



November 13, 2019

**New Jersey Association of School Psychologists (NJASP)  
to Host Advocacy Action Day on November 13, 2019  
During School Psychology Awareness Week**

*School psychologists from across the state to advocate for commonsense school safety measures, improved access to school-employed mental health services for students, and more rigorous curricula.*

**Trenton, NJ — In coordination with the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), the New Jersey Association of School Psychologists (NJASP) is hosting a virtual hill day on November 13, 2019. School psychologists across the state will be writing to their national and state legislators as part of National School Psychology Awareness Week (SPAW), which is November 11–15, 2019.**

In light of recent tragedies, school psychologists in New Jersey and across the country believe it is important that national and state legislators address three issues affecting students' ability to learn in an environment that is safe, supportive, and conducive to learning.

*Commonsense School Safety*

When students do not feel safe and supported at school, both physically and psychologically, they cannot learn to their fullest potential. This means supporting policies that promote sustainable crisis prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery while rejecting proposals that seek to allow anyone other than a commissioned school resource officer to be armed on a school campus.

*Access to School-Employed Mental Health Services*

One in five children and youth experience a mental health disorder, and about 80% who need mental health care do not receive it. With suggested staffing ratios for school-employed mental health professional (500–700:1 for school psychologists) not being met by many school districts, national and state leaders need to make a sustained commitment to achieve these key staffing ratios to ensure students are receiving the support they need.

*High Quality, Well-Rounded, Rigorous Curricula*

Comprehensive 21st century education includes social–emotional competency, self-control, problem-solving and conflict resolution skills, the ability to access and evaluate the validity of

information, and the ability to thrive in an increasingly competitive global economy. This means supporting school funding policies that promote equitable access to resources for all students and ensuring that teacher preparation, training, and professional development programs prepare teachers to work with diverse student populations.

As noted in the proclamation designating the second week of November as School Psychology Awareness Week,

School psychologists are specially trained to foster and deliver in the school and community a continuum of mental health services and academic support to lower barriers to teaching and learning. School psychologists have an important role in the education system by providing the mental health support that students need to succeed. They have rigorous professional standards with a commitment to the health of students and their families. Children cannot learn if they do not feel physically and psychologically safe, and school psychologists are in a unique position to provide support to students. It is important to recognize and promote the vital work being done for New Jersey students by school psychologists. Their continued efforts will help to ensure a stronger future for the education of children and youths across the State.

School psychologists in New Jersey and across the nation are committed to working with national, state, and local leaders, advocating for policies, procedures, and practices that will enable children and youth to thrive in at school, at home, and throughout life.

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About NJASP: The New Jersey Association of School Psychologists (NJASP) represents school psychologists working or living in New Jersey. NJASP's mission is to advocate for all children to realize their full potential and promote school psychological services for children and families.

About NASP: The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) represents 25,000 school psychologists throughout the United States and abroad. NASP empowers school psychologists to promote the learning, behavior, and mental health of all children and youth.

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