

# FRANCZEK

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## **NICKI BAZER**

### Partner

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Nicki Bazer serves as co-chair of the firm's Higher Education Practice Group and provides counsel to public and private K-12 institutions, as well as higher education clients. Nicki focuses her legal practice on labor and employment matters, policy and governance issues, student privacy rights, general school compliance, as well as charter schools. As former general counsel at the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), she provides valuable insight and counsel to school districts on the regulations and reform initiatives endorsed by ISBE. Nicki regularly represents clients in both state and federal court, and in administrative hearings.

Nicki is a frequent speaker on school law matters. Nicki has made presentations for the Illinois Council of School Attorneys, the Illinois Association of School Boards, and Illinois Association of School Personnel Administrator.

While at ISBE, she provided legal advice and support to districts under direct state oversight. She facilitated state-wide working groups on data security as it relates to student privacy, as well as the state school funding formula. As ISBE's General Counsel, Nicki oversaw the legal department, rules and waivers department, and the legislative agenda of the agency.

Prior to her time at ISBE, Nicki served as Bureau Chief for the Disability Rights Bureau at the Illinois Attorney General and as a senior attorney at Legal Aid Chicago. She completed a federal judicial clerkship with Chief Judge Janet Hall in the U.S. District Court of Connecticut. During law school, Nicki was a Root-Tilden-Kern Public Interest Scholar and an editor with the *Review of Law and Social Change*.

## Education

- J.D., *cum laude*, New York University Law School, 2001
- B.A., *cum laude*, Northwestern University, 1997 (history)

## Bar & Court Admissions

- Illinois
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit
- U.S. District Courts for the Central and Northern Districts of Illinois
- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois – Trial Bar
- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Ohio

## Recognition

- Appointed by Governor JB Pritzker to the Affirming and Inclusive School Task Force