

New Jersey Delegate Candidate—Terry Molony

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 must admit that I feel both energized and a little bit frightened when I read our Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services. I feel energized when I think about all of the competencies we have, about our knowledge base and the impact of our profession to enhance the lives of children and to support families and schools. However, I must admit that the task seems daunting at times. Having worked in different types of school, I realize that some environments support more of these activities than others. For instance, some years, I am able to engage in more creative aspects of school psychology, like starting a positive psychology club, which can impact mental health and school climate. However at other times, I need to assess more children, which can help parents, teachers and even the students to understand their educational needs and also their strengths.

I had a conversation with, John Kelly, the chair of the NASP GPR committee recently. I told him that sometimes when I look at all of the things we as school psychologists are supposed to do, I feel inadequate and that I have met many different school psychologists throughout NJ, who told me they feel the same way. John suggested considering the Model Act as a smorgasbord of activities from which we can choose as the priorities of our jobs change. That helped me to realize that I can focus on some of the Domains of Practice at different times and adjust my goals as needed. I can also keep the all the possibilities in mind, so that my job can always be interesting with new projects to develop and new challenges to work towards.

As NJ Delegate to NASP, I will continue to communicate with school psychologists across the state to find out how we define our practice, as well as to spread the word and share information about how to expand our roles through my monthly emails and my column in the NJASP newsletter. I plan to continue to visit different parts of the state to meet school psychologists and students and have dialogues regarding these important issues. Finally, I remain committed to advocating for children and families on an individual level, as well as on a broader level, meeting with and writing to state and federal legislators, using the practice model as my guide. I look forward to working with NJ school psychologists as we make schools better places for all children.