Erika Olinger - Delegate Candidate OK

What are your qualifications that make you a strong candidate for delegate?
What are the most pressing issues in the profession and how would you use your strengths to address these issues as a member of the NASP Leadership Assembly?

I am humbled and excited for the opportunity to serve Oklahoma and the profession of school psychology as NASP Delegate. My dedication to the profession is demonstrated by my diverse experience in the field, involvement in state and national organizations that represent school psychologists, and commitment to our mission to serve students and their families with valuable, robust, and effective services.

I earned my B.S. in Psychology from Colorado State University and M.S. and Ph.D. in School Psychology from Oklahoma State University. I am a Nationally Certified School Psychologist and Board Certified Behavior Analyst. I have worked as a School Psychology Doctoral Intern in Houston, TX focusing on mental health services, including serving those displaced by Hurricane Katrina within a year of its aftermath.

In Oklahoma, I worked as a practitioner in Putnam City and Edmond schools. I was the Lead School Psychologist and RtI Instructional Facilitator for Edmond Public Schools, where my roles included coordinating academic and behavioral supports across the district and supervising school psychologists. I am currently an Assistant Professor and the School Psychology Program Coordinator at the University of Central Oklahoma and the Director for the UCO Learning and Behavior Clinic.

Additionally, I have sought other opportunities to be involved with practitioners in consultative and collaborative roles- from the Tulsa and OKC metro to rural districts in western and northeastern Oklahoma. I have served on committees for the State Department of Education and have presented at conferences for related service providers, including administrator, family, and advocacy groups. These experiences have allowed me to view school psychology from many perspectives, including “feet on the street” practitioner, supervisor, university trainer, and clinic director- enabling me to represent the many facets of the school psychology community.

One of my most valued service opportunities has been eight years on the Executive Board (including two terms as President) for the Oklahoma Association of School Psychologists and as NASP Oklahoma Delegate. In this capacity, I have gained an appreciation for the dire circumstances that affect our daily work experience, including critical shortages of qualified providers, misunderstanding of our roles and capabilities, and barriers such as large caseloads and lack of state and administrative support. I have attended the NASP Public Policy Institute, Assistance-to-States, and NASP Practice Model trainings. My involvement has prepared and empowered me to fight for important issues legislatively, such as retaining the NCSP bonus.
These opportunities have expanded my skill set in advocacy and working towards meaningful change for a more comprehensive and supported school psychologist role, which directly impacts those we serve.

My diverse experience in school psychology, my training and history as a state and national leader, and my distinct understanding of the needs of practitioners combine to establish me as an exceptional candidate to communicate the needs and represent the membership of Oklahoma. Please consider not only my qualifications, but also my commitment to our colleagues, profession, and mission to serve children and families in Oklahoma as you reflect upon your choice for NASP Delegate.