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?

In Minnesota, we have made strong gains in both the implementation of the NASP Practice Model and Social Justice. Specifically, MSPA and our local and neighboring training programs have been working to provide comprehensive training that prepares new and experienced school psychologists to practice across the broad range of domains that comprise school psychology. The professional development opportunities offered by MSPA are mapped across the Practice Model to ensure that all areas are covered over time, if not within a single conference. Furthermore, our legislative committee has worked to advance school-based mental health policy and practice as well as advocating for MnMTSS and the sunsetting of the discrepancy model for identifying specific learning disabilities. A pressing challenge that blends both this strategic goal as well as shortages is expanding capacity to fully implement the Practice Model in schools, given the already full workloads of most school psychologists.

In the area of Social Justice, our state has made gains in several ways as well. MSPA and groups such as the Minnesota Collective for Educational Equity (MnCEE) have worked to define and advance efforts toward equity centered MTSS in our state. To that end, an opportunity for future growth is to ensure that equity is truly centered in this process, rather than languishing as an unfulfilled promise. Furthermore, we have a pressing need to advance high quality services at Tier 1 for each and every student in Minnesota. We continue to have unequal and inequitable distribution of resources that systematically provides an advantage to some students and not others. This was exacerbated by the COVID-19 Pandemic and continues to be a pressing issues for school psychologists and society at large. In addition, as the strategic goal states, “School psychologists have the self-awareness and critical consciousness to engage in and advocate for socially just practices that protect the right of every student to receive high-quality educational access, opportunities, and experiences.” This is an ongoing and pressing need for school psychologists in our professional and personal development, and one that I hope to support through my work with NASP and MSPA in the coming years.