

Kentucky Delegate Candidate—Paul Baker

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?

I identified in my first statement that a pressing issue facing school psychology in Kentucky is the need for advocacy at the state government level to provide our lawmakers and bureaucratic officials with informed perspectives on proposed statutes and policy making that impacts our field. In the months since I wrote that I still see my assessment of the situation as accurate, but my view has been both expanded and refined. Expanded in the sense that in addition to state level officials, I should have included leaders at the district and school level. Refined in the sense that we do have voices who advocate for school psychology in this state, but those voices have not been in harmony.

When I say voices I am not just alluding to the lead psychologist in your district, elected members of our state association, or the esteemed trainers in our graduate programs. I include all school psychologists in this state as a voice. At the local level, I see approaching the work we do everyday with kids with a high degree of commitment and professionalism as the best form of advocacy. However, based on my own experiences and conversations with other school psychologist I have surmised that many of the leaders at the school and district level may be unfamiliar with the full scope of services that a school psychologist can provide. Too often these leaders perception of our function in the schools revolves around a few key responsibilities (i.e. assessment and report writing) and does not encompass the other important roles we can play. Likewise, many individuals outside of the school setting are unfamiliar as to what a school psychologist actually is. Based on my experiences this summer lobbying Kentucky's congressional delegation on the behalf of school psychologist at NASP's Professional Policy Institute (PPI), it is my estimation that many of the key decision makers and their staff across the aforementioned levels of bureaucracy fall under this category

I indicated earlier that the school psychologist's voices are not in harmony. When I say this I do not mean that these voices clash, instead what I mean is that there is a need for a more coordination of said voices. I believe NASP's Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services will be a valuable asset towards this end. This document is designed to serve as a guide for policy makers and stakeholders at the various levels of governance to inform them as to the appropriate practices of school psychologist.

If I am selected as your NASP delegate I plan over the course of my term to converse with key state level stakeholders inside as well as outside our field, my school psychology mentors, and colleagues about how we can most effectively use the practice model to help broaden and reinforce our professional identity at both the local and state level. I also plan to utilize the contacts I have made at the national level through my participation in the PPI and future contacts at the Delegate Assembly Meetings to find a person or persons who were involved in a comparable effort in their state and were successful in this endeavor. I would take what I learn from this individual(s) back to those same state level stakeholders in our field and attempt to develop a plan to address

these deficiencies to help insure that all schools, children, and their families are provided with comprehensive psychological services.

Thank you for your Time,

Paul Baker