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State Delegate Candidate: Nevada

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?

In Nevada, we are making significant strides towards meeting the NASP strategic goals. In the area of workforce development, NVASP and members have been at the forefront of the lobbying efforts with the state to ensure that funding is available to recruit and retain school psychologists. In addition to funding, effort has been focused on removing barriers that prevent prospective new hires from obtaining necessary licensure to practice. The removal of the Praxis CORE requirement is a major step towards creating greater opportunities to recruit needed personnel. Recently, NVASP offered professional development related to supervision and mentorship of graduate interns and early career school psychologists. The tools presented provide a research-based set of strategies to help us maximize our efforts in this critical developmental opportunity for our emerging colleagues. Conversely, the pipeline for developing school psychologists maintains a known set of challenges. Leaders within the state have developed courses of study at the undergraduate level to promote interest in school mental health careers. Despite the development of a new program and courses, we continue to have an abundance of positions to fill. As delegate, I will continue to support the efforts of NVASP, NASP, and the university programs to inspire and cultivate emerging talent.

In the area of social justice, recent opposition to the expansion of the Health Impairment definition to include “developmental trauma” resulted in the proposed amendments being left in legislative committee. The passion and zeal demonstrated by NVASP leadership and committed members of the school psychologist community were nothing short of amazing. Currently, school psychologists within the state are actively seeking to fight against legislation that will require students to be retained in Grade 3, if they are not proficient on state supported assessments. Presently, letter writing campaigns are underway to inform legislators of the negative impact of retention and attempting to shift the focus to best practices. Despite the passing of this legislation, efforts continue to inform and guide lawmakers in reconsidering this decision. As delegate, I would like to use this platform to gather stakeholders for the development of innovative solutions for overcoming reading proficiency barriers. While continuing to pursue changes at the state level, it is important for us to simultaneously support efforts in our rural, urban, and suburban communities towards reading mastery for children.

While the NASP Practice Model provides a valuable comprehensive framework for well-rounded practice, our workforce shortage limits our ability to develop a broader range of skills. Since returning to site-based service delivery following the events connected to COVID-19, more opportunities for individual and group development are beginning to resurface. As delegate, my plan will be to continue to support opportunities for a broad range of professional development for school psychologists within the state; with additional care taken to address the learning needs for our colleagues in more remote areas with less accessible resources. The more we can reinforce
skills beyond those of assessment and report writing, the more we can impact the growth and development of our young people.