

# Leveraging Universities to Lighten Workload and Nurture Future School SLPs

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## **Integrating Knowledge & Practice with Senior Speech-Language Hearing Sciences Capstone Students**

### **Why This Matters**

- School SLP workloads include: IEP/ETR meetings, MTSS, documentation, billing, planning, therapy, professional development.
- ASHA (2024) survey: workload/caseload is the 2nd greatest challenge (after paperwork).
- Impact: burnout, less individualized student care, reduced positive outcomes.

### **What Is a Senior Capstone?**

- Capstone = graduation requirement in many Ohio SLHS programs.
- Purpose: integrate professional, general education, and major coursework into real-world experiences.
- Format: may be a course, independent study, or placement with an SLP.
- Typically: 2 semesters, 2–3 credits, research or fieldwork, including school settings.

### **UG Student Roles in Schools**

- Assist with screenings, data entry, filing, distributing progress reports.
- Help prepare therapy activities: games, literacy supports, MTSS activities.
- Support engagement with students in therapy or classroom contexts.
- Provide clerical support: copies, laminating, materials, office tasks.

### **Benefits for SLPs & Students**

- Students gain practical school-based experience and professional interaction.
- SLPs gain help with workload, mentorship opportunities, and more time for indirect services.
- Outcomes: better preparedness, improved efficiency, stronger student support.

### **Supervision Insights**

- If offering observation/clinical hours: complete 2 PD hours of Supervision (ASHA, 2020).
- Set clear expectations, tasks, and timelines upfront.
- Encourage reflective practice and provide explicit feedback.

### **How to Get Started**

- Reach out to nearby university SLHS program.
- Contact Undergraduate Program Director about senior capstone requirements.
- If the university does not require a capstone – ask for motivated volunteers.
- Provide meaningful opportunities → workload relief for SLPs.