KECIA PETERS
State Delegate Candidate: North Dakota
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?

Alongside of NASP, North Dakota’s state association is also focusing on the critical shortage of school psychologists. At our Fall conference, we launched a member survey to gather demographic information about practicing school psychologists in our state. We intend to use these data to inform our local and state educational agencies about the populations we serve and to demonstrate the need to increase the number of school psychologists in our state and communities. North Dakota has a single training program for school psychology at Minot State University (MSU). MSU was awarded a service grant aimed at training and retaining school psychologists in high-need areas in North Dakota. Grant partners include the Bureau of Indian Education – Turtle Mountain Area Schools. A goal of the grant is to increase the number of school psychologists in the Turtle Mountain Area Schools, as well as increasing cultural diversity of practitioners within our state. In regard to continuing challenges, so many of the adversities I have encountered as a practicing school psychologist seem to have shortages at the root, which makes it difficult to see past that. I am eager to look more into how I might advocate for my profession through increasing awareness of the NASP Practice Model and the Excellence in School Psychological Services (ESPS) Recognition Program. It may be helpful to broaden our advocacy efforts from talking about the number of school psychologists we have in our state to placing stronger emphasis on all the skills we have and how effective we can be at improving school outcomes.