NASP Advocacy Roadmap: The NASP Practice Model
*Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services*

**Exhibit H1**

**Becoming an Effective Advocate:**
How to Educate School Boards about Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services

1. **Identify your local school board members.** Review facts about them including involvement in education, children going to school in the system, and personal connections you can make to their bios. Educate yourself on the jurisdiction the school board has over local policy and budget decisions as this can vary across districts and states.

2. **Send your school board members an email to let them know you need their support.** Offer to be a resource if they have questions about a particular issue. Be sure to use your personal email address. If pertinent to the issue, provide a written summary of research, data, and other information that supports your issue. NASP has a variety of fact sheets, position papers, brochures, and other information available online at advocacy research [http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/researchmain.aspx](http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/researchmain.aspx) and resources [http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/advocacyresources.aspx](http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/advocacyresources.aspx).

3. **Sign up to speak at your school board meetings.** You may team with other colleagues and specialized instructional support personnel (e.g., school counselors and school social workers). This is particularly effective during budget deliberations. Rehearse a brief statement summarizing the importance of comprehensive and integrated school psychological services and give specific examples that pertain to your district. (See **Exhibit E: Key Messages** in this Advocacy Roadmap for more information.) Make a brief outline of the points you wish to convey. Be concise and present your points in order of importance. Be prepared to relate at least one quick real-life example illustrating how critical comprehensive and integrated school psychological services are to educational success.

4. **Invite school board members, in collaboration with other school personnel, to visit your school(s).** Make your invitations personal and be determined to include them. During the visit, be sure they learn more about what you do and how students benefit from your services. Include your school district staff and administrators on invitations and events.

5. **Directly ask if they would be willing to support a specific policy proposal, vote yes (or no) for an amendment, or champion an issue.** Offer to be a local resource person if the member has questions about the relationship between comprehensive and integrated school psychological services and strong outcomes for students.
6. If the school board member says something you disagree with, practice good active listening skills, and politely offer facts (if you have them) to rebut the statement. A polite, positive approach is always best. After you leave, you may think of a point or find relevant information to support your argument. This gives you a perfect opportunity to follow up with the school board member and restate your point. The more they hear from you (without you being annoying), the more you will make the issues known and you will become a resource to them. Sometimes it takes years to correct faulty information or beliefs…be patient, polite, positive and persistent.

7. **Remember to keep track of your “connections.”** Keep a record of any contacts that you, your family, or friends may have with school board members. These “connections” help personalize the relationship and will help the elected official have a greater interest in your work. You should also keep a record of contacts made with your elected official including meetings (date, time), issues you discussed, and any other personal tidbits that help personalize and prioritize your issues.