The Texas Approach to Addressing the SLP Shortage

ASHA SLP Forum
September 28 – 30, 2006

Lynn K. Flahive
Texas Christian University
Past President, Texas Speech-Language-Hearing Association
Joint Committee of

TSHA
TCASE (Texas Council of Administrators in Special Education
Board Texas State Licensure

FOCUS:
Public Schools
BackgrounD

- Legislative “fight” each year
- Lessen standards for SLP-As in schools
  - Give SLP-As full scope of practice
- TSHA Public Schools Task Force established in August 2003
University Student Survey
November 2003

- Survey for all Junior and Senior undergraduates as well as graduates
- All 17 programs in TX participated
- Areas explored
  - How students were financing education
  - Obstacles to obtaining a Masters
  - View of caseloads in different work settings
Special Ed. Director Survey
December 2003

- Distributed with help of a state legislator
- 57% return rate
- Areas explored
  - How SLP-As were assigned and used
  - Use of contracted SLPs
  - Recruiting strategies for SLPs
  - Salary incentives
Focus Group with University Supervisors/Clinic Directors
February 2004

- Looked at practicum requirements
- How public school issues were dealt with in curriculum
- Class schedules (day/night/weekend)
  - Full or part time
- Bilingual preparation
- Vacancies in instructional staff
Focus Group of Special Ed. Directors
February 2004

- ASHA assisted
- Opportunity for all 20 regions to express views/concerns/issues
- Want SLPs to be “well trained to work in the schools”
- Felt shortage is artificially created by licensure, MS/MA requirement, and CCC
- Admitted to shortage in other spec. ed areas
Joint Committee of TSHA and TCASE

- Established in April, 2004
- Meetings held April 2004, October 2004, and January 2005

PURPOSE: Develop short, mid and long term solutions
Meetings continued in October 2005 and December 2005

Refined the action plan, developed timelines, and assigned responsibilities for tasks
SHORT TERM GOALS

- Development of statewide eligibility criteria
  - Templates developed for articulation, voice, fluency, language
  - Adding two more
  - Training of Trainers (TOT) model used
    - Expense to TSHA
    - ASHA recently awarded a grant to TSHA to help
    - More trainings are being done
- Workload vs Caseload issues
- Staffing guidelines for SLP supervisors and SLP-As
- Staffing resource document for urban, suburban and rural districts
- Hiring practice guidelines for school district HR departments
- Developing materials to market the profession to high school and community/junior college students
Gain TEA involvement and participation of Regional Education Service Centers (ESC)

Increase flexibility of the use of SLP-As

- January 2004: TSHA/TCASE went to Licensure Board to allow SLP-As to attend ARDs
  - Result: SLP-As could attend speech only ARDs for children enrolled for articulation only

TSHA went to Licensure Board again in January 2006 after another legislative attempt to make change

- Head off legislative change in special session
  - Result: SLP-As may attend ARDs for children they see with specific restrictions
MIDTERM GOALS

- Develop a practicum model for Senior UG Speech Pathology students in schools
- TSHA with TCASE input will develop and provide more training for SLP-As
- Develop “Best Practices” guide for Special Ed Directors, Principals, Superintendents
- Presentations at TASA, TASB, TCASE to ensure others are aware of efforts and advances
- Training more bilingual SLPs
LONG TERM GOALS

- Establishment of “Grow Your Own” Programs for SLPs in school districts
- Develop a university collaborative for distance learning
  - Seeking funding from state legislature and TEA
- Improved working conditions
  - Physical space, release time, funding for CE
- Training ARD participants
- Training Parents
And it continues..

- Most recent meeting was September 11, 2006

- THANKS to ASHA, particularly
  - Janet Deppe
  - Kathy Whitmire