TRICIA DANIEL
State Delegate Candidate: Alabama

Statement 1

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

I have been the AL Delegate for the last 3 years and though I am uncertain of my contribution, Alabama has seen a 4% increase in their membership and has several candidates running in the upcoming election! That is a positive! I have worked as a school psychologist for over 19 years – at least 13 of those in Alabama. I am a Past President of the Alabama Association of School Psychologists; and have continuously collaborated with our leaders to make our organization stronger. I am an advocate for our profession and its impact on education and mental health. My experience as a school psychologist has spanned 3 states in a variety of districts (inner city, rural, suburban) and the landscape of Alabama has proven to be diverse itself. These experiences have provided me the opportunity to see special education interpreted in various ways and glean information to better meet the needs of children, their parents, and our districts and advocate for positive changes. Collaborating with our Board, we have attempted to incorporate the strategic goals of the national organization into conferences, newsletters, discussions, etc. and our Board is now more diverse. I continue to advocate, educate, and raise awareness for our profession by speaking with national leaders (Senators, US Representatives), presenting the NASP Practice Model to students and professionals; collaborating and advocating with a group of professionals who have similar interests (Joint Task Force for Mental Health which includes the Alabama associations of social workers and school counselors); and talking with our State department about eligibility and evaluation guidelines. Previously, I spoke to the Federal Commission on School Safety on behalf of our profession and organization while they were in Montgomery, advocated for our professional organization’s involvement in Alabama’s plan for ESSA; and advocated for AASP to have involvement with Governor Ivey’s SAFE Council.

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?

Personally, the most pressing issue in our State is the shortage of professionals. We have few programs left in the State producing school psychologists and with the needs identified in academics as well as mental health, continued compartmentalization of “fields” is detrimental to student success. Most school psychology programs produce 12 graduates a year which is insufficient to meet the attrition our field is facing. I see my goal as the NASP Delegate to continue to keep the strategic goals in the forefront, advocate to a variety of audiences (e.g., Superintendents, Boards, State Department, Legislators), and encourage others to advocate for our profession. I have been able to speak with universities about the possibility of starting new programs by presenting the Practice Model, spoken with HBCU colleges about the field of school psychology using the Exposure Project and encouraged others to use their professional platform to advocate for the field.