, the BOD concluded that the overall assessment findings were positive and that a subcommittee of BOD members would be appointed to establish new BOD goals that will be brought to the October BOD meeting. These goals will be in effect until the next assessment, which is scheduled for 2023.
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 Forms
InTouch Forms received from members since the last BOD meeting were shared with the BOD prior to the BOD meeting, and Chief Staff Officer for Communications Lisa Cole provided a summary of the messages.

NSSLHA Update
National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA) National Advisor Kia N. Johnson provided updates on National NSSLHA governance and upcoming programs for students.

- As of July 1, six students began their 2-year term on National NSSLHA’s Executive Council. Applications for 104 Student State Officer positions and 8 Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Action (IDEA) Workgroup positions have now closed. These positions are appointed, and their 1-year terms will begin on September 1.
- ASHA BOD members with new mentees will be introduced through email in mid-August after the Executive Council completes the NSSLHA onboarding process.
- National NSSLHA has developed a full calendar of events for the 2021–2022 academic year, including three virtual events and in-person meet-and-greet opportunities at Convention this fall.

Audiology Subcommittee Report
The BOD Audiology Subcommittee met virtually on July 8, 2021, prior to the July BOD meeting with Board Member At Large for Audiology Charles Bishop facilitating. The following topics were discussed:

- Board of Directors Virtual Hill Day in September;
- CEO search process update;
- results of the 2021 audit of ASHA’s finances;
- the May 26, 2021, Joint Town Hall regarding the Medicare Audiologist Access and Services Act of 2021 (MAASA);
- ASHA’s Leadership Mentoring Program;
- state-level reimbursement issues relative to some of the new audiology CPT codes;
- FDA rules regarding OTC hearing aids;
- Aligned Sense of Purpose initiative; and
- ASHA Audiology Assistants Scope of Practice.

Speech-Language Pathology Subcommittee Report
The BOD Speech-Language Pathology Subcommittee met on July 1, 2021, prior to the BOD meeting with Board Member At Large in Speech-Language Pathology Barbara Goodson facilitating. The following topics were discussed:
• an update on the topic of social determinants of health and the impact on assessment, treatment, and access to services, an area for which ASHA is currently developing tools and resources for members;
• an update on the work of the Ad Hoc Committee for Speech-Language Pathology Assistants Scope of Practice, which is set for peer review in early Fall;
• an update on the Ad Hoc Committee to Plan Next Steps to Redesign Entry-Level Education for Speech-Language Pathologists, which has begun meeting and is currently discussing key topics that will need to be addressed;
• an update on the search for ASHA’s next CEO, noting that the position description has been posted on the CEO search website and a link to it published in ASHA Now;
• Virtual Hill Day for the Board of Directors, which will be held in September;
• the opportunity (and need) for members to apply to be a mentor in the ASHA Leadership Mentoring Program for next year; and
• a reminder that the virtual ASHA School Conference is July 14–16.

2021 OCTOBER BOD RETREAT
President elect Judy Rich updated the BOD on October Retreat activities, which will include an orientation for incoming BOD members, and further discussion of DEI with a specific focus on equity as the topic for the retreat and noted the decision to have the 2021 Retreat at the National Office for safety measures given ongoing and evolving pandemic restrictions.

The Board of Directors meeting was adjourned on July 17 at 4:45 p.m. ET.