



Sent via email: [emily.k.aust@gmail.com](mailto:emily.k.aust@gmail.com)

March 9, 2020

Emily Aust, President  
Minnesota Speech-Language-Hearing Association  
c/o Craven Association Management  
700 McKnight Park Drive, Suite 708  
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

RE: Teacher Walkout/Strike

Dear Emily:

As I am sure you are aware, teachers in the City of Saint Paul are planning to strike on March 10, 2020. While negotiations between the Saint Paul Federation of Educators (SPFE) and Saint Paul Public Schools are continuing, we want you to know that we support ASHA members working in the district during this difficult time. We expect, as with the other walkouts, that ASHA members will have questions and concerns about their responsibilities.

We understand that, should the teachers strike, all pre-K-12 classes would be cancelled. We also know that—as school-based professionals—members are concerned about the welfare of their students as well as their fellow colleagues.

If schools close as a result of a walkout/strike, then the school district would be responsible for notifying families. If there are missed sessions during the walkout/strike, parents may ask for those services to be made-up or to receive compensatory services. While the school district is responsible for addressing those concerns, audiologists and speech-language pathologists (SLPs) may be asked to provide services for missed sessions.

*Potential disruptions in clinician–client relationships may occur as the result of a school strike. If a district makes the decision to close schools because of a strike, this temporary lack of services would not be construed as client/student abandonment by the audiologist or speech-language pathologist (SLP). If schools remain open during a strike, the audiologist or SLP should ensure that parents are notified that their children may not receive services as scheduled. (Whether FAPE [free appropriate public education] has been denied as the result of a missed session is to be decided on a case by case basis. The school district is responsible for addressing parent concerns.*

(See ASHA's Issues in Ethics: Client Abandonment; Discussion section at <https://www.asha.org/Practice/ethics/Client-Abandonment/>)

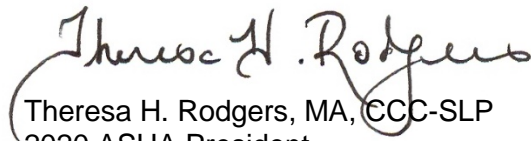
For your reference, ASHA's website has information on:

- **ASHA Guidance: School Walkouts or Strikes**  
[www.asha.org/SLP/schools/ASHA-Guidance-on-Walkouts-or-Strikes/](http://www.asha.org/SLP/schools/ASHA-Guidance-on-Walkouts-or-Strikes/)
- **Issues in Ethics: Client Abandonment**  
<https://www.asha.org/Practice/ethics/Client-Abandonment/>
- **Missed Speech-Language Sessions in Schools**  
[www.asha.org/slp/schools/prof-consult/missed-sessions/](http://www.asha.org/slp/schools/prof-consult/missed-sessions/)

- **Caseload and Workload**  
[www.asha.org/practice-portal/professional-issues/Caseload-and-Workload/](http://www.asha.org/practice-portal/professional-issues/Caseload-and-Workload/)
- **Salaries and Wage Data**  
[www.asha.org/Research/memberdata/Salary-Data/](http://www.asha.org/Research/memberdata/Salary-Data/)
- **Advocating for a Salary Supplement**  
[www.asha.org/Advocacy/state/issues/Advocacy-Resource-Guide-for-the-Salary-Supplement-Initiative/](http://www.asha.org/Advocacy/state/issues/Advocacy-Resource-Guide-for-the-Salary-Supplement-Initiative/)
- **Appropriate School Facilities for Students With Speech-Language-Hearing Disorders**  
[www.asha.org/policy/TR2002-00236/](http://www.asha.org/policy/TR2002-00236/)

Any audiologist or SLP who is concerned or unclear about the legal obligations in their employment contract should contact SPFE or consider consulting a labor or employment lawyer. Please send questions, concerns, or comments to Janet Deppe, ASHA's director of state affairs, at [jdeppe@asha.org](mailto:jdeppe@asha.org), or Jaumeiko Coleman, ASHA's director of school services, at [jcoleman@asha.org](mailto:jcoleman@asha.org).

Sincerely,

  
Theresa H. Rodgers, MA, CCC-SLP  
2020 ASHA President