LORA TUESDAY HEATHFIELD
State Delegate Candidate: Utah
Statement 2

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.

While Utah school psychologists may face some unique challenges, we also share a commonality of needs within our profession with other school psychologists across the country. The new 2020 Professional Standards serve to address those common needs and challenges by providing a guide for the profession of school psychology over the next 10 years. Promoting NASP’s priority goals in our state, such as the NASP Professional Standards, is essential to advocating for our profession and in presenting a unified message regarding the role of school psychologists in contributing to better educational and mental health outcomes for all students.

Within the 2020 Professional Standards, the revised NASP Practice Model highlights how school psychologists are uniquely trained to provide necessary behavioral and mental health services through their expertise in multiple domains, including data-based decision making and interventions that foster children’s social-emotional development. Ongoing advocacy at both the national and state levels is needed to help promote school psychologists’ expanding role in preventive and responsive service delivery and systems change in order to ensure that students’ mental health needs are adequately addressed in the schools.

As delegate, I serve on our state association’s Board and we have been focused on implementing our association’s strategic goals. Our state association has been actively promoting greater awareness of the role of school psychologists. The Practice Model will help guide our advocacy efforts in increasing awareness of the broad scope of practice that school psychologists can provide, increasing funding for school psychologists, and improving school psychologist-to-student ratios. Components of the Practice Model also can be incorporated into our efforts to advocate for entry into the profession with undergraduate and high school student presentations across the state for the NASP Exposure Project.

Currently, our nation is in the midst of a global pandemic, heightened awareness of racial inequalities, and political divisiveness. There could not be a more pressing need for the expertise that school psychologists can offer students and their families in these uncertain times. It is more important than ever to help promote NASP’s priorities, such as the 2020 Professional Standards, among state, district, and school leaders, in order to help ensure that the practice of school psychology meets the new national standards and that the educational and mental health needs of children and youth are met.