

Oklahoma Senate Committee on Appropriations

2013-14 Performance Report

Oklahoma Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology

AGENCY MISSION STATEMENT:

The Oklahoma Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology is the only agency in the state regulating health care services in the area of communicative disorders of the speech, language and hearing mechanisms. The mission of the Oklahoma Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology is to regulate the practices of speech-language pathology and audiology in order to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public and to support practitioners in their professional endeavors. The mission statement was already being used by OBESPA when I was hired as the Executive Secretary in 1999. I am not sure of the date the mission statement was voted by a board to become the official mission statement.

LEAD ADMINISTRATOR:

Jeanie Wall, Executive Secretary

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GOVERNANCE:

The agency is governed by five board members. The board members are residents of the state and appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate.

The board members consist of three licensed speech-language pathologists or audiologists, provided that at least one of the three shall be a licensed speech-language pathologist and at least one a licensed audiologist; one otolaryngologist who is certified by the American Board of Otolaryngology and one lay member. The licensed speech-language pathologist and the audiologist members are chosen by the Governor from a list of nominees elected by the Oklahoma Speech-Language Hearing Association. The agency lead administrator is appointed by the Board.

Current Board Members:

Tracy Grammer, M.S. Chair

Michael Grim, Ph.D., Vice Chair

Cheryl Giddens, Ph.D., Secretary

Kristen Hopper, Lay member

Greg A. Krempf, M.D., ORL

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SUBGROUPS OR COMMITTEES:

The Board does not have any committees or subgroups at this time.

GOVERNANCE ACCOUNTABILITY:

The Oklahoma Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (OBESPA) does not have a statute or rule which includes an attendance policy for board members. When board members accept the nomination for board membership they are encouraged to attend all meetings. OBESPA collaboratively schedules meeting dates to facilitate this attendance. The Board statutes provide that the Governor may remove any member for misconduct, incompetence, or neglect of duty.

MODERNIZATION EFFORTS:

OBESPA is in the process of working with the OMES IT department in drafting a contract for use of OMES IT services in the two person OBESPA office. The cost of the shared service is unknown at this time. OMES currently completes and processes payroll for OBESPA. We are collaborating with OMES to provide a shared service contract for accounts payable, accounts receivable, and purchasing. The \$1,500 per month as originally requested by OMES is cost prohibitive for OBESPA. OMES has agreed to reduce the cost for one year, but there is much uncertainty at absorbing large OMES fees without raising our licensure fees at the end of the inaugural year.

OBESPA's first cost cutting action was to provide our licensees and the general public with a website. The OBESPA website provides information on Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology licensure, board information, and copies of our rules and statutes.

The website has saved money for OBESPA by increasing productivity in the office with decreased number of hours spent answering questions over the phone and by mail.

OBESPA was one of the first State agencies to provide online application and renewal of licensure for our licensees, therefore, greatly reducing money spent to print and mail applications and renewal forms. On-line application and renewal of licensure also reduced the FTE expense of handling of hundreds of payments through the regular mail.

CORE MISSION:

Outside of the core mission of OBESPA, the executive secretary continues to perform accounts payable and receivable duties as well as completes purchase orders.

No core mission services that OBESPA provides is duplicated or replicated by another agency.

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PRIVATE ALTERNATIVES:

OBESPA is the only entity providing licensure for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology in Oklahoma.

Licensure is required to practice speech-language pathology and/or audiology in each State in the United States. Licensure of speech-language pathologists and audiologists is provided through each state government.

OBESPA has not been approached by any foundation, for-profit or not-for-profit corporation with efforts to privatize some of the functions of the agency.

The bordering States of Arkansas, Texas, Kansas and New Mexico licensure fees meet or exceed those of Oklahoma.