



A Year of Success for NJSHA

NJSHA's Legislative Committee, chaired by immediate past-president **Mary Faella**, works hand-in-hand with our governmental affairs consultants, **Lynn Nowak** and **Jacy Lance** at Porzio Governmental Affairs. NJSHA tracked 258 bills introduced and moving through the legislative process in 2019. Below is a brief outline of successes that NJSHA achieved in the past year.

Single Licensure for Audiologists

- Permits certain audiologists to dispense and fit hearing aids by virtue of their audiology license, without requiring a separate hearing aid dispensing license.
- Received unanimous approval by two legislative committees and by the full Senate and Assembly.
- In addition to prime sponsors Senator Patrick Diegnan (D-Middlesex) and Assemblywoman Vainieri Huttie (D-Bergen), nine legislators added their names to the legislation as co-sponsors.
- Signed by Governor Murphy in March 2019.

Protections Incorporated into Applied Behavior Analyst Licensing Bill

- Requires proper training and licensure of Applied Behavior Analysts.
- NJSHA worked with Senator Loretta Weinberg (D-Bergen), the Senate sponsor, to secure amendments to protect the practices of speech-language pathology and audiology in the legislation.
- The bill now specifically clarifies, "the practice of behavior analysis does not include diagnosis of speech-language, hearing, and other communication and swallowing disorders" and "nothing in this act shall be construed to apply to the practice, activities and services of qualified members of other professions, including speech-language pathologists or audiologists."
- Work on this legislation has opened the door for a fruitful, collaborative relationship between NJSHA and Autism NJ.
- Signed by Governor Murphy on January 13, 2020.

Music Therapist Licensure

- Sets standards of qualification, education, training and experience for music therapists.
- NJSHA secured amendments to this legislation to protect the scope of practice of speech and audiology practitioners.
 - These include mandating collaboration with a patient's speech-language pathologist (SLP) or audiologist when providing services to patients with speech or swallowing disorders and prohibiting a music therapist from replacing speech-language specialists (SLs) or SLPs when providing educational or rehabilitation services.
- As introduced, the bill states that the practice of music therapy does not include the diagnosis of any physical, mental or communication disorder.
- Music therapists will be governed under a new "Board of Creative Arts and Activities Therapies." There will be five professions under that Board: Dance Movement; Drama Therapy; Art Therapy; (these three are already in statute); Recreational Therapy; and Music Therapy.
- The Board shall consist of two dance movement therapists; two drama therapists; two art therapists; two recreational therapists; and two music therapists.
- Signed by Governor Murphy on Tuesday, January 21, 2020.

Working Group on Deaf Education

- Establishes Working Group on Deaf Education; directs Department of Education (DOE) to develop parent resource guide; requires DOE and Department of Health (DOH) to collect and report certain data on delays in deaf and hard of hearing children from birth to age five.
- NJSHA was integral in securing critical amendments to ensure that the Working Group has a balanced composition and parents and students have access to the supports and services that they need, in their chosen modality, whether that be American Sign Language or Listening and Spoken Language.
- NJSHA members Nancy V. Schumann, MA, CCC-SLP, LSLs Cert. AVT and Donna M. Goione Merchant, AuD have been notified of their appointments to the entity which is being housed in the DOE.

Deaf Students Bill of Rights

- NJSHA worked with the sponsors of the bill to ensure that the protections and rights afforded to deaf and hard-of-hearing students in this legislation were meaningful and appropriate.
- This was signed into law on August 5, 2019 and effective on September 4, 2019.

Aphasia Task Force

- NJSHA was integral in securing the appointment of THREE NJSHA members (Linda Tucker-Simpson, MS, CCC-SLP, Mary Jo Santo Pietro, PhD, CCC-SLP and Janice Dibling, MS, CCC-SLP) to the 13-member Mike Adler Aphasia Task Force created by legislation passed last session (P.L. 2017, c. 342).
- This further demonstrates our value and involvement in every level of state policymaking.

State/Local Recognition

- A Union County resolution was presented to NJSHA for May as *Better Hearing and Speech Month* in April 2019.
- In April 2019, Board Members of the New Jersey State Board of Education recognized and presented a plaque to NJSHA leadership, designating May as *Better Hearing and Speech Month*.

Additional NJSHA-Member Appointments

- Hearing Impairment Task Force:
Olivia Van Wagner, MA, CCC-A, FAAA
- The Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Advisory Committee:
Martin D. Shulman, PhD, CCC-SLP
- Hearing Aid Dispensers Examining Committee:
Anne M. Eckert, AuD, MBA, CCC-A



 facebook.com/NewJerseySHA

 instagram.com/newjerseysha

 linkedin.com/company/njsa