



## **Invitation to Submit COSA Board Member Nominations**

### **Approved by Nominating Committee December 2020**

Each year, the Council of School Attorneys of the National School Boards Association selects nominees for director-at-large and officer positions in the COSA Board of Directors that will become vacant at that year's annual meeting. Any COSA member in good standing is eligible, including school attorneys in private firms, in-house school district counsel and counsel at state school boards associations.

The COSA Bylaws charge COSA's Nominating Committee with the selection of a slate of nominees. As part of that effort, the Committee welcomes recommendations for potential candidates for director-at-large positions that will contribute to a strong diverse board. Therefore, it takes this opportunity to encourage and invite you to submit candidates you think the Committee may wish to consider in its selection of director-at-large nominees, including yourself.

Your assistance in identifying potential candidates is valuable to the Nominating Committee. Please complete and submit the accompanying Questionnaire and other indicated materials when making your recommendation(s).

The Committee encourages the nomination of candidates from diverse backgrounds in an effort to ensure that the Board is indeed reflective of COSA's members, including their geography, ethnicity, scope of practice, and varied professional interests and concerns.

COSA will hold its Annual Business Meeting in April 2021, with the date and time to be determined. Nominating materials for director-at-large positions are due on or before **February 5, 2021**.

Please review the following vital information.

### **About the COSA Board of Directors**

The COSA Board of Directors is COSA's governing body. It has 22 voting members consisting of seven officers, including the three immediate past chairs, and fifteen directors-at-large. The Board also has two non-voting directors including the NSBA President and the NSBA Executive Director or his/her designee.

Directors-at-large are elected for a two-year term and may serve up to two two-year terms. Officers are elected for a one-year term, from among Board members who have served two two-year terms.

The COSA Board conducts COSA's business between annual meetings of the membership. It also takes actions necessary or convenient to the management of the affairs of COSA, which may include advising NSBA/COSA staff on programs and services to be provided to COSA members. Its officers have such

Board powers as necessary to act on the Board's behalf in between Board meetings.

In their work, the COSA Board and its officers are further guided by COSA's strategic plan and the implementation of that plan within the framework and mission of NSBA.

### **COSA Board Member Responsibilities**

- **Attendance at in-person meetings:**  
The COSA Board conducts two in-person meetings per year, and all the directors-at-large and officers are expected to attend both. The first meeting is held in the spring in conjunction with COSA's School Law Seminar, just prior to the NSBA Annual Conference. The second takes place in the fall in conjunction with the School Law Practice Seminar.

Regarding costs associated with attending both meetings, COSA reimburses travel expenses for the fall meeting, but not the spring meeting. In addition, COSA Board members remain responsible for their own registration fees to attend the COSA seminars held in conjunction with the COSA Board meetings, unless they are part of the faculty at the School Law Seminar.

- **Committee Service:**  
COSA Board members are expected to serve on at least one Board committee. Some of the committees are standing committees and others are ad hoc. Each year, the COSA chair establishes the committees and assigns members to each, including committee chairpersons. The committees meet primarily by conference call.
- **Familiarity with the COSA Bylaws:**  
COSA Board members are expected to be familiar with the COSA Bylaws and their impact on the governance of COSA and the work of the Board.
- **Ambassador Role:**  
COSA Board members serve as COSA ambassadors to the NSBA community, the legal community and the public at large. They are expected to engage actively in their role as advocates of COSA membership, and promoters of COSA programming and the practice of school law.
- **Assistance to NSBA:**  
From time to time, COSA Board members may be asked to provide assistance regarding NSBA publications and programming events, including authoring articles and making presentations.

### **The COSA/NSBA Connection**

COSA is an integral program of NSBA, and COSA Board officers serve on the NSBA Board of Directors in an *ex-officio* capacity during the year they serve as COSA chair.

Both organizations have intersecting missions and purposes. NSBA's stated mission is: "Working with and through our State Associations and the U.S. territory of the Virgin Islands, NSBA advocates for equity and excellence in public education through school board governance." COSA's mission is "to support school attorneys in their representation of public school boards by providing leadership in legal advocacy for public schools."

Because COSA is an NSBA program, its annual budget is subject to approval by the NSBA Board of Directors.

### **The COSA Board Nomination and Election Process**

The COSA Bylaws set out the process for nominating and electing COSA Board directors-at-large and officers.

Each year, COSA members elect three officers (Traditionally, the Chair-elect becomes Chair automatically without further vote.). The number of new directors-at-large elected each year is staggered to ensure there are a total of 15 directors-at-large on the COSA Board.

It is the responsibility of COSA's Nominating Committee to submit to the COSA members a slate of nominees. That Committee is comprised of the COSA Chair and the three immediate Past Chairs.

No nominations are accepted from the floor. Nominations for officer positions must come from the Nominating Committee. Nominations for new directors-at-large must come from the Committee, or over the signature of ten (10) COSA members submitted no less than 30 days in advance of the election.

The Nominating Committee selects its director-at-large nominees from among COSA members who are skilled leaders in the school law field in their state, and dedicated to the work of COSA. Your knowledge of, and association with, such individuals at the local level places you in a unique position to help the Committee identify strong, qualified candidates.

Beyond careful review of nominating materials, the Committee may interview potential candidates at its discretion.

Successful nominees are notified prior to the annual meeting at which their nomination will be presented for election.

### **Selection of Nominees for COSA Board Positions**

As per the COSA Bylaws, when selecting nominees, the Nominating Committee strives to “maintain a wide geographical and diverse representation on the COSA Board of Directors to ensure that the professional interests and concerns of all members are represented.” It also considers a candidate's:

- Type of school law practice
- Contributions to COSA and attendance at COSA events
- Membership/leadership in the state council of school attorneys (if one exists)
- Contributions to the state council of school attorneys and state school boards association
- Service to other local, state or national professional associations
- Availability and time commitment to serve as a COSA Board member/officer
- Employer's knowledge and support of candidacy
- Support from the candidate's state school boards association

In its selection, the Committee may consider any COSA member in good standing, including

previous or “retired” Board members who are not subject to any of the limitations set out in the Bylaws.

In addition to those of new nominees, the Committee considers, as well, the continuing qualifications and commitment of existing COSA Board members and officers eligible for nomination.

If you have additional questions, please contact Cheryl Richardson, National School Boards Association at 703.838.6714 or [crichardson@nsba.org](mailto:crichardson@nsba.org). Feel free to contact me as well at the address below.

Thank you for your service as a COSA member, and for your assistance with the COSA Board nomination and election process.



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## NSBA Council of School Attorneys Board Nomination Questionnaire

Dear COSA Member:

Whether you are nominating someone else or yourself with the support of a sponsor, the completion and submission of this Board Nomination Questionnaire indicates a candidate's willingness to accept a nomination from the COSA Nominating Committee to serve as a director-at-large on the COSA Board for a two-year term.

The information provided will assist the Committee in evaluating the candidate in a wide range of criteria. The same information will be gathered from each candidate.

The completed Questionnaire must be submitted by **Friday, February 5, 2021** by mail or e-mail to:

Council of School Attorneys  
c/o Cheryl Richardson  
National School Boards Association  
1680 Duke St.  
Alexandria, VA 22314  
[crichardson@nsba.org](mailto:crichardson@nsba.org)

**Please attach a short biography of the candidate, letter(s) supporting the candidacy, and any desired additional information.**

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

**NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE, AND E-MAIL ADDRESS OF CANDIDATE \*:**

\*Must be a member in good standing of the NSBA Council of School Attorneys.

**NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE, AND E-MAIL ADDRESS OF NOMINATOR/SPONSOR\*:**

\*If you are nominating yourself as a candidate, please ask another COSA member in good standing to “sponsor” your self-nomination.

Nominator /sponsor should forward a letter outlining the accomplishments of the candidate and reasons for support of the candidate’s nomination.

The following information should be completed by the candidate for nomination.

*Type of Practice*

How long have you practiced school law? _____	
What percentage of your professional time is spent practicing school law? (Please check one)	
<input type="checkbox"/> 100% <input type="checkbox"/> 75-99% <input type="checkbox"/> 50-74% <input type="checkbox"/> 26-49% <input type="checkbox"/> 0-25%	
What type of school law practice do you have?	
___ Solo practice	___ In-house counsel
___ Small firm	___ State Association counsel
___ Large firm	___ Other: please specify
If you are in private practice, what are the primary school districts that you represent?	
1.	2.
3.	4.
5.	6.

If you are an in-house counsel for a school district:

How long have you practiced in that capacity?	Which is your school district of current employment?
Did you practice school law before becoming in-house counsel? ___ Yes    ___ No	Where else have you practiced school law?

If you are a counsel/attorney for a state school boards association:

Which state association do you currently work for?	Are you an association employee?    ___ Yes ___ No
How long have you worked for the association? _____	Are you an outside counsel?    ___ Yes    ___ No
What kind of work do you do for the association? _____	If outside counsel, where else do you practice school law?

***COSA Membership***

How many years have you been a member of the NSBA Council of School Attorneys? _____	
List any presentations, publications or other volunteer work you have done for COSA and/or with the NSBA Office of Counsel.	
Over the past 5 years, how many times have you attended the following COSA programs: Spring School Law Seminar _____ Fall Law Practice Seminar _____ Webinars _____	
What do you value most about your COSA membership? (May be attached in a separate document.)	
What would you do as a COSA Board member to (1) help support COSA's role as the lead organization on school law matters, and (2) enhance the active participation of COSA's members? (May be attached in a separate document.)	

***Relations with state council of school attorneys***

If you practice in a state with a council of school attorneys:

How many years have you been a member? _____	Is your state council affiliated with the NSBA Council of School Attorneys? _____ Yes    _____ No    _____ Don't Know/NA
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In the past five years, how many of your state council meetings and programs have you attended?	How many meetings and programs does your state council hold each year? ____
What leadership positions have you held?	
What presentations, publications or other types of volunteer work have you done for your state council of school attorneys. Please list date and topic.	

***Relations with state school boards association***

What presentations, publications or other types of volunteer work (e.g. participation in advisory workgroups) have you done for your state school boards association? Please list date and topic.	

***Relations with Other Professional Associations and School-Related Governmental Entities***

What types of volunteer service and leadership roles have you provided for other local, state or national professional associations, e.g. ABA, local bar, labor/arbitration organizations etc.?

Local	State	National

Have you served in any local, state or national think tank or other work group(s) charged with providing governmental entities advice on issues related to the governance/operation of public schools? Please list.

Local	State	National

***COSA Board Service***

Do you have any colleagues in your current practice who are serving, or have served, on the COSA Board?

Yes  No  Don't Know (If yes, who and when? \_\_\_\_\_)

Have you been nominated for service on the COSA Board before?

Yes  No (If yes, when? \_\_\_\_\_)

Why do you wish to become a COSA Board member? (May be included in a separate document.)

Please indicate your acknowledgement of the time necessary to fulfill the expectations of COSA Board membership, and your commitment to the expectations of service as described in the attached COSA Board Member Service and Nomination Process document. (May be included in a separate document.)

Please indicate your employer's knowledge and support of your potential candidacy as a member of the COSA Board of Directors, including the employer's acknowledgement of the time commitment. (May be attached in a separate document.)

**OPTIONAL Demographic Information:**

**Sex:**             Male                       Female                       Non-Binary

**Race:**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian  | <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> African-American                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Native American |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Pacific Islander                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-Cultural  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Please add any description you feel is relevant: _____ |  |

**Thank you** for completing the questionnaire. Please mail or e-mail the completed questionnaire and any additional information that would support the candidate's nomination to:

**Council of School Attorneys**  
**c/o Cheryl Richardson**  
**National School Boards Association**  
**1680 Duke St.**  
**Alexandria, VA 22314**  
[crichardson@nsba.org](mailto:crichardson@nsba.org)

**The deadline for receipt of nominations is Friday, February 5, 2021.**

For questions about the nominating process, please contact Cheryl Richardson, NSBA, at 703.838.6714. Feel free to also contact Phil Hartley, Chair, 2021 Nominating Committee, at [phartley@hhhlawyers.com](mailto:phartley@hhhlawyers.com) with questions on Board service.