

SLP Caseload and Workload Characteristics

For additional information, please contact
Jeanette Janota, Surveys and Analysis
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
Rockville, MD 20850
800-498-2071, ext. 8738
jjanota@asha.org

Contents

Executive Summary	1
Function	2
Caseload or Workload.....	2
Caseload Size.....	2
...by Facility.....	2
...by State	3
...by Area	4
Areas of Intervention.....	5
Weekly Activities	6
Workload Calculator.....	6
Missed Sessions	7
Supervision	8
...by Region.....	8
...by Experience	8
Survey Notes and Methodology	9
Response Rate.....	9
Reports.....	9
Suggested Citation.....	9
Supplemental Resources	10
Additional Information	10
Thank You	10
Appendix: State Listings.....	11
Figures	
Figure 1: Median Caseload Size, by Type of School.....	2
Figure 2: Median Caseload Size, by Area.....	4
Figure 3: Mean Weekly Hours in Pull-Out Service, by Type of School.....	6
Figure 4: Missed Sessions Made Up	7
Tables	
Table 1: Median Caseload Size, by State	3
Table 2: Areas of Intervention.....	5
Table 3: Comfort With Supervising Assistants	8
Table 4: Comfort With Supervising Assistants, by Region (%).....	8

Executive Summary

In Spring 2020, the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) conducted a survey of speech-language pathologists (SLPs) and educational audiologists in school settings. The survey was designed to provide information about school-based service delivery and to update and expand information gathered during previous Schools Surveys.

The results are presented in a series of reports. This report is based on responses from SLPs in special day/residential schools, preschools, elementary schools, secondary schools, and combined school settings. Data are not presented for table cells with fewer than 25 respondents.

Overall Findings

- ◆ 88% of the SLPs employed full time or part time were clinical service providers.
- ◆ 79% of clinical service providers used a caseload approach to determine the number of students they served.
- ◆ Median caseload size was 47 students.
- ◆ The median caseload sizes were highest in Arizona and Texas (65) and smallest in New York (30).
- ◆ Median caseload sizes were smallest in the Middle Atlantic states (34) and largest in the East South Central states (60).
- ◆ At least 85% of SLPs served students with autism spectrum disorder; language disorders: pragmatics/ social communication; language disorders: semantics, morphology, syntax; and speech sound disorders.
- ◆ Clinical service providers spent an average of 19 hours weekly providing services in a pull-out model.
- ◆ 10% of the SLPs had used the ASHA Workload Calculator.
- ◆ 63% of the clinical service providers said they would need to make up a session any time that they missed one for any reason.
- ◆ 55% of the SLPs were *very or extremely comfortable* supervising assistants.

Function

Most (88%) of the SLPs who were employed full time or part time were clinical service providers. The rest were diagnosticians (5%), special education teachers (3%), administrators/supervisors/directors (2%), consultants (1%), or filled some other role (1%).

Caseload or Workload

Most of the clinical service providers who were employed full time or part time used a caseload approach to determine the number of students they served.

- 79% used a caseload approach
- 17% used a workload approach
- 4% used both a caseload approach and a workload approach.

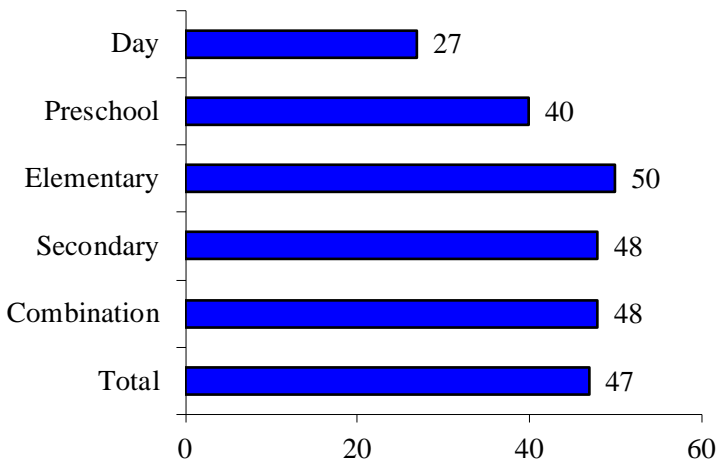


Caseload Size

The median monthly caseload size of ASHA-certified, school-based SLPs who were clinical service providers working full time was 47 (range of 5–214). Caseload size was lowest in special day/residential schools (27) and highest in elementary schools (50; see Figure 1).

...by Facility

Figure 1: Median Caseload Size, by Type of School



Note. $n = 1,279$.

...by State

Approximately one third ($n = 18$) of the states had a sufficient number of respondents to warrant reporting their caseload sizes. The highest reportable caseload size was in Arizona and Texas (65), and the lowest was in New York (30; see Table 1).

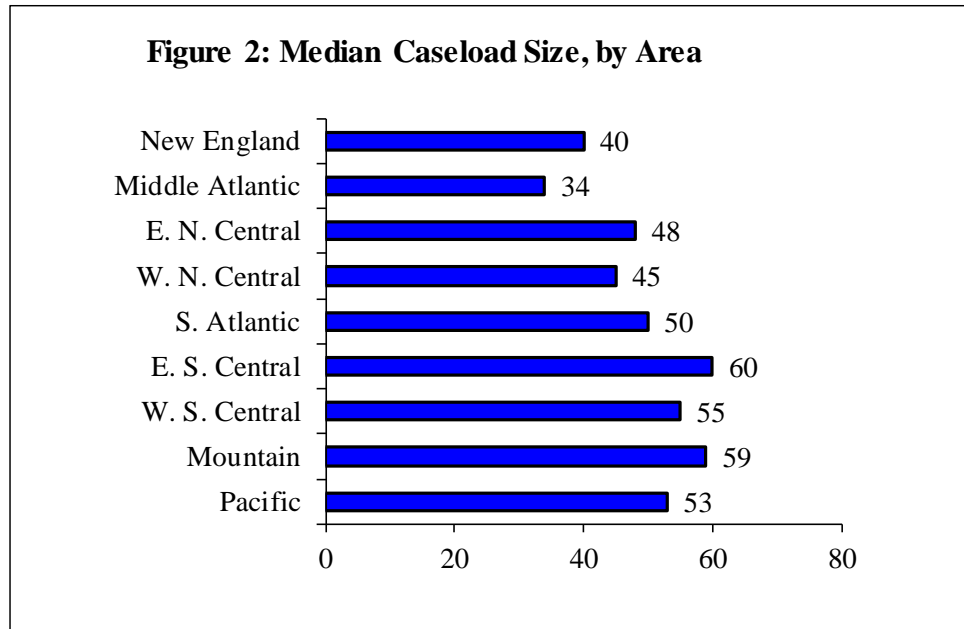
Table 1: Median Caseload Size, by State

State	Caseload	State	Caseload
Alabama (AL)		Montana (MT)	
Alaska (AK)		Nebraska (NE)	
Arizona (AZ)	65	Nevada (NV)	
Arkansas (AR)		New Hampshire (NH)	
California (CA)	55	New Jersey (NJ)	35
Colorado (CO)		New Mexico (NM)	
Connecticut (CT)		New York (NY)	30
Delaware (DE)		North Carolina (NC)	46
District of Columbia (DC)		North Dakota (ND)	
Florida (FL)	60	Ohio (OH)	53
Georgia (GA)	48	Oklahoma (OK)	
Hawaii (HI)		Oregon (OR)	
Idaho (ID)		Pennsylvania (PA)	56
Illinois (IL)	45	Rhode Island (RI)	
Indiana (IN)		South Carolina (SC)	
Iowa (IA)		South Dakota (SD)	
Kansas (KS)		Tennessee (TN)	
Kentucky (KY)		Texas (TX)	65
Louisiana (LA)		Utah (UT)	
Maine (ME)		Vermont (VT)	
Maryland (MD)	41	Virginia (VA)	50
Massachusetts (MA)	43	Washington (WA)	
Michigan (MI)	53	West Virginia (WV)	
Minnesota (MN)	46	Wisconsin (WI)	42
Mississippi (MS)		Wyoming (WY)	
Missouri (MO)	36		

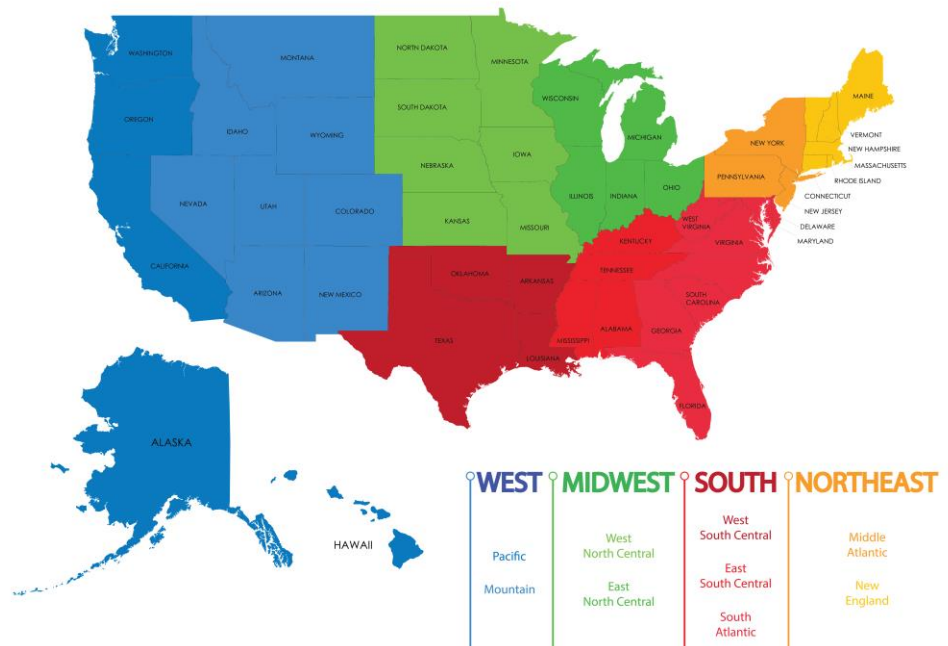
Note. $n = 927$ for the 18 states with reportable data. Blank cells indicate that fewer than 25 respondents provided data.

...by Area

The median caseload size was lowest in the Middle Atlantic states (34) and highest in the East South Central states (60; see Figure 2).



Note. n = 1,279. A list of states assigned to each area can be found in the Appendix.



Areas of Intervention

The four areas of intervention in which most of the school-based SLPs had students were (a) autism spectrum disorder (92%); (b) language disorders: semantics, morphology, syntax; (c) speech sound disorders (89%); and (d) language disorders: pragmatics/social communication (87%; see Table 2).

The largest average number of students seen, grouped by area of intervention, was for language disorders: semantics, morphology, syntax (22), followed by speech sound disorders (19). The smallest number was for selective mutism (1).

Area of intervention	Percentage of SLPs who regularly serve students in this area	Mean number of students regularly served*
Acquired brain injury (ABI)	13.2	2.3
Auditory processing disorder (APD)	30.5	4.7
Autism spectrum disorder (ASD)	91.7	10.9
Childhood apraxia of speech (CAS)	57.6	2.7
Cognitive communication disorders	51.5	10.2
Dysphagia (swallowing/feeding)	10.0	4.2
Fluency disorders	67.5	2.5
Hearing loss	45.4	3.0
Language disorders: pragmatics/social communication	86.5	12.5
Language disorders: semantics, morphology, syntax	89.9	21.7
Nonverbal, augmentative and alternative communication (AAC)	63.1	6.5
Reading and writing (literacy)	35.8	12.6
Selective mutism	22.8	1.3
Speech sound disorders	88.9	18.5
Voice or resonance disorders	15.1	2.2

Note. $n = 1,279$. SLP = speech-language pathologist.

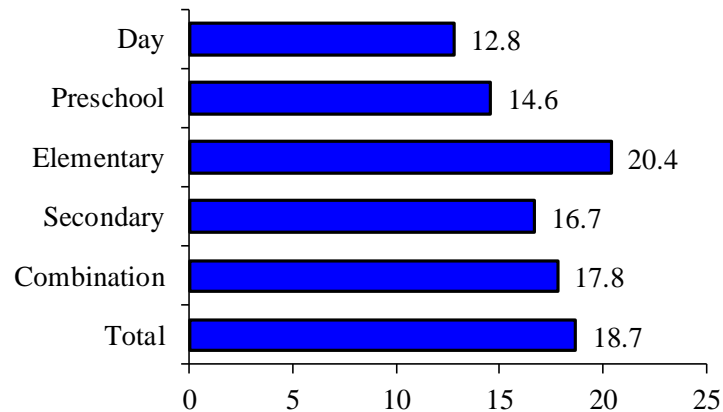
*Includes only SLPs who do serve these students.

Weekly Activities

The SLPs who were clinical service providers and were employed full time reported spending an average (i.e., mean) of 36.6 hours in a typical week on a list of 10 activities. More of their time was spent in pull-out service than in any other activity (18.7 hours). Time spent on this activity was highest in elementary schools and lowest in special day/residential schools (see Figure 3). Respondents also reported that they spent a mean of

- 5.4 hours in classroom-based integrated services;
- 4.0 hours on diagnostic evaluations;
- 1.9 hours on collaborative consultation;
- 1.4 hours on Multi-Tiered System of Support/Response to Intervention (MTSS/RTI) activities;
- 0.9 hours on technological support;
- 0.9 hours on supervision;
- 0.2 hours on services to Section 504 students;
- 0.1 hours on telepractice; and
- 3.1 hours on other duties, as assigned.

Figure 3: Mean Weekly Hours in Pull-Out Service, by Type of School



Note. $n = 1,121$.

Workload Calculator

When asked whether they had used the ASHA Workload Calculator that is on ASHA’s website, 10% of the SLPs said *Yes*; 38% said *No, but I know what it is*; and 52% said *Don’t know what it is*.

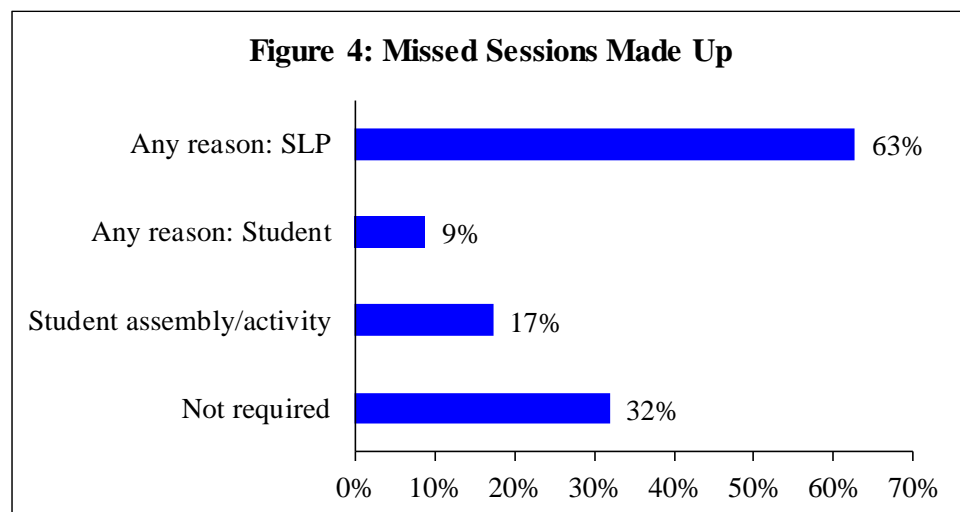
The type of facility where they worked was not related to their response ($p = .301$), but the region of the country where they worked was ($p = .000$). SLPs in the East North Central states were the most likely to reply *Yes* (20%) and least likely to say they did not know what the Workload Calculator was (35%). On the other hand, SLPs in the Middle Atlantic states were least likely to say *Yes* (4%) and most likely to say they did not know what it was (69%).

Missed Sessions

Survey respondents were asked to select which of the following four possible circumstances addressed whether they were required to make up missed sessions. (They could select multiple responses.)

- I am not required to make up missed sessions.
- When the student misses a session due to assembly or classroom activity.
- Any time a student misses a session for any reason.
- Any time I miss a session for any reason.

More than half (63%) of the clinical service providers who were employed full time or part time said they would need to make up a session any time that they missed a session for any reason. Fewer (32%) said that they were not required to make up missed sessions, 17% said that a session would need to be made up when the student missed a session due to assembly or classroom activity, and 9% said a makeup session was required any time a student missed a session for any reason (see Figure 4).



Note. *n* = 1,496. SLP = speech-language pathologist.

The type of facility where SLPs were employed had an effect on only one of the responses. The range of SLPs who were required to make up missed sessions due to assembly or classroom activity was between 10% in preschools and 24% in secondary schools (*p* = .008). Region of the country had an effect on all four responses (*p* = .000).

- The range of SLPs who were required to make up missed sessions any time they missed one for any reason ranged from 48% of those in New England to 76% in the West South Central states.
- When the student missed a session for any reason, 2% of SLPs in the Pacific states to 16% in the Middle Atlantic states were required to make up missed sessions.
- SLPs who reported that they were required to make up missed sessions when students were missing due to assembly or classroom activity was between 6% of those in the West North Central states and 32% in the South Atlantic states.
- Finally, from 22% of SLPs in the West South Central states to 47% in New England were not required to make up missed sessions.

Supervision

When asked how comfortable they felt to supervise audiology or speech-language pathology assistants within their professional area (i.e., audiology or speech-language pathology), slightly more than half of the SLPs felt *very* or *extremely comfortable* (see Table 3).

Response	%
Not at all comfortable	6
Slightly comfortable	9
Somewhat comfortable	30
Very comfortable	37
Extremely comfortable	18

Note. $n = 1,752$.

...by Region

Type of school ($p = .346$) had no effect on their response, but both area of the country ($p = .011$; see Table 4) and years of experience in the schools ($p = .000$) did.

Response	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
Not at all comfortable	8	6	4	3
Slightly comfortable	7	10	12	8
Somewhat comfortable	29	33	30	28
Very comfortable	36	36	37	41
Extremely comfortable	20	14	18	20

Note. $n = 1,704$.

...by Experience

The more years of experience that SLPs had in the schools, the more likely they were to report that they were *extremely comfortable* with supervising assistants. Specifically, the percentages of SLPs who said they were *extremely comfortable* can be broken down as follows:

- 1–5 years of experience: 7%
- 6–10 years of experience: 13%
- 11–15 years of experience: 21%
- 16–20 years of experience: 22%
- 21–25 or 26–30 years of experience: 26%
- 31 or more years of experience: 34%

Survey Notes and Methodology

Since 2004, ASHA has fielded the Schools Survey in even-numbered years to gather information of interest to the professions. Members, volunteer leaders, and staff rely on data from the Schools Survey to better understand the priorities and needs of SLPs and educational audiologists.

Response Rate

The survey was fielded on February 10, 2020, to a random sample of 4,500 ASHA-certified SLPs and 500 ASHA-certified audiologists who were employed in school settings in the United States. Everyone received an electronic “be-on-the-lookout-for” message 2 days later, and a second postal mailing followed on March 11. A third mailing was not sent because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The sample was a random sample, stratified by state. Small groups, such as constituents in Wyoming, were oversampled. Weighting was used when presenting data to reflect the actual distribution of SLPs in each state based on ASHA’s membership database.

The original sample included 4,500 SLPs, with an additional survey returned by an SLP who had removed his identifying number, resulting in a total gross sample of 4,501. Of the original 4,501 SLPs, 17 were retired, 21 were employed in other types of facilities, 16 were not employed in the field, 8 had incorrect addresses, and 2 were ineligible for other reasons, leaving 4,437 possible respondents. The actual number of respondents was 1,779, resulting in a **40.1%** response rate. The results presented in this report are based on responses from those 1,779 individuals.

Reports

Results from the 2020 Schools Survey are presented in a series of reports for SLPs:

- *SLP Caseload and Workload Characteristics*
- *SLP Workforce and Work Conditions*
- *SLP Annual Salaries and Hourly Wages*
- *Survey Summary Report: Numbers and Types of Responses, SLPs*
- *Survey Methodology, Respondent Demographics, and Glossary, SLPs*

Results from the educational audiologists are presented in a separate report: *Survey Summary Report: Numbers and Types of Responses, Educational Audiologists*.

Suggested Citation

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2020). *2020 Schools Survey report: SLP caseload and workload characteristics*. www.asha.org/Research/memberdata/Schools-Survey/

Supplemental Resources

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (n.d.-a). *ASHA Assistants Program*. www.asha.org/associates/assistants-certification-program/

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (n.d.-b). *ASHA Workload Calculator*. <https://www.asha.org/SLP/Schools/Workload-Calculator/>

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (n.d.-c). *The Practice Portal*. <https://www.asha.org/Practice-Portal/>

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2002). *A workload analysis approach for establishing speech-language caseload standards in the school* [Position Statement]. www.asha.org/policy/PS2002-00122/

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2010a). *Roles and responsibilities of speech-language pathologists in schools* [Position Statement]. <https://www.asha.org/policy/PS2010-00318/>

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2010b). *Roles and responsibilities of speech-language pathologists in schools* [Professional Issues Statement]. <https://www.asha.org/policy/PI2010-00317/>

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2010c). *Working for change: A guide for speech-language pathologists and audiologists in schools*. <https://www.asha.org/uploadedFiles/Working-Change-Schools-SLPs-Audiologists-Guide.pdf>

Additional Information

If you would like to speak with a member of the ASHA School Services Team about the survey, please send a message to schools@asha.org or call ASHA's Action Center (800-498-2071) and ask to be connected to a School Services staff member. To learn more about how the Association is working on behalf of school-based ASHA Certified Members, visit the ASHA Schools webpages at www.asha.org/slp/schools/.

Thank You

ASHA would like to thank the SLPs who completed the *ASHA 2020 Schools Survey*. Reports like this one are possible only because people like *you* participate.

Is this information valuable to you? If so, please accept invitations to participate in other ASHA-sponsored surveys and focus groups. You are the experts, and we rely on you to provide data to share with your fellow members. ASHA surveys benefit *you*.

Appendix:
State Listings

Regions of the Country

Northeast

- ◆ Middle Atlantic
 - New Jersey
 - New York
 - Pennsylvania
- ◆ New England
 - Connecticut
 - Maine
 - Massachusetts
 - New Hampshire
 - Rhode Island
 - Vermont

South

- ◆ East South Central
 - Alabama
 - Kentucky
 - Mississippi
 - Tennessee
- ◆ South Atlantic
 - Delaware
 - District of Columbia
 - Florida
 - Georgia
 - Maryland
 - North Carolina
 - South Carolina
 - Virginia
 - West Virginia
- ◆ West South Central
 - Arkansas
 - Louisiana
 - Oklahoma
 - Texas

Midwest

- ◆ East North Central
 - Illinois
 - Indiana
 - Michigan
 - Ohio
 - Wisconsin
- ◆ West North Central
 - Iowa
 - Kansas
 - Minnesota
 - Missouri
 - Nebraska
 - North Dakota
 - South Dakota

West

- ◆ Mountain
 - Arizona
 - Colorado
 - Idaho
 - Montana
 - Nevada
 - New Mexico
 - Utah
 - Wyoming
- ◆ Pacific
 - Alaska
 - California
 - Hawaii
 - Oregon
 - Washington