

Speech-language pathologists

[Linguistics](#), [Language](#)



School Speech-Language Pathologists Hayley K. Mason Ball State University
School Speech-Language Psychologists Speech-language pathologists began their impact in schools in 1910 in the Chicago public school systems. These programs commenced due to educators acknowledging how speech and hearing problems affected performance in the classroom. Today, 55% of all speech-language pathologists (SLPs) work in the school systems, 95.5% of those being females (Plante & Beeson, 2008). They are required to perform a vast array of important tasks.

They determine, diagnose, treat, and assist in preventing disorders related to speech, communication, language, and fluency. According to a study done by Plante and Beeson (2008), their caseloads may accommodate multiple handicapped children or those with distinguishing speech and language hindrances. Their work is in-depth and very meticulous. School speech-language pathologists administer distinctivediagnostictests to help recognize the particular area of complications a child encounters. The child may face problems with stuttering, fluency, swallowing, articulation of words, or many other serious cases.

Once the impairment of a student is recognized, they write an individualizededucationplan (IEP). This is comprised of a set of simplegoalsand objectives for each of their students throughout the duration of the school year. They may work with the students individually, in a small group, or with an entire classroom to accomplish these goals (Plante & Beeson, 2008). Each school day has a fixed number of allotted time slots for a school SLP. It must be filled with activities mandated by the state, federal

laws, or local education problems and procedures (" Executive summary: A," 2003).

If needed, they may work with other professionals to help treat children. Classroom teachers can aid in sharing with the speech-language pathologist what the child's struggles with in the classroom. Audiologists and school speech-language pathologists work side-by-side in many cases determining the problems and best treatment for the child. Occupational therapists, physical therapists, child psychologists, and special education teachers also work together to evaluate a student. Joint evaluation of a child speeds up the process and allows for a diagnosis and treatment methods to be put in place sooner.

It is also a benefit because all of these professionals have experience working with this particular population (Plante & Beeson, 2008). Caseloads, not to be confused with workloads, are typically defined as the number of students with IEPs that school SLPs serve directly and/or indirectly. However, in some school districts it might also include those students whom do not have identified disabilities but still receive assistance (" Executive summary: A," 2003). By ASHA's recommendation, the maximum caseload for a school SLP should be no more than 40 students.

However, the results from the study completed by Katz, Maag, Fallon, Blenkarn, and Smith (2010) suggest that it is typical for a caseload to fluctuate between 45 and 59 students. Too many caseloads can put too much added pressure on a school SLP, causing them to become less satisfied with their job. Job satisfaction is characterized as an attitudinal variable estimating the degree to which employees are pleased by their jobs and the

miscellaneous aspects of their jobs (Edgar & Rosa-Lugo, 2007). Speech-language pathologists exceeding 40 caseloads expressed significantly less satisfaction with their career choice.

They felt pressured by lack of time in completing assessments compared to those with fewer caseloads (Katz, Maag, Fallon, Blenkarn & Smith, 2010). Most employees' voice that having reliable coworkers, enough time to get work done, and a friendly supervisor all contribute to higher job satisfaction. This in turn correlates to their likelihood to remain in the profession (Katz et al, 2010). Those who have been in the profession for a greater number of years have a higher job satisfaction than those who are just starting out.

Although, they are often unsatisfied with their opportunity for promotion or advancement in the field, fellow coworkers, pay and pay rises, and their primary supervisor (Edgar & Rosa-Lugo, 2007). Despite some downfalls, school speech-language pathology is a fast growing career. Numerous states across the United States have undergone a significant net gain in population. Immigration levels are on the rise in states such as New York, Florida, Minnesota, California, and Texas. Thus, increasing the number of speech-language pathologists needed in school districts (Edgar & Rosa-Lugo, 2007). There will be a larger demand for speech-language pathologists that specialize with certain age groups, especially school-age children. Currently, there are approximately 54, 120 speech-language pathologists working in private and public school systems. By 2020, that number is expected to increase by more than 12, 000 employed school speech-language pathologists (U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012). There are countless benefits that are enticing more people into the field. Mothers (and

sometimes fathers) of school-age children enjoy that their working hours are very similar to their children's schedules. They can work full-time and still get their child off the school bus everyday.

Majority of school SLPs (93%) only work 9-10 months out of the year, allowing them to have the summers off to spend with their families but still be paid on an annual basis (Brook, 2012). Generous benefit packages are usually offered, including health, dental, and vision insurance programs and maternity leave. Furthermore, the salary of a school speech-language pathologist also definitely has its advantages. Salary fluctuates depending on years of experience, geographic location, and type of school system. According to the results of a study done by Brook (2012), the median earning of a school speech-language pathologist was around \$58, 000.

Those who work in the Northeast region have a higher median income those who work in alternative regions of the country, especially the South and Midwest. By working in a suburban or metropolitan area, school SLPs are likely to make about \$10, 000 more than those working in rural areas. Secondary and elementary school speech-language pathologists generally have a higher income than those who work with in preschools. Those with 28 years of experience or more made up to \$25, 000 more than those first starting out in the profession (Brook, 2012). A range fluctuating between 88% and 94% of school SLPs were paid on an annual basis. .