

June 1, 2023

Dear Legislative Commission,

On behalf of the Nevada Speech-Language and Hearing Association (NSHA), the NSHA Coalition to Address Personnel Shortages in Special Education and Related Services, the American Speech-Language Hearing Association- State Education Advocacy Leader (ASHA-SEAL), and Speech-Language Pathologists across our state we want to thank the Legislative Commission for the work that is done for the citizens of Nevada.

LCB no. R125-22 changes language within NAC 391 to decrease employment barriers for school districts to hire more experienced professionals that may have begun their careers in a setting other than the school building. Speech-language pathologists (SLP) hold a Master's degree with a rigorous program and standards that allow a practitioner to provide speech, language, cognition, swallowing services to people from birth to death, with a license from the State of Nevada Speech Language Pathology and Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensing Board (NVBOE). This is the license to practice Speech Pathology in our state. To obtain this state license SLPs must also obtain a national certification from the American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA) that is called the Certificate of Clinical Competence(CCC). Built into both licenses is the requirement for continuing education and professional development in our field of practice, Speech Language Pathology. To require clinicians that already hold these two licenses (NVBOE and ASHA CCC) to take a reading, writing, and math exam or have a GRE score within the last 5 years is a barrier to recruiting SLPs that have been practicing in other settings.

Speech-language pathologists that hold Master's degrees are allied health professionals that provide evaluations and therapeutic services for communication needs across multiple settings within a community. These settings include private practices, hospitals, behavior clinics, developmental clinics, higher education settings, and school settings. School-based speech/ language evaluation and therapy services are medically based even though they are delivered in a school building, because of this the services provided by a Master's level SLP are reimbursable by Medicaid creating a funding source for schools in Nevada.

Thank you for considering and approving this regulation change, it has a meaningful impact for Speech-language pathologists working in Nevada as well as Nevada citizens.

Kim Reddig, M.S. CCC-SLP
NSHA President

Nancy Kuhles, M.S. CCC-SLP
Co-chair NSHA Coalition

Karen Klopfer, M.S. CCC-SLP
ASHA SEAL

