NASP leaders recently adopted the 2020 Professional Standards that serve as a guide for professional practice and ethics. What do you see as the role of the NASP delegate in promoting these standards? Provide examples of what you will do.

During my first term as NASP delegate, I was fortunate to participate in the discussions, reviews, and the adoption of the Professional Standards of the National Association of School Psychologists (2020). The 2020 Professional Standards provide a “unified set of national standards that guide graduate education, credentialing, professional practice and services, and ethical behavior of school psychologists” (2020 NASP Professional Standards). Although these standards serve as a guide for professional practice and ethics at a national level, it cannot be assumed that practice, procedures, and policies are consistent at the state level. However, in order to uphold the highest professional standards and to be effective in using these standards to communicate priorities and positions, it is critical that professional practices at the state level reflect the Professional Standards of NASP.

It is the role of the NASP delegate to promote the 2020 Professional Standards in both articulation and action. In addition to communicating with our school psychologist members, the dissemination of the Professional Standards targeted to stakeholders, policy makers, and other professional groups, will also help support the highest standards of school psychology practice. Specifically, in considering the delivery of comprehensive and integrated school psychological services, i.e., the NASP Practice Model, there is still much to be done in promoting school psychologists as critical student support providers for all students, not just students with disabilities. Unfortunately, in many schools, the day to day responsibilities of school psychologists are not reflective of our extensive training and expertise. The professional standards will strengthen our position in advocating for a comprehensive model of practice, including recognition of the value of school psychologists as qualified mental health providers. As state delegate, I will continue to promote the NASP Practice Model in collaboration with other state leaders via continuing professional development and advocacy efforts.

In concert with the promotion of a comprehensive role as “best practice”, in collaboration with other state leaders, we will review NJDOE standards for the credentialing of school psychologists in comparison to the 2020 NASP standards. This will help to ensure that the practice of school psychology in NJ is defined and held to the highest standards, with emphasis on the training and experiences that are unique to school psychology. I will continue to promote school psychologists as the professionals with specialized expertise in learning, mental health, and behavior. I do feel that over the past several years the school psychologists in our state have increasingly demonstrated our value to policy makers, stakeholders, and other professionals and that the adoption of our Professional Standards will only strengthen our ability to improve the quality of life for students, families, and school communities.