The American Psychological Association (APA) is seeking public comments as it considers revisions to the Model Act for State Licensure of Psychologists (Model Act). The Model Act provides language to guide state agencies in regulating the licensure of psychologists. APA generally recommends that the use of the title “psychologist” be reserved for individuals with a doctoral degree (e.g., PhD, PsyD), but since 1977, the Model Act has included an exemption to allow school psychologists trained at the specialist level and working in school settings to use the title “school psychologist,” an exemption that NASP has successfully advocated to maintain in previous versions of the Model Act.

NASP standards recognize the specialist level of preparation (defined by a minimum 3-year, 60-graduate semester hour degree in school psychology, including a 1,200-hour internship, 600 of which must occur in a school setting) as the entry level requirement to obtain a credential as a school psychologist. It is imperative that our members voice the importance of maintaining the ability for specialist level, state credentialed school psychologists to use the title “school psychologist” in any revision of the Model Act.

It is imperative that any revisions to the Model Act for State Licensure of Psychologists maintain the exemption for use of the title “school psychologist” as outlined in Section J.3. The historical, legal, and publicly accepted understanding of what specialist and doctoral level school psychologists do to support students, families, and schools in everyday practice is inextricably tied to the use of the title “school psychologist.”