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?

The school psychology shortage within Wisconsin is due to various factors. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic leading to consistent virtual instruction during this time helped universities pivot and think outside of the box on how to train new school psychologists. In recent years more programs that are offering virtual based programs and classes to meet needs of potential school psychology candidates looking for a career change. These alternative type programs are reaching more people across Wisconsin living in rural areas, full time working professionals, alternative track students, and/or adults with young families. Additionally, this alternative format may allow for a more diverse outreach for potential professionals that may have experienced barriers to traditional school psychology training options.

Another gain in the field of school psychology that Wisconsin has made recently is WSPA’s commitment to center race and social justice. In recent years race and social justice issues have been at the forefront of conversation across the country as well as the state of Wisconsin. WSPA has recently embedded a race and social justice lens (i.e., equity for all) that will be used working toward board goals and action steps. This is an important step for Wisconsin as it allows school psychologists to promote equity across many aspects of systemic and societal challenges that impact many students and families that are served by school psychologists in Wisconsin. As school psychologists in Wisconsin, we are here to serve and advocate for Wisconsin’s children and families to ensure educational success.

One area of growth that Wisconsin is struggling to move beyond is the traditional test/place aspect of school psychology. Although the school psychologist is trained to be much more than a super assessor many districts continue to pigeonhole school psychologists in this role. The better promotion of the NASP Practice Model to school districts, administrators, and education stakeholders will be crucial as a potential shift in thinking about the skills of school psychologists in the Wisconsin education community. The comprehensive role in conjunction with training and hiring more psychologists will be beneficial in meeting Wisconsin youth’s mental health, educational, and behavioral needs.