JIM CORR
State Delegate Candidate: Michigan

Statement 2

The NASP Leadership Assembly has adopted three 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?

MASP has worked diligently to address NASP's strategic goals (and our own), particularly in the areas of mental health, critical shortages and social justice. We have seen many gains and successes over the last several years. Of particular note is the recent passing of the SMART Bill Public Act that was signed into law by Governor Gretchen Whitmer. The Student Mental Health Apprenticeship Program for Retention and Training (SMART) was created to provide financial support to encourage more people to enter school based mental health professions (School Psychology, School Counseling, and School Social Work). The SMART Program provides paid work experiences and practicum opportunities for School Psychology graduate students. The MASP School Psychologist Committee advocated and partnered with legislators to draft and provide testimony for this bill which had bipartisan support. The SMART Bill not only works to address the critical shortages in our state, but if successful, it may provide the students of our state with greater access to school based mental health providers.

While we have celebrated our successes, there are significant needs that continue to present challenges to school psychologists across Michigan. Providing ways to financially support future school psychologists is important, but we are also in great need of additional trainers and training programs. Additionally, we must work to expand and evolve our existing training programs so as to provide greater access for interested individuals. In order to meet the demand across the state and nation, we must find creative ways to recruit and train new school psychologists (and retain those we already have in practice). Furthermore, if we desire our school psychologists to fully utilize their broad training, knowledge and skills as noted in the Practice Model, then we must lessen their personal and professional burdens by decreasing the school psychologist to student ratio.

With regard to social justice, MASP has committed to increasing our organizational awareness, consciousness, practice, and outreach, so that we can better promote nondiscriminatory practices and empower the members, students, families and communities we serve. The recently formed Social Justice and Multi-Cultural Ethics Committee is leading our organization and members in this critically important work. We must continue our efforts to increase engagement and advocacy that will promote socially just practices and help ensure students receive high-quality educational access, opportunities, and experiences.

In addition to NASP’s strategic goals, MASP has also identified the need to continue to: increase strategic partnerships, increase member engagement and outreach, increase legislative outreach and engagement, increase our capacity to be a more strategic organization through nimbleness and shared governance, and clearly define and describe processes at all levels of the organization.