SHAWNA RADER KELLY
President-Elect Candidate

Statement 2

NASP Leaders have adopted three strategic goals that guide the association’s work. Please describe what you see as the NASP President’s role in promoting these goals.

The strategic goals adopted by the Leadership Assembly chart a course for the work of our association over the next five years. These goals include identifying solutions to the critical workforce shortages impacting schools and graduate education programs, promoting the Domains of Practice and the Organizational Principles outlined in the NASP Practice Model, and engaging school psychologists in the critical work of addressing inequities and engaging in and advocating for socially just educational practices. These efforts are led by a team of knowledgeable, dedicated leaders including elected delegates and officers, board and committee chairs, a skilled and committed staff, and numerous members who volunteer their time and expertise to accomplish these goals. The strength of our leadership lies in the diversity of our experiences and the depth and breadth of our collective knowledge regarding the challenges facing our members, our students, and the school communities we serve. Our leaders include practitioners and graduate educators, graduate students, supervisors, those just beginning their careers, and those with years of experience. They represent the first line of communication regarding the state of the field and the needs of our members. Together, they provide expertise and perspectives that can broaden our awareness and deepen our understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing school psychologists.

A primary role of the NASP President is to ensure that we capitalize on their knowledge and skills by actively and intentionally engaging the leaders in dialogue that will assist us in selecting strategies, developing resources, and identifying advocacy activities that will result in meaningful progress on the strategic goals. While our individual experiences with these issues may vary, we share a collective responsibility for addressing them. The President can ensure that we are fully leveraging the expertise of our leaders, encouraging and inspiring them to think creatively, broadly, and strategically to seek solutions to the challenges facing our profession. I have held many positions in leadership and found that even when we are faced with difficult topics, we are at our best when working together. The President supports this by creating spaces that honor diversity and diverse opinions, including and welcoming new voices to the conversation, communicating a shared vision, establishing trusting relationships, modeling effective leadership, and supporting and facilitating collaboration and open communication.

The challenges we face in reaching our goals are complex and multi-faceted; thus, the solutions will likely be as well. The conversations we have within the profession are critical, yet our success will likely depend on our ability to collaborate with others outside of the field of school psychology. Identifying solutions to workforce shortages, advocating for the comprehensive role and the structural supports outlined in the Practice Model, and promoting socially just policies and practices will necessitate collaboration and problem-solving with other professional groups and decision-makers. The NASP President can work with others to identify these opportunities and lead these efforts.
In addition to working with the leadership to address the association's goals, the President must also act in service to the membership. Our credibility and our relevance lie in our ability to predict and respond to the needs of our members and to ensure that services and resources reflect the demands facing practitioners, graduate educators, and graduate students. While the strategic plan charts the course for the association’s work, we can expect that there will be issues that arise that require our attention and action. The President has a responsibility to ensure that we navigate these issues and respond to new developments while simultaneously maintaining focus on our strategic goals.

Perhaps most importantly, while the association's goals must address the needs of our members, it is imperative that the members see themselves reflected in our goals. While our experiences may vary, our similarities are greater than our differences. Our greatest opportunity as an association lies in our ability to work together towards a shared vision of ensuring that all children and youth thrive and that all school psychologists have the capacity, resources, and support to make this a reality. As a school psychologist, I go to work every day with one mission: to create the school I want my child to go to. As a leader, my goal has been to work with others to shape the profession I want to work in. As NASP President I will work with the leadership and our members to ensure that our association is one that we are proud to belong to.