

FRANCZEK



NICKI BAZER

Partner

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Nicki Bazer serves as co-chair of the firm's Higher Education Practice Group. Nicki focuses her legal practice on policy and governance issues, student privacy rights, teacher evaluation, teacher misconduct issues, educator licensure compliance, general public 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, in administrative hearings on teacher matters, and before the Illinois Department of Human Rights. She represented Chicago Public Schools during its most recent labor negotiations with the nation's largest teachers union resulting in a five-year agreement. Nicki also works with higher education institutions on labor issues, intellectual property matters and student matters.

Nicki is a frequent speaker on school law matters, specifically on student data security and privacy and teacher performance and evaluation. Nicki has made presentations for the Illinois Council of School Attorneys, the Illinois Association of Administrators of Special Education, the Illinois Association of School Boards and Illinois Association of School Personnel Administrators.

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 legislative agenda of the agency, including drafting legislation, working with education stakeholders and testifying before the Illinois General Assembly.

Prior to her time at ISBE, Nicki served as Bureau Chief for the Disability Rights Bureau at the Illinois Attorney General. 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