

Arkansas Delegate Candidate—Wendy Stovall

NASP recently adopted its 2010 *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services*. What steps would you, as state delegate, take to use the 2010 model to best solidify the professional identity of school psychologists and ensure access to school psychological services by all children, families, and schools?

Arkansas is an incredible state in which to work in as a School Psychology Specialist; yet our roles are so varied that teachers, administrators, parents, and even School Psychology Specialists themselves, are often unaware of exactly what that role is. I have been introduced as “the tester”, “the RTI lady” and even the “special education behavior lady”. A colleague of mine was recently introduced as “the folder checker.” Given the inconsistencies in how our positions are perceived, I think the first step in solidifying our professional identity is broadening the knowledge base of those with whom we work and ultimately the communities and families for whom we work. To do so, we must advocate and promote the identity of School Psychology professionals at the local, state and national level. One of the best informational tools available for use in this regard is the NASP *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychology Services*. This model provides guidance and an outline of available school psychology services. However, even the best information is useless unless it is readily available and distributed to those in the field of education, as well as, to the general public.

The distribution of this information at the local level can be done in several ways. It is very important to begin this process with those we interact with and work with on a daily basis. Professional development with the teaching staff and administrators informing them of the comprehensive services we can provide can be very beneficial. I am very fortunate to be employed at an Educational Cooperative where I provide professional development opportunities on various school psychology related issues. Future professional development for teacher and administrators could include an overview of those services the school psychology specialist is qualified to give. Other local agencies very important to our field, yet often forgotten, are agencies that represent parents of students whom we serve. I have had the honor of speaking at several informational meetings for parents on topics such as; how to understand evaluation results, the Response to Interventions Process in our schools and when to request an evaluation from school personnel. This would be an excellent venue to describe the services we can provide. School psychology specialists must also be strong advocates for the services for which they are qualified to provide. We must be well informed and well trained to provide a wide range of services. In essence, we must “sell our services” to the consumer as they are often unaware of the wide range of services we can now provide. We must stay abreast of best practices and seek on-going training and be prepared to share information and train others as a part of our own professional development.

The Arkansas School Psychology Association (ASPA) also plays an integral role in providing information to schools, universities and families regarding the behavioral, social, emotional and

academic services that can be provided by a School Psychology Specialist. I am currently serving on the ASPA board where we work very hard to promote school psychology services at the university level by providing scholarships for students and making research grants available for students involved in school psychology research. ASPA also promotes the comprehensive services we are qualified to provide by providing access to nationally renowned speakers on relevant current topics. Other professionals such as special educators, principals and speech/language pathologist are invited to attend ASPA which allows us to share information through a school psychology perspective, as well, as promote the scientific research-based practices spelled out in the new comprehensive model.

I may never be a Dixie Bryson or a Rita Jones but it would be an honor to represent and serve the wonderful state of Arkansas, while providing information from our national level, especially the *NASP Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Service*.