

ASHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING REPORT

ASHA's Board of Directors (BOD) met virtually on August 8 and 9, 2020. Following are highlights of the Board's discussions.

PRESIDENT'S OPENING REMARKS

President Theresa Rodgers convened the BOD meeting at 10:30 a.m. ET on August 8, 2020, and welcomed the Board members.

She acknowledged the virtual BOD retreat that BOD members, incoming BOD members, and senior staff participated in the day before entitled "Implicit Bias in the Boardroom: Evidence and Opportunities." The Retreat was facilitated by Dr. Joseph Williams, an associate professor of counselor education at the University of Virginia.

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:

2020 CONNECT

This year, ASHA Connect (Schools Connect, Health Care Connect, and Private Practice Connect) took place July 8–20, 2020, in a fully virtual form. With 59 recorded presentations and 23 live sessions, totaling more than 110 hours of educational content, it was the largest online conference ASHA has offered to date. It was also the most well-attended single online conference ASHA has ever offered, with over 1,200 registered attendees.

In addition to live and recorded sessions, ASHA Connect 2020 included 48 poster presentations, a large and active virtual exhibit hall, and a pop-up ASHA store. It also provided members opportunities to:

- connect with speakers about their presentations;
- reflect on issues related to race and cultural awareness;
- connect with mental health resources;
- connect with vendors about useful products and services;
- connect with the ASHFoundation, ASHA-PAC, and 10 ASHA staff teams for information and resources;
- connect with fellow attendees to learn more about each other; and
- stretch and meditate with yoga on-demand.

Special thanks are extended to all the volunteers, speakers, exhibitors and sponsors, and staff who pivoted to make this event an incredible success!

2020 Convention

On July 10, ASHA publicly announced that the 2020 ASHA Convention was cancelled. After working with ASHA partners in San Diego, California for months, it was mutually determined that it would not be possible to host Convention as planned due to a number of factors related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The ASHA Convention has only been cancelled one prior time—in 1943, due to World War II.

ASHA was one of very few large organizations to have communicable disease coverage for event cancellation; as a result, we expect full coverage of the costs and the expected revenue associated with Convention. ASHA remains hopeful to be able to conduct the 2021 Convention in Washington, DC as planned.

Future of Learning

During the February 2020 ASHA Board of Directors (BOD) meeting discussion of the 2020 CEO Goals, the BOD supported moving forward to develop a comprehensive, multi-stakeholder, multi-year, multi-phase workplan/roadmap to transform ASHA's Learning Culture and Ecosystem to achieve the Desired Characteristics of that Ecosystem, and to complete any of the workplan elements with a 2020 due date.

Due to the subsequent impact of COVID-19-related priorities among many of the volunteer and staff leaders involved, the Future of Learning initiative was paused in mid-March. COVID-19-related (and evolving) disruptions to our professions' models of academic preparation, capacity to pivot and adapt treatment approaches, and heightened need for patient and professional safety considerations have significantly increased the urgency of the need to move this initiative forward. It is now reactivated, albeit at a slower pace than originally planned for 2020. Draft "Desired Characteristics of ASHA's Learning Culture and Ecosystem" have been developed and circulated for review by the volunteer and staff leaders who participated in the December 2019 event. A consultant (Tagoras, Inc.) has been engaged to guide and inform the development of an ASHA roadmap to evolve, enhance, and transform ASHA's learning ecosystem.

Academic Affairs Focus Groups

Three virtual focus groups were held in June 2020 on the topic of planning for academic year 2020–2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants were department chairs or in similar positions in audiology (AuD and PhD) programs, speech-language pathology master's-only programs, and speech-language pathology master's and PhD programs. Twenty-two administrators participated, representing 22 different CSD programs located in 17 states; six of these administrators were male and six were from racial/ethnic underrepresented populations. The information gleaned from the focus groups will inform how ASHA, along with other entities, may support academic programs, faculty, and students in the upcoming academic year 2020–2021.

Payer Portal

The [Payer Portal](#) consolidates coverage and reimbursement-related information relevant to third-party decision-makers into one location that will be promoted to payers to help ensure they can obtain the information and resources they need from ASHA's website. Currently, pages exist related to audiology and speech-language pathology in general and a condition-specific page related to autism. Work on the Payer Portal remains ongoing, albeit on a somewhat slower timeline as Government Affairs and Public Policy (GAPP) and Practices staff have had to shift their priorities during the COVID-19 pandemic to address member concerns regarding telepractice, personal protective equipment, and other emergency policies and executive orders.

The next pages under development will cover maintenance therapy and the distinction between rehabilitative and habilitative services, in direct response to payer requests received at the 2019 Private Payer Summit. Work related to the development of practice guidelines continues on the topics of cognitive treatment and aural rehabilitation. Development of pages specific to those conditions will commence once those guidelines and related literature reviews become available.

Career Portal

The [ASHA Career Portal](#) offers career development resources and job opportunities. In September, ASHA will launch a new biweekly speaker series on Instagram to highlight member career stories and tips for success in finding job opportunities. New content will also be added with tips for interviewing virtually, networking during COVID-19, and using personality assessments to identify one's strengths.

Earlier this year, a [new job board](#) powered by Web Scribble launched on the ASHA Career Portal, offering an improved user experience with greater functionality. The new job board provides free professional resume critique from Top Resume when members [create an account](#), which allows members to request and store references and manage resumes and cover letters so they can easily and quickly apply to job postings. Members can also create custom job alerts to notify them when jobs are posted that match their interests. Members are encouraged to visit the [ASHA Career Portal](#), read content posted on ASHA's [LinkedIn](#), or follow [@ASHACareers](#) on Twitter for tips, resources, and job opportunities.

ASHA TV

ASHA TV is a multimedia platform that will allow ASHA to consolidate video and audio content into one location on [asha.org](#). ASHA is creating more multimedia content than ever before; however, we do not currently have the infrastructure to fully support or organize the content. Currently, content is housed on social media channels and YouTube, over which there is little control, resulting in a loss of traffic to outside resources or promotion of unrelated content. The goals for the launch of ASHA TV are to streamline multimedia content (audio and video) through a closed network of ASHA-only content.

The discovery phase of the ASHA TV project began on June 25, with the goal of producing a feasibility study for the Facilitating Team to review and approve to continue work. The content on ASHA TV will be meta-tagged in alignment with another ASHA project, the Enterprise Taxonomy and Ontology project, which creates common content tags to improve search on the ASHA website and to improve findability of all ASHA content across all of ASHA's platforms.

Assistants Certification

In November 2017, the ASHA BOD passed a resolution approving a 3-year plan to develop certification programs for audiology assistants and speech-language pathology assistants (SLPAs). The assistant certification programs are scheduled to begin accepting applications in December 2020, with the first ASHA-certified assistant certifications being awarded shortly thereafter. The latest information on this is available at www.ashaassistants.org or may be obtained by emailing assistants@asha.org. The following key steps have been completed or remain on track to be completed:

- The audiology assistants and SLPAs certification standards were approved in April and are on the assistants website and at www.asha.org/certification.
- The passing scores on the examination were approved by the Council for Clinical Certification in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CFCC) in May.
- The four forms of the examination were successfully loaded into Prometric's testing system, and staff reviewed/approved the registration process that will be available once applications are officially accepted.
- The online education modules for audiology assistants and SLPAs that are required (or equivalent) of candidates who were not educated to practice as an assistant were made available in late July.
- In July, Todd Philbrick (Director, Certification) and Lisa Wolf (Manager, Assistant Certification Program) hosted a live tweet session to answer questions.
- Certification handbooks will be available in the third quarter of 2020.

Certification Administration

Through the first half of 2020, the number of applications is down significantly from 2019—as was expected because of the surge of applications in 2019, prior to the 2020 standards changes. When the 2019 and 2020 application numbers are combined, they already exceed the application numbers from 2014 and 2015, which was the year of and year after the last speech-language pathology standards change. Audiology applications are down from 2019 but they are up 20% from 2018. As a result of the surge of 2019 graduates who recently completed their clinical fellowships, ASHA is on pace to exceed the 10,000 certifications awarded in 2019.

Annual retention of certificate holders remains very strong, at over 97% (95% for CCC-As and 97.5% for CCC-SLPs), and one more renewal notice will be sent by email and mail, which will likely boost overall renewal to over 98%.

Q&A SESSION

The below topics were posted prior to the BOD meeting for review by each BOD member. The BOD was provided the opportunity during the BOD meeting to provide feedback or have questions answered.

NSSLHA Update

National Advisor for the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA) Kia N. Johnson provided a governance update and details on recent updates related to the NSSLHA Strategic Plan, COVID-19 response, and National NSSLHA's Stand Against Racism.

Update on Governance Structure: As of July 1, seven students began their 2-year terms on the NSSLHA Executive and Regional Councils. Applications for the 104 Student State Officer positions recently closed. These positions are appointed; 1-year terms begin September 1.

Overview of NSSLHA's Strategic Plan: Earlier this year, the Executive Council approved [National NSSLHA's 2020-2022 Strategic Plan](#). The goals are as follows:

1. Build a strong and diverse membership base.

2. Enhance member understanding and engagement.
3. Facilitate collaboration and growth.

The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for these goals have been identified and progress toward desired outcomes is as expected.

COVID-19 Response: To address the immediate needs of students—particularly graduate student clinicians and clinical fellows—National NSSLHA developed a number of student-specific resources, including a [NSSLHA COVID-19 webpage](#), live chats, and blog posts on guidance for meeting certification standards.

National NSSLHA’s Stand Against Racism: National NSSLHA continues to demonstrate a commitment to providing students with resources to assist in dismantling systemic and institutional racism within CSD programs. More information can be found on the [NSSLHA Stop the Silence webpage](#).

Audiology Subcommittee Report

The audiology BOD subcommittee discussed the following topics during its July 21, 2020, conference call:

Ida Institute

- Ida Institute and ASHA are moving forward in continuing a formal working relationship. The ASHA Audiology Practices team is looking into collaborating with Ida to share its publications and resources with ASHA through ASHA’s publication platforms (*Perspectives* and *The ASHA Leader*).

CAPCSD Working Group

- The survey was sent out for members’ feedback on creating a national database and standardization for a centralized application process for the final externship year. The survey responses were due by July 24, 2020. The involvement in this project is based on recommendations from the AuD Education Summit Report, July 2019.

Audiology Assistants Scope of Practice Ad Hoc Committee

- Vice President for Audiology Practice Sharon Sandridge will serve as the chair of the committee. The committee will also include five audiologists, two audiology assistants, and Director, Audiology Practices Tricia Ashby as the ex-officio. There are plans to have a kickoff meeting in late August or early September.

Diabetes proposed CDC educational material review

- The subcommittee reviewed the proposed CDC educational material, *Healthy Ear Matters*, and provided suggested edits that were shared with Kathy Dowd, President of the Audiology Project.

Aligned Sense of Purpose

- The Audiology Subcommittee met to discuss the status of the Aligned Sense of Purpose (ASoP). The ASoP, which was formed in January 2019, consists of two to three members from the various audiology organizations. After a face-to-face meeting in January 2019 and a conference telephone call in June of 2019, the group became dormant. Vice President for Audiology Practice Sharon Sandridge, an ASHA representative on the ASoP, posted a message to the current committee members asking if there was an interest in continuing with the ASoP. Overall, there was a favorable response to continue the work that the ASoP had started, with some suggestions regarding potential topics. As ASHA funded the initial meeting and the follow-up telephone conference call, along with the facilitator, and since ASHA Chief Staff Officer for Audiology Neil DiSarno was the original organizer, it was important to determine how the ASoP will be funded going forward and how upcoming meetings would be organized. Several options were discussed, and these will be put forth to the ASoP on the community board for further consideration.

Other topics

- The Chief Staff Officer for Audiology position has been posted on the ASHA website and other social media outlets. Chief Executive Officer Arlene Pietranton asked the subcommittee to encourage people to apply for the position or let her know and she will reach out to potential candidates. BOD members will have the opportunity to provide input on the selected candidates. CEO Pietranton will make the final hiring decision.

Speech-Language Pathology Subcommittee Report

Palliative Care

President Theresa Rodgers shared a presentation with information on palliative care and SLPs. The National Academies of Practice provided a webinar on this topic, focusing on interprofessional practice and palliative care teams. Myths that may have an impact on speech-language pathology practice were discussed. Dysphagia and communication were identified as priority areas for consideration, and the broader topic of where the profession is with respect to palliative care was addressed. Discussion followed on the implications for research, IPE/IPP, professional development, and advocacy.

COVID-19 and Speech-Language Pathology Practice

The subcommittee discussed current news suggesting that international students may be required to leave the United States if universities move to virtual instruction. Graduate students may have difficulties with Internet connectivity, time zone changes, and access to secure data and laboratory/research environments. A report from a recent meeting with political leaders suggests this will likely not happen. COVID-19 has accelerated transformational learning and requires our educational programs to move forward in a myriad of new ways. A continuum of models is being suggested at various programs across the nation. Funding implications for graduate programs and students were also discussed.

The importance of communicating with members and students and providing clear information related to jurisdiction and who has the authority to make which decisions was reviewed. It was noted that school-based professionals may not yet know the educational model that will be offered by their local education agency, creating challenges for planning and implementation of services. The ASHA School Services team is preparing a back to school e-packet of information for members.

InTouch Forms

In Touch Forms were shared with the BOD prior to the BOD meeting, and Chief Staff Officer for Communications Lisa Cole provided a summary of the messages received since the last BOD meeting.

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, with the first being focused on the review of the Q2 2020 status of the Strategic Objectives' *Annual Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)*. The KPIs are short-term performance metrics that track, monitor, and assess the success of initiatives for the year. Up to three KPIs have been identified for 2020 for each Strategic Objective; their status at the end of Q2 2020 was reported to the Board, along with changes to the KPIs due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The second segment of the update was an overview of a suggested additional performance measure (PM) 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 new PM was discussed and a motion was submitted to the Board of Directors for approval.

In the third segment of the update, major accomplishments were reported for the Strategic Objectives. This segment also included information regarding specific changes because of the COVID-19 pandemic (such as cancelled and/or postponed activities). Additional 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.

CONFIRMING THE RELEVANCE OF THE STRATEGIC PATHWAY

The long-term outcomes for the Strategic Pathway to Excellence necessitate routine checks to ensure that the progress and direction of the Pathway is consistent with the Association's desired outcomes, along with ongoing evaluations to determine the extent to which any course corrections are needed to ensure the transformational outcomes are achieved.

Vice President for Planning Craig Coleman, Chief Staff Officer for Multicultural Affairs Vicki Deal-Williams, and Director of the Office of Business Excellence (OBE) Rozsa Felix facilitated the Strategic Pathway Refresh activities.

The focus for the August BOD meeting was on Strategic Objectives #5 (Increase influence and demonstrated value of audiology and speech-language pathology services), #6 (Increase the diversity of the membership), and #8 (Increase members' cultural competence). Prior to the meeting, BOD members reviewed feedback collected from the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Advisory Councils and SIG Coordinating Committees on strategic objective initiatives and participated in an information session with each of those strategic objective owners to discuss general themes and concerns from the stakeholder feedback. Progress on each of the three strategic objectives was rated as on track and potential enhancements were discussed. BOD members recommended potential areas of focus and suggested additional initiatives for consideration for each of the three strategic objectives.

INTEGRATE EQUITY AND INCLUSION INTO THE PATHWAY

Chief Staff Officer for Multicultural Affairs Vicki Deal-Williams and Director of the Office of Business Excellence Rozsa Felix facilitated a discussion with the Board of Directors to establish the Board's vision for championing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) across the organization and the discipline, and how increased diversity, equity, inclusion, and culturally responsive practice align with ASHA's Envisioned Future. Discussion also included approaches to social justice, and how the Board's priorities can be integrated into ASHA's Strategic Pathway to Excellence. After in-depth discussion, the BOD agreed that next steps will be to approve a revision of the Envisioned Future and to review recommendations from staff for either a new strategic objective, expansion of existing objectives, or both.

ASHA'S CYBERSECURITY POLICY

Director of Information Systems Tori Liu and Information Security Administrator Rumnea Kelly provided the BOD with an overview of the information security program. An overview of the program is provided at least every 2 years to the BOD.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Vice President for Finance Mel Cohen presented the second quarter financial report through June 2020. Total revenue is \$29,898,373, and total expenses are \$25,104,182, with net revenue (revenue minus expense) of \$4,794,191 as of that time. This is lower compared to the June 2019 net by \$817,000 due to the impact of COVID-19 on revenue-generating activities.

During the first 6 months of a typical year, revenue exceeds expense because that's when ASHA collects a large part of dues in addition to specific types of non-dues revenue. In the second half of the year, revenue normally exceeds expense, with a large source of revenue earned from in-person events such as ASHA Connect and the ASHA Convention. Due to COVID-19 and cancellation of the Convention, ASHA is projecting that by year end 2020 expenses will exceed revenue, with a net loss of up to \$700,000.

Mel Cohen also provided a Financial Planning Board (FPB) report. He presented an overview of the 2020 year-end budget projections, and a recommendation from the Financial Planning Board to the BOD to suspend the balanced budget provision for the 2020 Approved Budget due to the financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on ASHA's revenue and expenses. Chief Executive Officer Arlene Pietranton indicated that her goal and the proposed resolution before the BOD states that the 2020 budget deficit shall not exceed \$700,000 (or just over 1% of

ASHA's 2020 Operating Budget). The BOD also received a recommendation from the Financial Planning Board to approve the Future of Learning project funding request of \$65,000 from the Special Opportunities Fund.

Mel Cohen also provided an Audit Committee report. ASHA received an unmodified audit opinion for the 2019 Consolidated Financial Statements, which is the highest level of assurance that an auditor can provide. A motion was made and passed to acknowledge and accept the 2019 Annual Audit Report. The BOD also approved a motion that the 2021 ASHA dues will remain at the same rate as the 2020 dues. The last time there was an increase in ASHA dues was 2010.

COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS (CNE) STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOPs)

Two bylaws resolutions were approved in 2020 that necessitated changes to the CNE SOPs: BOD 1-2020 (sunset the Advisory Councils); and BOD 9-2020 (transition to a hybrid election for the BOD). Changes presented to the BOD by Past President and CNE Chair Shari Robertson were as follows:

- revising the CNE charge and composition to align with the Bylaws approved by resolution BOD 9-2020;
- removal of Advisory Council language and processes for nominations and elections;
- inclusion of a member ratification process that provides for member feedback on the slate of candidates prior to elections opening;
- refining requirements for the position of president-elect to include membership on the CNE; and
- development of a process to allow the BOD to receive the names of nominees for review, with the authority to add or remove names from the slate remaining exclusively with the CNE.

The BOD will vote on this motion online in the next few days.

SPECIALTY AWARD IN CONTINUING EDUCATION (ACE) FEASIBILITY STUDY REPORT

Continuing Education Board Chair Tanya Shores and Director of Continuing Education Jo Ann Linseisen presented the findings of a study exploring the feasibility of establishing a Specialty Award in Continuing Education (Specialty ACE). The presentation highlighted data pertaining to the need, perceived benefits, barriers, capacity, costs, potential for revenue generation, marketing, and other considerations for establishing and operating a Specialty ACE, as well as the Continuing Education Board's recommendation regarding the Specialty ACE. Associate Director Amy Hasselkus assisted in the presentation and participated in the discussion that followed. After careful discussion and review of the information presented, the BOD agreed with the CEB's recommendation not to move forward with a specialty ACE.

VALUE OF THE CCCs CAMPAIGN

Director of Public Relations Joseph Cerquone gave an update on the Value of the CCCs campaign and presented the ASHA BOD with proposed options to consider for continuing the CCCs campaign after 2020. The BOD considered several options and ultimately decided to

support continuing the campaign with a combination of digital and social media ad campaigns as well as direct mail, pending support from the Financial Planning Board and available funds.

The meeting was adjourned on August 9 at 1:45 p.m. ET.