

LACY SKINNER

State Delegate Candidate: Vermont

Statement 2

NASP Leaders have adopted five strategic goals that guide the association's work. In your state, what are some gains being made in school psychology practice related to these goals, and what are some pressing challenges?

There have been many gains made in Vermont related to NASP's strategic goals, but it is important to address the challenges as well. To address the shortages, we have a relatively new training program in the state with a goal of training new school psychologists while also building strong practicum and internship opportunities. Another way that will be important to address the challenge of shortages is for VASP to work with the Agency of Education, and the graduate training program to create appropriate respecialization and professional retraining so that professionals in related fields wanting to work as a school psychologist have clear paths to work in Vermont. With regards to working as mental and behavioral health providers, while many of Vermont's school psychologists view themselves as such providers and are able to provide a variety of services to their schools and students, there are many other school district personnel that do not recognize the breadth of training our school psychologists have. Therefore, to expand the opportunities for our school psychologists it is important to provide training and increased awareness of the practice model domains to related school personnel such as special education administrators, principals and school boards. However, while bringing awareness to others it will also be important to stress the need for additional school psychologists so that school psychologists will have time to engage in a variety of skills and not be overwhelmed by demands for additional services without also having the appropriate supports. There are opportunities for leadership within VASP, and broadening those opportunities by encouraging more involvement across the state coupled with our state organization's goal to engage more with state legislation is a goal that I will focus on if able to work as the state's delegate. Finally, working towards protecting the rights and opportunities of all students requires working with not only the school systems but also the communities they are part of which can involve providing trainings and working with school boards to ensure that rules put in place do not harm students but also provide programs that respect all students. Even with all the added pressures that school psychologists are currently facing, it is an exciting time to be a school psychologist and I look forward to the opportunity to continue to improve our field.