

TERESA FRITSCH
State Delegate Candidate: Idaho
Statement 1

What are your qualifications that make you a strong candidate for delegate?

I have worked for the past two and half years as Idaho's NASP Delegate. I have learned a lot over those years in my role and responsibilities as a delegate, which I believe makes me a strong candidate to continue in the role for the next three years. I have worked in Idaho over the past 28 years and have built connections and relationships with members of the Idaho School Psychologist Association (ISPA), state legislators, individuals in the offices of our U.S. Congressmen and at Idaho's Department of Education, and school psychologists across the state. My passion for school psychology and desire to build our profession to make it more visible here in Idaho will allow me to continue to work towards implementing NASP's and ISPA's Strategic Goals.

What is the most pressing issue in your state? As NASP Delegate, how do you see your role in working with your state association to address this issue?

The most pressing issue in Idaho, like many states across the nation, is the shortage of school psychologists, particularly in our rural districts. I have been working with various members of the ISPA Board to address this issue in several different ways. One way has been working to become more visible as a profession. I have made presentations with other school psychologists before the state's special education directors and have used the NASP Exposure Project to promote our profession before high schoolers. I will be presenting with other school psychologists about the NASP Practice Model and the need for more school psychologists in my district and our state at my district's school board meeting and the Idaho School Board Association's (ISBA) Annual Conference, respectively, next month. In addition, I have been working with the ISPA Recruitment Chair as we make plans for activities during National School Psychology Week in November. I have been working on a letter to our state legislators to be used as a template for all school psychologists to use during NSPW to promote our profession.

Another way we are working to address the workforce shortage is by collaborating with other school mental health stakeholders. ISPA joined with Idaho school counselors, social workers, administrators, and nurses with Idaho Aware at our annual conference to promote mental health in schools. Members of the ISPA board and I have been implementing a Mental Behavior Health Action Plan that was developed during NASP's Regional Leadership Meeting in April 2021 and this conference was part of that plan. Working together with other stakeholders will allow us to have a stronger voice to speak before our district school boards and state legislators.

A third way to address shortages is building the school psychologist pipeline by promoting our only school psychologist graduate program in the state. Over the summer, the GPR Chair and I met with committee members from the offices of each of our U.S. Congressmen to promote legislation that would Increase Access to Mental Health in Schools by supporting partnerships between institutions of higher education and local education agencies and creating grants for students who complete a graduate training program related to mental health. We hope to continue this partnership and expand it with our state legislators.