

SEAL NEWSLETTER

The latest news and updates from ASHA and MSHA



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New SEAL

My name is Melanie Clyatt and I am so pleased to be serving as your new State Education and Advocacy Leader for the year 2020. My goal is to keep you informed about what is going on nationally and statewide as it pertains to the services we provide our students.

COVID - 19

I know that this is what is on everyone's mind right now. Of course, information is changing and being updated very rapidly. ASHA has sent out their guidelines [HERE](#). The Department of Education has set forth their guidelines [HERE](#) for serving those with disabilities during this pandemic. In addition, they provided information on FERPA and COVID-19 [HERE](#) and the impact of COVID-19 on assessments and accountability under ESSA [HERE](#). ASHA recommends that ASHA members consult this information from the U.S. Department of Education with regard to school-based SLP and educational audiology service provision.

Strikes or Walkouts

January's topic for ASHA SEALS was strikes or walkouts. There are many things that need to be considered when addressing this issue. ASHA has created a guidance document that addresses notification responsibilities, legal and ethical guidelines, and making up missed sessions [HERE](#). ASHA does not provide guidelines on whether or not you should or should not engage in a strike or walk out, but it does give guidance about things as professionals we need to consider.

Universal Licensure

This is an issue that is hot at both the national level and the state level. Universal Licensure is having one body regulate speech pathologists and audiologists regardless of the setting where they work. ASHA has an explanation [HERE](#). In Mississippi a bill has been introduced in the house and senate to create a single licensing board which would govern licensing requirements and ethics violations. MSHA has provided a more lengthy explanation of what this would entail [HERE](#) and benefits it could provide.

Loan Forgiveness

Our March topic centered around loan forgiveness. I am excited to report that your MSHA organization has really done great work around this subject. There are several ways to look into loan forgiveness. On a federal level there are avenues for Perkins Loan cancellation, [Public Service Loan Cancellation](#), [Teacher Loan Forgiveness](#), and [Temporary Expanded Public Service Loan Forgiveness](#). In Mississippi, the office of student financial aid will award approximately 8 Speech Language Pathology Forgivable Loan recipients per year. Candidates must be working toward obtaining a first-time master's degree in communication sciences and disorders. The loan is offered for full-time and part-time students and will be "forgiven" after 1 year of service as a licensed SLP in MS public or charter schools per year funding was received by the recipient. The application dates are October 1 through March 31, and the documented deadline is April 30th (June 30th for the letter of acceptance). Eligibility requirements: MS resident for 1 year prior to the application process, admitted and enrolled in a program of study, and maintain a 3.0 or higher GPA. Look for details on the MSHA website [HERE](#).