



ASHA
American
Speech-Language-Hearing
Association

Schools Survey Report:
SLP Workforce and Work Conditions Trends
2004–2020

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Introduction

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) conducted the *2020 Schools Survey* to gather information about professional issues related to school-based services. Results from this survey are presented in a series of reports, including this report on speech-language pathologist (SLP) workforce and work conditions trends.

Findings from the 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, and 2018 *ASHA Schools Surveys* are included in this report for comparative purposes. Questions differ among surveys, so data on all topics are not available for all survey years.

Survey Report Highlights

Employment Status

- In 2020, most (86%) *ASHA Schools Survey* respondents who were employed as SLPs worked full time—the same or about the same as in past years (81%–92% from 2004 to 2018).
- In 2020, most (88%) *ASHA Schools Survey* respondents who were employed full or part time as SLPs were salaried employees—about the same as in recent past years (87%–89% from 2012 to 2018).

Greatest Professional Challenges

- Most (82%) SLPs reported that *large amount of paperwork* was their greatest/one of their greatest professional challenges in 2020—about the same as in past years (79%–83% from 2006 to 2018).
- More than half (57%) of SLPs reported that *high workload/caseload size* was their greatest/one of their greatest professional challenges in 2020—compared with 55%–71% from 2006 to 2018.
- Half (50%) of SLPs reported that *limited time for collaboration* was their greatest/one of their greatest professional challenges in 2020—the same or about the same as in recent past years (50%–54% from 2014 to 2018).

Member Satisfaction Ratings

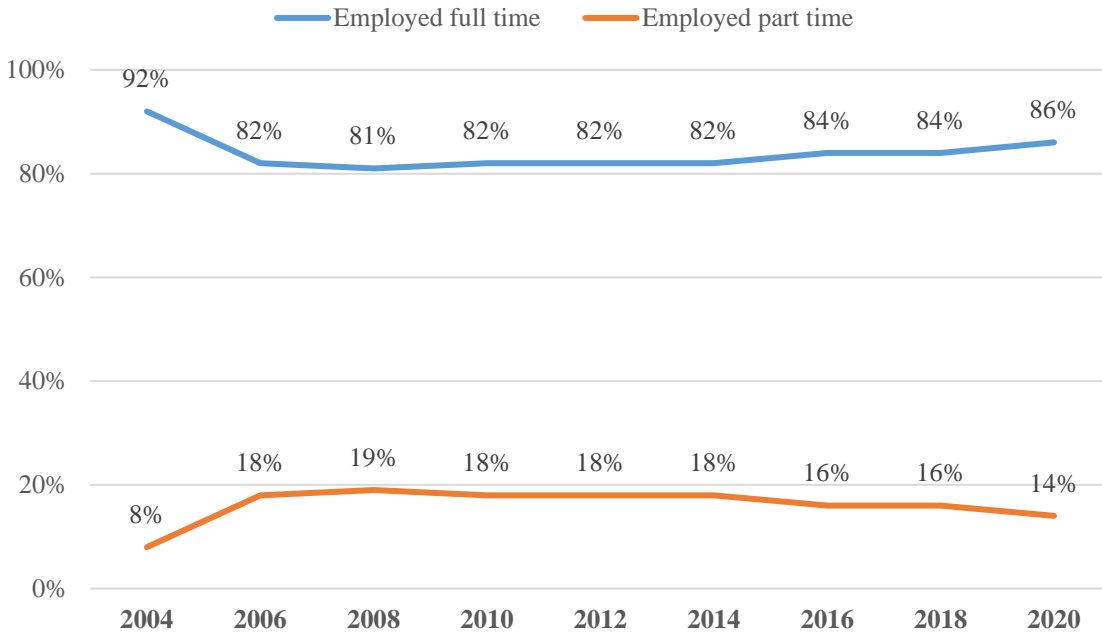
- In 2020, most (61%) SLPs indicated that ASHA was doing a good or excellent job in serving its school-based members overall—about the same as in recent past years (60%–73% from 2010 to 2018).
- In 2020, most (76%) SLPs indicated that ASHA was doing a good or excellent job with continuing education—about the same as in recent past years (75%–78% from 2012 to 2018).
- In 2020, most (72%) SLPs indicated that ASHA was doing a good or excellent job with resources—about the same as in recent past years (75%–82% from 2012 to 2018).

Employment Status

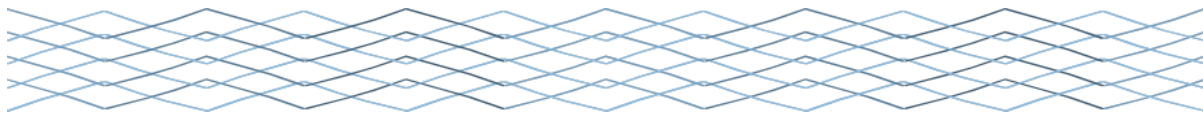
Full Time or Part Time

In 2020, most (86%) *ASHA Schools Survey* respondents who were employed as SLPs worked full time—the same or about the same as in past years (81%–92% from 2004 to 2018; see Figure 1).

Figure 1. *Percentage of ASHA Schools Survey SLP respondents who are employed full or part time, by year.*



Note. These data are from the 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2020 *ASHA Schools Surveys*. *Employed part time* was not defined in the surveys. $n = 2,602$ (2004); $n = 2,427$ (2006); $n = 2,420$ (2008); $n = 2,418$ (2010); $n = 2,420$ (2012); $n \geq 1,690$ (2014); $n = 1,806$ (2016); $n = 2,109$ (2018); $n = 1,720$ (2020).



Salaried Employee, Contractor, or Self-Employed

In 2020, most (88%) *ASHA Schools Survey* respondents who were employed full or part time as SLPs were salaried employees—about the same as in recent past years (87%–89% from 2012 to 2018). The remainder were contractors or self-employed (see Table 1).

Table 1. *Percentage of ASHA Schools Survey SLP respondents who are salaried employees, contractors, or self-employed, by year.*

Designation	%				
	2012 (<i>n</i> = 2,403)	2014 (<i>n</i> = 1,666)	2016 (<i>n</i> = 1,798)	2018 (<i>n</i> = 2,099)	2020 (<i>n</i> = 1,701)
Salaried employee	89	87	87	87	88
Contractor	11	13	13	13	11
Self employed	—	—	—	—	1

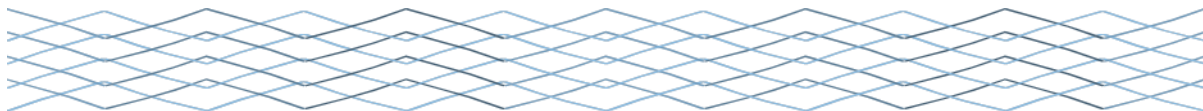
Note. These data are from the 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2020 *ASHA Schools Surveys*. Dash indicates that the item was not included in the survey.

Greatest Professional Challenges

In 2020:

- Most (82%) SLPs reported that *large amount of paperwork* was their greatest/one of their greatest professional challenges—about the same as in past years (79%–83% from 2006 to 2018).
- More than half (57%) of SLPs reported that *high workload/caseload size* was their greatest/one of their greatest professional challenges in 2020—compared with 55%–71% from 2006 to 2018.
- Half (50%) of SLPs reported that *limited time for collaboration* was their greatest/one of their greatest professional challenges—the same or about the same as in recent past years (50%–54% from 2014 to 2018).

See Appendix Table 1.



Member Satisfaction Ratings

In 2020, most (61%) SLPs indicated that ASHA was doing a good or excellent job in serving its school-based members overall—about the same as in recent past years (60%–73% from 2010 to 2018). Ratings varied by specific area of service and year (see Table 2).

Table 2. Ratings for what kind of job ASHA is doing in serving its school-based members, by area and year.

Rating	%					
	2010 (n = 2,417)	2012 (n ≥ 2,474)	2014 (n ≥ 1,699)	2016 (n ≥ 1,817)	2018 (n ≥ 2,106)	2020 (n ≥ 1,736)
Overall needs^a						
Poor	5	2	3	3	3	6
Fair	35	21	15	19	21	24
Good	55	59	61	57	55	50
Excellent	5	10	12	12	12	11
Don't know, NA	—	8	10	9	9	9
Advocacy						
Poor	—	5	5	7	8	11
Fair	—	25	22	23	23	27
Good	—	44	44	43	43	38
Excellent	—	10	11	9	10	10
Don't know, NA	—	16	18	19	15	14
Answering school-based practice questions						
Poor	—	—	—	—	3	3
Fair	—	—	—	—	20	18
Good	—	—	—	—	50	51
Excellent	—	—	—	—	14	17
Don't know, NA	—	—	—	—	13	11
Continuing education						
Poor	—	2	2	2	2	3
Fair	—	17	14	15	16	16
Good	—	53	51	51	51	49
Excellent	—	23	27	27	24	27
Don't know, NA	—	6	6	5	6	6
Resources^b						
Poor	—	1	1	1	2	2
Fair	—	15	11	15	16	19
Good	—	53	54	52	51	50
Excellent	—	24	28	27	24	22
Don't know, NA	—	8	6	5	8	6

Note. These data are from the 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2020 ASHA Schools Surveys. Dash indicates that the item was not included in the survey. Because of rounding, percentages may not total exactly 100%. ^aFrom 2010 to 2018, this item was *overall*. ^bFrom 2012 to 2016, this item was *with online resources*. In 2018, it was *with evidence-based resources*.

Survey Methodology

The survey was mailed on February 10, 2020, to a random sample of 4,500 ASHA-certified SLPs and 500 ASHA-certified audiologists employed in school settings in the United States. The sample was stratified by state. Small groups, such as SLPs and audiologists in Wyoming, were oversampled. A survey notification email was sent at the time of the mailing. A second mailing followed on March 11 to individuals who had not responded to the February mailing. A third mailing was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Response Rates

Of the original 4,500 SLPs in the sample plus one other SLP who returned the survey without any identifying number, eight had incorrect mailing addresses, 17 had retired, 21 were employed in other types of facilities, 16 were not employed in the profession, and two were ineligible for other reasons, which left 4,437 possible respondents. The actual number of respondents was 1,779—a 40.1% response rate.

Past *ASHA Schools Survey* response rates were as follows:

- 2004: 69.7%
- 2006: 64.9%
- 2008: 64.0%
- 2010: 64.8% (overall); 65.5% (among SLPs)
- 2012: 63.6% (overall); 64.7% (among SLPs)
- 2014: 46.0% (overall); 47.0% (among SLPs)
- 2016: 47.4% (overall); 47.9% (among SLPs)
- 2018: 48.0% (overall); 48.8% (among SLPs)

Suggested Citation

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2020). *Schools survey report: Workforce and work conditions trends, 2004–2020*. www.asha.org

Additional Information

Companion reports are available on the ASHA website at www.asha.org/Research/memberdata/Schools-Survey/.

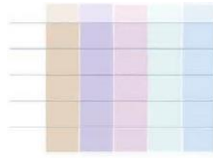
Questions?

For additional information regarding this report, contact Schools Services at schools@asha.org.

Acknowledgment

Without the generous cooperation of the members who participate in our surveys, ASHA could not fulfill its mission to provide vital information about the professions and discipline to the Association membership and public. Thank you!

Appendix



Appendix Table 1. *Greatest professional challenges of school-based SLPs, by year.*

Professional challenge	%							
	2006 (n = 2,561)	2008 (n = 2,556)	2010 (n = 2,492)	2012 (n = 2,538)	2014 (n = 1,786)	2016 (n = 1,894)	2018 (n = 2,170)	2020 (n = 1,497)
Budget constraints	—	—	—	—	—	44	47	32
Ethical challenges	—	—	—	—	—	15	14	12
High workload/caseload size	58	56	60	61	55	70	71	57
Inadequate workspace and facilities	29	28	25	25	21	30	33	30
Incorporating optimal service delivery models	—	—	—	—	36	42	44	41
Lack of funding to attend professional development programs	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	31
Lack of training to work with specific disorders or special populations	—	—	—	—	—	—	21	22
Large amount of paperwork	80	80	81	81	80	83	79	82
Legal challenges (e.g., due process)	—	—	—	—	—	—	13	12
Limited family/caregiver involvement and support ^a	25	24	27	28	28	28	31	43
Limited support from the administration	21	22	21	21	21	26	23	24
Limited time for collaboration	—	—	—	—	51	50	54	50
Limited understanding of my role by others	34	34	37	38	38	40	38	41
Low salary	32	33	27	31	29	36	36	30
Medicaid billing	—	—	—	—	—	32	34	37
Out-of-pocket professional expenses	—	—	34	39	30	35	35	36

(Table continues)

Appendix Table 1. Continued

Professional challenge	%							
	2006 <i>(n = 2,561)</i>	2008 <i>(n = 2,556)</i>	2010 <i>(n = 2,492)</i>	2012 <i>(n = 2,538)</i>	2014 <i>(n = 1,786)</i>	2016 <i>(n = 1,894)</i>	2018 <i>(n = 2,170)</i>	2020 <i>(n = 1,497)</i>
Personnel shortage	—	—	—	—	—	22	23	24
Travel/distance between schools	—	—	—	—	9	8	7	11
Volume of meetings	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	54

Note. These data are from the 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2020 *ASHA Schools Surveys*. Dash indicates that the item was not included in the survey. ^aFrom 2006 to 2018, this item was *limited parental involvement and support*.