



**SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY PRACTICE COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

**Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina**

**October 10, 2013**

1380 Harbor Island Drive

San Diego, CA 92101

Room: MARINA 5

(619) 272-5830

**Committee Members Present**

Patti Solomon-Rice, Interim Chair, Speech-Language Pathologist

Dee Parker, Speech-Language Pathologist

Rodney Diaz, Otolaryngologist

Monty Martin, Public Member

**Board Member Present**

Alison Grimes, Dispensing Audiologist

**Guests Present**

None

**Staff Present**

Annemarie Del Mugnaio, Executive Officer

Clair Yazigi, Outgoing Legal Counsel

Sabina Knight, Incoming Legal Counsel

Breanne Humphreys, Program Manager

**I. Call to Order**

Chairperson Solomon-Rice called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

**II. Introductions**

Those present introduced themselves.

**III. Approval of the June 12, 2013 Speech-Language Pathology Practice Committee Meeting Minutes.**

**M/S/C Diaz/Martin**

**Minutes were accepted as stated.**

#### **IV. Discussion Regarding the Evaluation of Internationally Trained Applicants for Licensure**

##### **A. Update on International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Project**

The English Language Competency project was to set a standard passing score for the IELTS exam. A new exam specialist with the Office of Professional Exam Services (OPES) interviewed the six subject matter experts who took the exam and expressed concern with the strong Australian accent of the exam moderator. Issues were with idioms and regionalism which made the exam difficult for those that speak English.

TOFIL – designed for students who want to come to the United States to go to college

TOEIC - designed for professionals

IELTSs - similar to the TOEIC but the standard setting study had already been done and it was an easier process to implement.

It was decided that the English language competency component must be linked to the minimum standards of a speech-language pathologist. To be an effective speech-language pathologist, one must be able to communicate with the clients they serve. This is not clearly identified in the Occupational Analysis (OA) for speech-language pathology. Since the last OA for speech-language pathologist was conducted in 2001, OPES suggested that a new OA be conducted with a supplemental report on English language competency. OPES is working on an OA project plan and obtaining ETS's 2010 speech-language pathologist Job Analysis Study which supports the current speech-language pathologist Praxis Exam. The OA will take between nine to twelve months to complete. OPES will assist the Board with selecting another exam that will meet our criteria.

##### **B. Discuss Amendments to Existing Regulations (CCR 1399.152 & 1399.152.1)**

Current provisions in the Board's laws and regulations do not specify that academic equivalency is intended only for internationally trained students. This may result in graduates from unaccredited U.S. programs petitioning for equivalency. The intent of the current provisions was to apply to internationally trained applicants only. Current provisions address graduate level coursework but not undergraduate coursework.

Ms. Solomon Rice gave a detailed report on an analysis that she and Ms. Raggio conducted on what is currently done in the 16 CA universities that train students in speech-language pathology. They charted the undergraduate and graduate curriculums of these universities.

Ms. Del Mugnaio stated that it was helpful having identified the required nine core content areas so that the transcripts can be more easily translated. She stated that current law requires 60 semester hours with 23 courses covering the core content areas. We are recommending increasing the 60 hours to 69 semester hours. Changing a statute requires legislation. We would have to find a motivated author or committee to carry this bill. We must have a compelling reason to raise the minimum standard for licensure; the current standards are antiquated and no longer represent entry level academic standards for a speech-language pathologist. The regulation would have to define the equivalent qualifications.

Ms. Solomon-Rice stated the 23 courses covering the core content areas would be better served if they were in a regulation because competencies can change as the scope of practice changes.

Ms. Yazigi said that by removing the number of semester units and adding general language of what is required will clarify the provisions for the internationally trained applicant. She suggested the Board address the academic requirements in regulation.

Motion to move to make the following changes:

**M/S/C Diaz/Martin 1:44:36**

**Recommend to the full board to find an author to strike B&P Code 2532.2 (b) which removes the number of semester hours from statute. Change 1399.152.1 to include the competencies listed in the draft of 2532.2(b) which are anatomy and physiology of speech, swallowing and hearing; neuroanatomy; psychoacoustics of hearing; speech and language development; neurological aspect of language; phonetics; articulation and speech disorders; fluency; voice and resonance; child and adult language disorders; aural rehabilitation; swallowing; communication modalities; clinical methods; audiology; general coursework in biological, physical, and social science; and statistics.**

**V. Consider amendments to the Speech-Language Pathology Assistants (SLPA) Regulations (16 CCR 1399.170-1399.170.20.1) Scope of Responsibility and Supervision Provisions.**

Ms. Del Mugnaio referred to the document that Ms. Carol Murphy put together from other states regarding supervision of SLPAs. It was found that some boards do not license SLPAs but do regulate them, while others have no regulations regarding SLPAs. She stated that ASHA's speech-language pathologist scope of practice states that there is a minimum of direct supervision for the first 90 workdays. Currently our provisions do not address a minimum percent of direct supervision.

Our regulations do address types of supervision required for duties performed by a SLPA. Ms. Del Mugnaio gave the following examples of when supervision is required: immediate supervision (physically present) is required to any direct client activity involving medically fragile patients and may include any new screening or treatment activity that the assistant has been trained on, but has yet to perform. It is dependent on the task, the competency of the assistant, and the status or level of the client.

The Board has already adopted some changes but the committee needs to decide if it wants to add a minimum number of hours of supervision during the SLPA's first 90 days.

Ms. Solomon-Rice stated that she believes we should have both hours and percentages identified as ASHA has in their speech-language pathologist guidelines. The need is to address immediate supervision during the first 90 days. Immediate supervision is defined in regulation as the

speech-language pathologist is physically present during services provided to the client by the speech-language pathologist. ASHA guidelines recommend no less than 20% supervision.

Ms. Parker supports moving forward because this is important for consumer/student protection, especially during the first critical 90 days. The speech-language pathology assistant must be fully aware of what they can and cannot do. They must know the limits of their scope of practice.

Mr. Martin, who works in the school setting, agrees that this is important but stated there is a shortage of speech-language pathologists in the schools. He has observed some of the activities of SLPAs and had concerns.

Ms. Del Mugnaio said that this would create a problem in the school setting and would not be favorable. She recommended asking for comments from those interested parties before the Board adopts direct supervision requirements. It was agreed to send out a request for comments from CSHA and SELPA Directors.

The committee will recommend that the Board give the Executive Officer authority to send this information to the interested parties, as well as the other adopted changes that the Board would like to move into regulation.

#### **VI. Discussion Regarding Credential Waivers Issued to Speech-Language Pathologists by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC)**

Ms. Del Mugnaio stated that this is an informational discussion. The Board does not regulate speech-language pathologists that are employed in the public school districts. They are credentialed and waived under the governance of the Department of Education.

Ms. Solomon-Rice stated that the concern is that the speech-language pathologist working under a waiver is not practicing at a minimal level of competency. The waived SLP does not have a master's degree, has not passed the Praxis, and has not completed the required 300 clock hours of clinical work under supervision of a licensed speech-language pathologist.

Ms. Del Mugnaio viewed a report by Ms. Carol Murphy regarding the issuance of credential waivers through CCTC. She found a total of 222 (30%) waivers granted for speech-language pathologist between the period of June 2008 and March 2013.

Ms. Solomon-Rice shared from a report that during 2010-2011 there were a total of 533 speech-language pathologist credentials granted and 439 Variable Term Waivers (VTW) granted. During 2008-2009 there were a total of 465 credentials granted and 504 VTWs. More waivers were granted than credentials. Waivers are granted for one year but can be renewed.

Ms. Parker stated that to obtain a VTW the applicant must have documentation that he/she is enrolled in a program and will complete six units that year. Some districts that had refused to hire VTWs in the past are now hiring them because of the severe shortage of qualified licensed or credentialed speech-language pathologists. She shared that the VTWs in the southern districts

speak Spanish and provide a greater source of translation and interpretation, so they are in great demand.

The issue is the disparity in training for a waived speech-language pathologist and that of a licensed speech-language pathologist. The Board has tried to convince the legislature that it would be better for the public to have a uniform standard, that being licensure. We really do not have an understanding of the process, criteria, or prerequisite for these waivers.

Ms. Del Mugnaio recommended inviting the CCTC to speak to this subject at our next Board meeting. Ms. Parker will invite the person over credentialing and issuance of waivers to address the Board at our February meeting.

Chairperson Solomon-Rice adjourned the meeting at 4:25 p.m.