

President's Letter

By
Ed Morgret



President's Message:
Professionalism and Advocacy

In my fall message, I observed that school psychology is at a “crossroads,” and our future as school psychologists relies on how we, individually and collectively, respond to our current state of affairs. There are many challenges our profession faces today. Although the MLA debate is behind us for now (see MLA article in this newsletter), defending our title and practice has been an ongoing issue. With declining resources, protecting school psychology jobs is a major concern. Another challenge is to keep up with all of the legislative activities that impact our profession. But with every challenge comes opportunity.

To transform a challenge to an opportunity we must grow in two main areas: **Professionalism** and **Advocacy**. We need both – we can't grow in one without the other. They are two sides of the same coin. We may possess superb professional skills, be knowledgeable in our profession, and be the most productive professionals in our school system. **But**, if no one notices and no one advocates for us, our services may be curtailed or, worse yet, assigned to non-school psychologists. On the other hand, if we advocate for our profession, but don't have the professional competencies to back it up, then advocacy falls flat on its face.

So, you may ask, how is WVSPA promoting professionalism and advocacy? With regard to professionalism, through our two yearly conferences and our Marshall University partnership, training has been provided across a broad range of professional topics. At the same time, WVSPA has recognized the importance of current trends in the field. For instance, two recent trends relate to RTI and the Autism Spectrum Disorder. With respect to RTI, we have had two nationally renowned speakers at our conferences this year – Steven Feifer (“Integrating RTI with Cognitive Neuropsychology”) and Joseph Kovalski (“Using RTI to Determine Eligibility”). With respect to Autism Spectrum Disorder, WVSPA offered a full-day workshop during the 2009 spring conference. WVSPA is currently working with Marshall University Graduate College to provide advanced training in assessment of ASD. You will also be hearing a lot about WV Team Autism in the coming year.
(continued on page 2)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

APA Adopts New Language in Revised Model Licensure Act (MLA).....	2
Scenes from the Fall 2009 WVSPA Conference..	3-4
Awards Chairperson.....	5
WVSPA Awards Criteria.....	5
NASP Elections.....	5
WVSPA Executive Board Members.....	5
WVSPA Membership Information.....	5

APA Adopts New Language in its Revised Model Licensure Act (MLA)

WVSPA is continuing with its advocacy efforts with links to NASP (Thank you Bev Winter!) and our Government Public Relations Committee (Thank you Angela Madia!). Our members have also been successful in building strong grassroots support to address legislative issues. A case in point is the very hard work of three members in particular – Sarah Kendall, Terry Thorn, and Beth Fouty-Young – in helping pass in 2008 House Bill 4117 that provided salary stipends to school psychologists who are nationally certified. It is important to note that promoting professionalism and advocacy is not only an organizational responsibility – it is an individual responsibility as well, and I am very encouraged by the individual leadership I have seen across the state in promoting a number of activities relevant to school psychologists.

As I near the end of my term as WVSPA President, there are a number of people I want to thank. In addition to Bev and Angela (mentioned above), I say thanks to: Helen Wells for making my transition from President-Elect to President an easy one; Debbie Rolston and Tanya Cook for helping to put our financial house back in order, and thanks, Tanya, for your historical perspective; Fred Krieg and Sandra Stroebel for our strong WVSPA-MUGC partnership; all of the regional representatives that enabled us to produce a current directory; Susan Beck for providing accurate minutes of all of our meetings; Gwen Smith for her hard work in publishing the *PsychPerspectives* (“Yabadabadoo”); and Ray McCormick for posting information on our website. Most of all, a special thanks to our 86 members (up from 64 since last year!!!) who make WVSPA the great association it is today. ψ

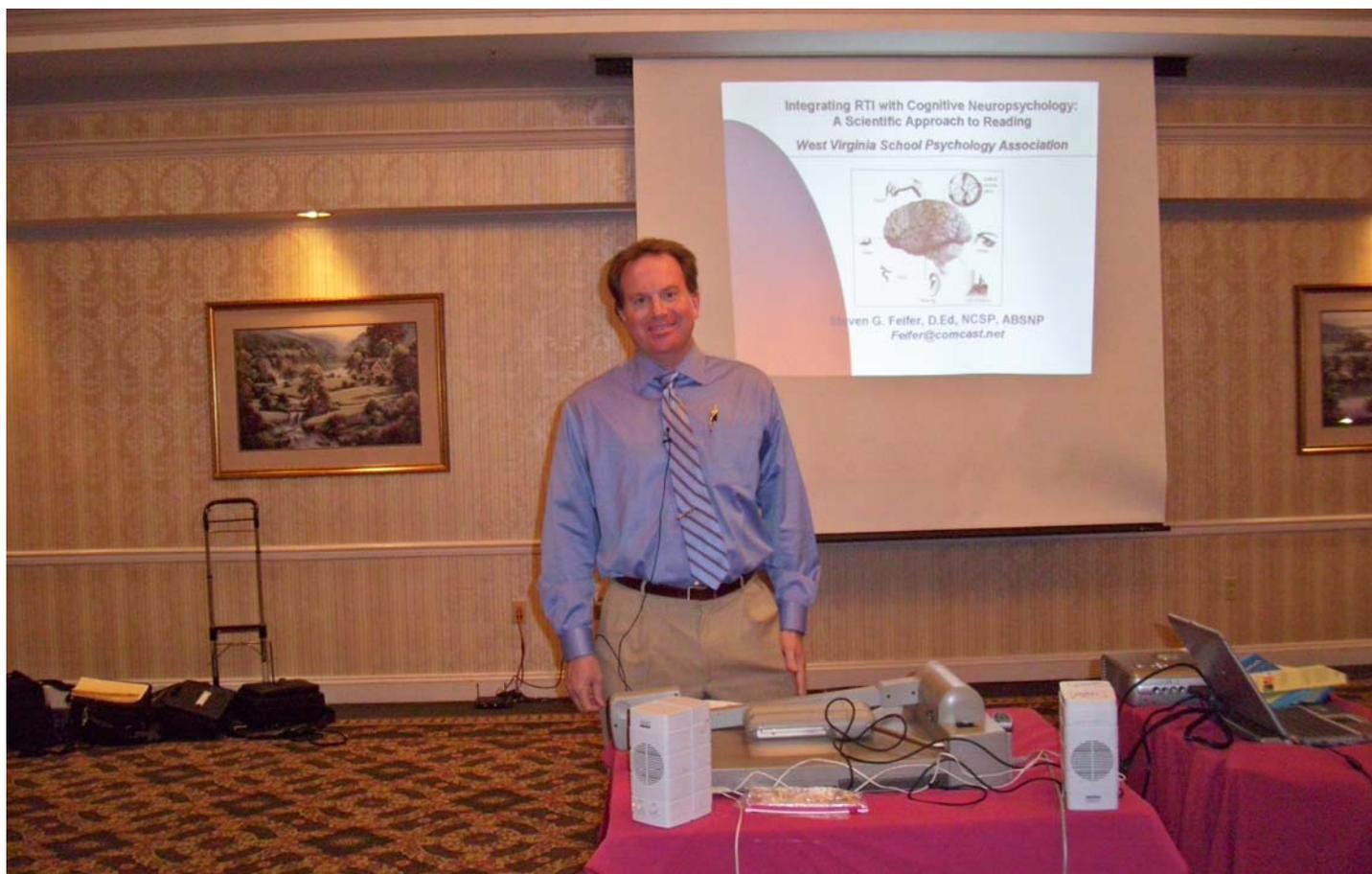
On February 20, 2010, the APA Council of Representatives voted to retain the right of both specialist and doctoral level school psychologists credentialed by State Education Agencies to use the title “school psychologist.” The new language differs significantly from last year’s draft version of the APA Model Act for State Licensure of Psychologists (MLA). The draft version removed the school psychology exemption, restricting the practice of school psychology to those holding doctoral degrees and having a license to practice psychology. This draft version was strongly opposed by NASP, state school psychology associations, and state education agencies. APA received 19,000 letters opposing the school psychology exemption. Even Division 16 (the school psychology division) of the APA was advocating for retaining the school psychology exemption.

The final language was a modified version of one of three options presented to the Council of Representatives by Division 16. This new language acknowledges that State Education Agencies credential and title practitioners who work in the schools (that may or may not hold a doctoral degree) and acknowledges that State Boards of Psychology credential practitioners for independent practice:

“Nothing in this act shall be construed to prevent (cite relevant state education authority or statutory provisions) from credentialing individuals to provide school psychological services in those settings that are under the purview of the state education agency. Such individuals shall be restricted in their practice and the use of the title so conferred, which must include the word “school”, to employment within those settings. This provision is not intended to restrict the activities of licensed psychologists.”

The above language does not mention the title “school psychologist,” so APA is not explicitly allowing or forbidding the use of the title. The final wording in the MLA is considered a “win” for school psychology, as it protects the title and practice of school psychologists who are credentialed through state education agencies.

Scenes from the Fall 2009 WVSPA Conference





Awards Chairperson

Libby Willard has accepted the position of Awards Chairperson. She has completed her first "assignment" by gathering nominations for the different awards presented by WVSPA and purchasing the awards. The recipients will be announced during our business luncheon. Libby's willingness to serve in this position is greatly appreciated.

Awards Criteria

West Virginia School Psychologist of the Year Award is in recognition of an individual's exemplary provision of school psychological services.

Exemplary Program in the Delivery of School Psychological Services Award is in recognition of implementation of innovative practices or programs by an individual or county school system.

Chloe Hollinger Award is in recognition of an individual who has promoted school psychology in West Virginia through such things as publications, presentations and overall leadership.

Special Friends of Children Award is presented to a person who has demonstrated outstanding dedication to the children in West Virginia and has shown a commitment to the profession of school psychology.

Government & Public Relations Award is presented to a person who has demonstrated leadership in government and public relations.

WVSPA takes pride in recognizing our members each year for outstanding contributions to the field of School Psychology. We want nominations from our WVSPA members. Please review the criteria for each of the awards, request a nomination form and complete it. Send the completed form to:

Libby Willard
2353 Virginia Avenue
Hurricane, WV 25526

NASP Elections

Fred Krieg has been elected as our new NASP Delegate. Bev Winter, our past NASP Delegate, has been voted to be a trustee on the Children's Fund. Congratulations to both and thank you for your hard work and dedication.

WVSPA Executive Board

President - Ed Morgret
President Elect - Sandra Stroebel
Past President - Helen Wells
Secretary - Susan Beck
Treasurer - Debbie Rolston
Government and Public Relations - Angela Madia
Ethics Chairperson - Karen Edgell
Membership Co-Chairs- Tanya Cook and Debbie Rolston
Newsletter Editor - Gwendolyn Smith
Awards - Libby Willard
Nominations - Libby Willard
Region A - Kim Scott (RESA 5 and 6)
Region B - Angela Madia (RESA 7)
Region C - LeAnn Cooper (RESA 8)
Region D - Kathy Showen (RESA 2 and 3)
Region E - Jennifer Hanrath (RESA 1 and 4)
MUGC Representative - Fred Krieg
MUGC Student Representative - Chasity Daugherty
NASP Delegate - Fred Krieg
WV Board of Examiners - Toni Parsons
WVDE Liaison - Lanai Jennings

Join WVSPA

Membership Categories

REGULAR – Available to those currently certified by the State Department of Education, or persons who hold a current license in school psychology granted by the WV Board of Examiners of Psychologists. Fee \$50.00 annually

STUDENT – Available to those actively enrolled in a psychology training program, taking a minimum of six semester hours. Student membership status is granted for no more than five years, requires annual verification from the University where they are enrolled, and is not granted to any person employed full time. Fee \$25.00 annually

RETIRED – Available to persons holding regular membership for at least five consecutive years and who retired from professional activity. No fee, but requires annual application.

ASSOCIATE – Available to those having at least a bachelor's degree and who have an interest in school psychology. Fee \$15.00 annually.

Dues are assessed on or near July 1st of each year. New and student members may be required to complete additional forms before membership is accepted. Please make checks payable to WVSPA. Mail to:

Debbie Rolston
WVSPA Treasurer/Membership
2027 Derricks Creek Road
Sissonville, WV 25320

Gwendolyn L. Smith
Psych Perspectives Editor
P. O. Box 206
Falling Rock, WV 25079

TO: