CARRIE EMRIKSON  
State Delegate Candidate: Illinois  

Statement 1

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

Choosing to run for NASP Delegate from Illinois, I feel I can draw on many experiences leading me to this election. First, I have been a school psychologist for almost 25 years including more than a decade of leadership roles with the Illinois School Psychologist Association (ISPA). My experience includes co-chairing the Professional Standards committee, serving as President and currently a co-chair of the Governmental Affairs committee. I am also a member of an Illinois related services coalition group called Speaking 4 Children on behalf of ISPA. Speaking 4 Children is a coalition of all IL related service governmental affairs/leadership teams to promote legislation that supports education and working together to support our professions. I am also on the ISPA representative team to the Illinois Terrorism Task Force where we provide a voice for students and educators to state officials. I feel these experiences have led me to supporting Illinois as NASP Delegate. I am a practicing school psychologist and union building representative as well. In addition to my role as building representative, I have been a member of a contract negotiations team bargaining to receive monetary recognition for district psychologists earning their NCSP and reimbursement for subsequent renewal fees. These are a few of the ways I have supported school psychologists at the local to state level that lead me to be a strong candidate for IL delegate.

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?  

With a school psychologist to student ratio of 1 to 1290, I feel addressing shortages in our state as the most pressing issue. There has been a continual deficit of more than 100 open, unfilled positions across the State of Illinois in the last 10 years. It has been a struggle for many schools to find substitute psychologists for maternity or family leaves, replace retirees or even expand when a district wants to have additional staff. This leaves many children in danger of not receiving services needed for their mental health and educational programming. I see myself working hand in hand with the Illinois School Psychologist Association to ensure the future and growth of a career in school psychology. I will work and collaborate with our state leadership to find ways to address the shortage without lessening the standards in our field. I, along with my Governmental Affairs co-chairs, have been developing relationships with key members of our state legislature to promote legislation that will allow access to our field from minoritized groups, maintain safety in working conditions and inform on trauma-sensitive practices. I feel my role as a NASP delegate, if elected, could bring in state and national attention to our role and care. The field of school psychology needs to continue to recruit and mentor school psychology candidates from diverse backgrounds, which will better represent the schools we serve. We are a field where all are welcome and we need to find more to take up the seats at our tables.