

COLLINS & BLAHA, P.C.

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January 17, 2023
via Electronic Mail

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**†ALSO ADMITTED IN
THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Sean Cotton, Treasurer
Board of Education
Grosse Pointe Public School System
20601 Morningside
Grosse Pointe Woods, MI 48236

Re: Proposal for Legal Services

On behalf of Collins & Blaha, P.C., we appreciate the opportunity to submit this proposal regarding the scope of legal services our firm provides to boards of education for Michigan school districts.

Collins & Blaha, P.C. specializes in education law and advises elected boards of education throughout Southeast Michigan. Our attorneys practice before all administrative agencies with which a school district is regularly concerned. These include the Teacher Tenure Commission, Department of Civil Rights, Employment Relations Commission, the Michigan Finance Authority, and proceedings in the Michigan Department of Education, as well as proceedings in federal agencies and all state and federal courts.

As federal and state governments have increased their oversight of local schools, the management of a school district's legal affairs has become increasingly more complex. Additionally, as administrative law precedent is not published in commercially available digests, expertise in education-related areas of law is critical to competent legal representation of a board of education.

Education law is a specialized area that demands expertise in the following areas: The Revised School Code, election law, special education, tenure law, tax and school financing, municipal finance, employment and labor law, civil rights law, students' rights and related constitutional issues, the Michigan Public Employee Relations Act, the Uniform Budgeting and Accounting Act, the Bullard-Plawecki Employee Right to Know Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Freedom of Information Act, and the Open Meetings Act.

As a full-service firm whose primary focus is the representation of Michigan educational institutions, Collins & Blaha, P.C. has provided a broad range of education-related legal services to our clients in all of the above-mentioned areas since 1982. With offices located in Farmington Hills, our firm represents boards of education throughout Southeast Michigan, including in

Sean Cotton, Treasurer
Board of Education
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Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Washtenaw, Genesee, and Monroe Counties. Moreover, our firm is regularly consulted as experts by other boards of education throughout the State of Michigan.

As discussed in the attached proposal for legal services, our law firm has represented boards of education in all facets of education law. This includes, but is not limited to, be appointed as general counsel for boards of education. Our firm is currently named specifically as general counsel for the Boards of Education of Ann Arbor Public Schools, Plymouth-Canton Community Schools, the Taylor School District, Grand Blanc Community Schools, Bedford Public Schools, and Monroe Public Schools. As general counsel for these school boards, we understand there may be other named legal counsel who perform legal services for the school district in specified areas, and that our role as general counsel is to facilitate such legal services, and to provide advice on general school law directly to the boards of education. In addition to being formally named general counsel for the school districts listed above, we are also the sole named legal counsel, which includes general counsel services to the boards of education, for many of the school districts listed in our references included as part of our proposal.

Collins & Blaha, P.C. takes a proactive approach by working closely with our clients to prevent legal problems before costly litigation arises. We regularly work with boards of education to strategically achieve goals through the most effective and efficient means available. In the event a dispute cannot be avoided or resolved, our firm works closely with the board of education to ensure the board understands the risks inherent in litigation. Once the decision is made to proceed, we apprise our client as to every step in the litigation process.

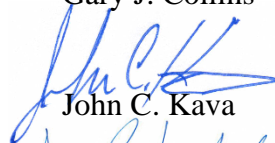
Pursuant to your request, we have enclosed our proposal for legal services, which includes a Legal Representation Agreement. We enjoy educational law and strive to be a leader in charting new legal courses to benefit our clients. We would welcome the opportunity to represent the Board of Education of the Grosse Pointe Public School System.

Sincerely,

COLLINS & BLAHA, P.C.



Gary J. Collins



John C. Kava



Jeremy D. Chisholm

GJC/JCK/JDC
Enclosures

**COLLINS & BLAHA, P.C.
LEGAL SERVICES**

GROSSE POINTE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

**COLLINS & BLAHA, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Highway, Suite 170
Farmington Hills, Michigan 48334
Telephone: (248) 406-1140
Facsimile: (248) 406-8416**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1. Scope of Services**
- 2. Individual Attorney Profiles**
- 3. Firm References**
- 4. Firm Philosophy**
- 5. Fees and Billing / Legal Representation Agreement**

SCOPE OF SERVICES

Collins & Blaha, P.C. is one of the few law firms in Michigan specializing in education and school law. More than 90 percent of the firm's time is devoted to educational clients. For over forty years, Collins & Blaha, P.C. has been committed to aggressive representation of its educational clients. However, aggressive representation does not mean engaging in fruitless and costly litigation. Many times, the most prudent and effective solution to a controversy is early intervention and resolution prior to incurring liability. A detailed description of the components of educational law is provided below.

1. **PUBLIC SCHOOL LEGISLATION AND LAWS:** Collins & Blaha, P.C. was actively involved in the education reforms which were passed in 2011, which included topics such as teacher tenure, revisions to the Revised School Code, public employee's health insurance and amendments to the Public Employment Relations Act. Mr. Collins is regularly called to testify in front of the Michigan Legislature on matters related to both the Revised School Code and the Teachers' Tenure Act.
2. **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT:** Collins & Blaha, P.C. analyzes in detail this Act and the interplay between it and the Open Meetings Act. Issues that typically arise concern those types of information subject to disclosure and those which are not subject to disclosure such as employee evaluations, personal notes of Board members and administrators, minutes of closed sessions of a Board of Education meeting, and communications between the Board of Education and its attorney. Collins & Blaha, P.C. has been successfully involved in Michigan Attorney General Investigations and circuit court actions alleging violations of the Freedom of Information Act and the Open Meetings Act.
3. **OPEN MEETINGS ACT:** Please see Item #2 discussed above.
4. **BOARD GOVERNANCE PROCEDURES/ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER:** Collins & Blaha, P.C. advises its clients on the most effective governance procedures which are tailored for each individual district. Collins & Blaha, P.C. has extensive experience with multiple governance models, including Robert's Rules of Order.
5. **CORPORATE AND MUNICIPAL BY-LAWS:** Collins & Blaha, P.C. has drafted municipal and school board by-laws. Collins & Blaha, P.C. works collaboratively with its clients to individualize by-laws which meet the individual needs of the organization.
6. **CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS AND GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION:** Collins & Blaha, P.C. negotiates and interprets collective bargaining agreements with all applicable employee units of school districts. The firm also negotiates and drafts all business and civil contracts necessary for the appropriate functioning of the school business office. This includes contracts for acquisition or sale of property and any and all contracts with vendors.
7. **501(c)(3) AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS:** Collins & Blaha, P.C. handles the formation and organization of entities operated exclusively for exempt purposes, as set forth in Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3). The firm also handles the proper procedures for school districts receiving charitable donations, as well as the community foundations which support each school district.
8. **MERC PROCEEDINGS:** Collins & Blaha, P.C. handles all phases of labor relations on behalf of its clients, pursuant to the Public Employment Relations Act. The firm handles mediation and fact-finding procedures and advises clients during labor strikes. The firm represents clients in MERC proceedings regarding collective bargaining issues, election procedures and disputes, exclusions from the bargaining

unit and unfair labor practice charges. Collins & Blaha, P.C. also provides extensive advice and consultation in the administration of grievances including representation in arbitration and negotiation. The firm represents clients in court proceedings involving injunctions and “duty of fair representation” claims brought by union members.

9. EMPLOYMENT POLICIES: Collins & Blaha, P.C. has drafted employee handbooks for school districts and has been actively involved in the development of Board of Education policies which fulfill the needs of each individual district.

10. CIVIL RIGHTS: Collins & Blaha, P.C. represents clients before state and federal agencies including the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights in all civil rights related matters including but not limited to, age discrimination, gender discrimination and race discrimination.

The firm works in partnership with school districts to target issues which give rise to claims of discrimination. The firm has extensive experience preventing and resolving claims of discrimination. Preventative services include educational presentations to administrators and employees, drafting anti-discrimination policies and engaging in dispute resolution. Although many matters can be resolved without litigation through early and assertive intervention, sometimes preventative measures prove unsuccessful. When this occurs, Collins & Blaha, P.C. will aggressively litigate those matters that cannot be otherwise resolved.

11. EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE: Collins & Blaha, P.C. represents school districts in demotion and discharge and layoff and recall proceedings at all levels of the tenure process including hearings before Administrative Law Judges, the Teacher Tenure Commission, Circuit Courts, the Court of Appeals, and the Michigan Supreme Court.

Collins & Blaha, P.C. is one of the foremost authorities on tenure law in the State of Michigan and our attorneys are regularly asked to speak at seminars and conferences both in Michigan and out of state. The firm has an excellent success rate in advocating on behalf of school districts in tenure matters.

12. REAL ESTATE: Collins & Blaha, P.C. has dealt with numerous real estate transactions, including drafting leases and purchase agreements for school districts. The firm has represented its clients in stand-alone real estate transactions, as well as part of a municipal financing issuance of a district and has advised school districts on areas such as surveys, appraisals and environmental assessments.

13. INSTITUTIONAL AGREEMENTS AND CONTRACT LAW: Collins & Blaha, P.C. works closely with its clients on the feasibility and benefits of inter-governmental agreements, such as contracts for services between neighboring school districts.

14. CREDITOR RIGHTS: Collins & Blaha, P.C. advises its clients on the procedural provisions designed to protect the ability of creditors to collect any money that they are owed. The firm also has handled construction liens within the context of school district construction and renovation projects.

15. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY: Collins & Blaha, P.C. has advised school districts on the creation and protection of intellectual property, such as copyrights for educational materials and computer programs.

16. LITIGATION: Collins & Blaha, P.C. represents clients in all employment and labor related issues including wrongful discharge; breach of collective bargaining agreements; age, race, gender, handicap, and

national origin discrimination claims; negligent hiring and/or suspension; wage and hour claims, and other related claims. Further, the firm has been successful in obtaining injunctions and protective orders to ensure that the workplace is “violence free.” The firm confines its representation to Boards of Educations in labor matters and declines all invitations to represent labor unions or employee associations.

17. CHARITABLE GIVING: Collins & Blaha, P.C. advises its clients on the proper procedures to preserve charitable giving status, as well as forming local community foundations.

18. TAXATION: Collins & Blaha, P.C. has represented school districts before the Michigan Tax Tribunal, including appeals on the General Motors Technical Center in Warren, Michigan, the Orion Assembly Plant in Lake Orion, Michigan, and the General Motors Stamping Plant in Grand Blanc, Michigan.

19. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS: Collins & Blaha, P.C. works with its clients on all aspects of employee benefits, including the most recent amendments to public school employee health benefits in Michigan. The firm has assisted in drafting Benefit Plan Documents for use by administrators and employees of school districts.

20. STUDENT DUE PROCESS, AND DISCIPLINE: Collins & Blaha, P.C. represents clients in all constitutional related matters including freedom of speech and expression; student publications; search and seizure; religious rights and equal access; privacy issues; student discipline, including suspensions and expulsions; due process protections and student rights.

21. LAW ENFORCEMENT: Collins & Blaha, P.C. provides its clients with a quarterly legal update and summaries of federal and state law that is applicable and relevant to school-related safety issues under Michigan’s Safe Schools law. William Blaha of the firm also serves as a representative on Michigan’s Safe Schools Initiative Work Group.

22. BOND COUNSEL SERVICES: Listed in the Bond Buyer’s Directory of Municipal Bond Dealers, the firm prepares necessary documentation for all stages of the issuance of tax exempt notes and bonds, from initial resolutions, millage elections, applications to the Michigan Department of Treasury, to closing documents. The firm advises in the determination of financial needs and the acquisition of financing through various banks, underwriters, and financial consultants. The firm works closely with the Municipal Finance Division of the Treasury Department and the School Bond Loan Program, and advises clients in the issuance and sale of General Obligation Unlimited Tax Bonds, Deficit Reduction Bonds, Refunding Notes and Bonds, Equipment Acquisition Notes, State Aid Notes, and Tax Anticipation Notes.

23. GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS: Collins & Blaha, P.C. has advised its clients on zoning issues in connection with its real estate services outlined under Item #12.

24. ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION: Collins & Blaha, P.C. has dealt with environmental issues and the necessity and proper procedures for environmental assessments in connection with its real estate services outlined under Item #12.

25. INSURANCE: Collins & Blaha, P.C. has advised its clients on the proper insurance carrier and coverage applicable to each individual school district. The firm has also been heavily involved in the changing landscape of health insurance for school district employees.

26. STATE CAPITAL OUTLAY REQUIREMENTS: Collins & Blaha, P.C. has advised its clients on the state capital outlay process in connection with its bond counsel services outlined under Item #22.

27. **APPROPRIATE USE POLICIES:** Collins & Blaha, P.C. has drafted appropriate use policies for school districts which fulfill the specific needs of each individual district.

28. **TECHNOLOGY ACQUISITION AND OWNERSHIP:** Collins & Blaha, P.C. has represented its clients and drafted closing documents in technology acquisition transactions, such as Equipment Notes and Installment Purchase Agreements. The firm has dealt with stand-alone technology acquisition transactions, as well as part of a municipal financing issuance of a district.

29. **STUDENT AND EMPLOYEE PRIVACY RIGHTS:** Collins & Blaha, P.C. has advised school districts on protecting the privacy of student education records, pursuant to the Family Educational Right to Privacy Act, and the interplay with the Freedom of Information Act. The firm has also dealt with the provisions regarding the security and privacy of health data, pursuant to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996.

30. **SPECIAL EDUCATION AND 504'S:** Collins & Blaha, P.C. is also involved in all aspects of special education matters including the identification and evaluation of disabled children and placement of disabled students. We provide representation to school districts during the Individualized Educational Planning Team ("IEPT") process and any subsequent due process hearings and appeals. We have been successful in challenging the award of attorney fees, and in obtaining injunctive relief requiring the removal from school of violent handicapped students. Members of the firm have served as hearing officers in Section 504 hearings.

In most instances, the firm is able to avoid the hearing process through aggressive intervention both prior to and subsequent to the IEPT meeting. However, when litigation has been unavoidable, the firm has been successful in defending both placement services and student discipline challenges.

31. **BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY:** Collins & Blaha, P.C. regularly works with clients to update, refine and customize Policies to reflect the particular needs of individual Boards of Education. We have extensive practical experience with all the market-dominant commercial policy packages and regularly monitor these products to proactively provide updates as necessary. Our attorneys ensure that Boards of Education have confidence that their policies are not only current and compliant, but are appropriately targeted to meet the school district's and community's needs.

ADDITIONAL AREAS OF FIRM EXPERTISE

THE REVISED SCHOOL CODE OF 1996: The Revised School Code is the comprehensive Act that governs the organization and operation of elementary and secondary schools in this state. Collins & Blaha, P.C. continues to apply and interpret this Act on behalf of its clients in the context of a broad spectrum of issues including purchase, sale, and lease of property; annexation and consolidation of school districts; school district elections; special education; student discipline; athletic competition; purchase of textbooks; school curriculum; and school construction matters.

MICHIGAN ELECTION LAW: Collins & Blaha, P.C. is involved in all aspects of elections including drafting the appropriate resolution, affidavit and ballot language necessary for conducting annual elections. Also, this firm advises regarding the proper language for millage or bond issues to be placed on the ballot. The firm drafts a calendar to be used by its clients each year to ensure timely election procedures.

UNIFORM BUDGETING AND ACCOUNTING ACT: Although the major thrust of this Act involves the school district's auditing firm, Collins & Blaha, P.C. frequently responds to client requests for

information regarding content and timing for publication of notices for public hearings and proposed budgets, and preparation of resolutions for adopting budgets. Our understanding of the requirements for budgetary compliance coupled with an awareness of a school's budget and alternative options is an effective tool for our negotiations with collective bargaining groups.

BULLARD-PLAWECKI EMPLOYEE RIGHT TO KNOW ACT: Collins & Blaha, P.C. handles issues under this Act which govern employees' right of access to their personnel records; confidentiality of such records; and the use of such records in adversarial proceedings when the issues arise in arbitration, tenure, or court actions. The primary questions arising under the Act involve what information is, or should be, contained in the personnel file for use in a quasi-judicial or judicial proceeding. The firm issues interpretive opinions of this Act in conjunction with the Freedom of Information Act and other relevant laws whenever a third party requests information pertaining to the employee.

MCKINNEY VENTO: Collins & Blaha, P.C. has extensive experience in working with clients to determine the appropriate placement and allocation of costs for homeless students as defined in *McKinney Vento*.

ATTORNEY PROFILES

COLLINS & BLAHA, P.C. concentrates its practice in labor, education, special education, municipal finance, and general school law. General School law involves issues of taxes, contracts, employee benefits, finance, litigation, state and federal reporting requirements and education matters. All attorneys attend weekly staff meetings where current cases and projects are discussed and reviewed. While all attorneys in the firm are experienced in education law, each attorney is skilled in one or more specialized areas, and is available to assist with major issues and cases involving all clients. The firm's attorneys participate regularly as guest speakers for various organizations and are readily available to conduct courtesy seminars for our clients.



GARY J. COLLINS received his undergraduate degree with high honors, and a Masters in Labor and Industrial Relations from Michigan State University; and his Juris Doctor degree from Wayne State University. Prior to becoming an attorney Mr. Collins was employed for two years by the Michigan Association of School Boards as a Labor Relations Consultant and for four years by Grand Blanc Community Schools as Director of Labor Relations. Mr. Collins has represented over 30 Michigan School Districts in all phases of collective bargaining, including mediation, fact finding and arbitration. Gary J. Collins co-authored *The Michigan Teacher and Tenure* with William J. Blaha, with the Eighth Edition released in 2017. Mr. Collins also co-authored *The Michigan Teacher and Administrator Evaluations* in 2016.



WILLIAM J. BLAHA graduated with honors from Michigan State University and received his Juris Doctor degree from Wayne State University Law School. Mr. Blaha's expertise has been concentrated in representing educational institutions in the specialized area of labor relations and education law. William J. Blaha co-authored *The Michigan Teacher and Tenure* with Gary J. Collins, with the Eighth Edition released in 2017. Mr. Blaha also co-authored *The Michigan Teacher and Administrator Evaluations* in 2016. Mr. Blaha was lead counsel in a landmark Michigan Supreme Court ruling (*Michigan Gun Owners, Inc. and Ulysses Wong v Ann Arbor Public Schools and Jeanice K. Swift*, July 27, 2018) that upheld Ann Arbor Public Schools' Board Policy prohibiting visitors from "open carry" at school except as permitted by law.



LORIE E. STEINHAUER received her undergraduate degree in Psychology and English and her Masters in Psychology from the University of Southern California. She received her Juris Doctorate from Wayne State University Law School. Prior to attending law school, Ms. Steinhauer was a tenured high school teacher and school psychologist. Ms. Steinhauer practices in the areas of litigation, constitutional law and special education before state and federal courts, the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, State Tenure Commission, and the Michigan Employment Relations Commission.

Ms. Steinhauer counsels clients in all aspects of special education, including such issues as accommodations, IEPs, and student discipline. She represents School Districts in due process hearings, IEP team meetings, and mediation. She regularly conducts seminars and in-services in the areas of special education, constitutional law, and student rights. Ms. Steinhauer is a member of the Litigation Sections of the State Bar of Michigan and the American Bar Association, Michigan and National Councils of School Attorneys, Oakland County Bar Association and the Michigan Association of School Boards. Ms. Steinhauer is also admitted to practice in the District of Columbia.



AMBERLY ACUFF BRENNAN graduated from Michigan State University (B.A.) and the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law (J.D.), where she was a two-year member of the Moot Court Board of Advocates and competed in the Gallagher Professional Responsibility Appellate Moot Court Competition. She also served one year on the Moot Court Board of Directors as the Managing Editor.

Ms. Brennan concentrates her practice in the areas of general school law and labor and employment law. She is a member of the State Bar of Michigan and the American Bar Association. Ms. Brennan joined in 2003. Ms. Brennan has advocated on behalf of school districts and community colleges in teacher tenure proceedings, discrimination claims before the Office of Civil Rights, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Ms. Brennan has also conducted investigations into potential employee misconduct and employee discipline.



JOHN C. KAVA received his undergraduate degree from Saginaw Valley State University and received his Juris Doctor from Ave Maria School of Law, where he served as Vice President of the Moot Court Board. Mr. Kava represented Ave Maria School of Law as an oral advocate in several Moot Court Competitions and was a member of the Moot Court Team that won the 2008 State of Michigan Competition. Prior to entering law school, Mr. Kava was a college football coach at Gannon University and took graduate courses in Business Administration.

Mr. Kava practices in the areas of general school law, board counsel, employment and labor law, special education, student discipline, and constitutional law. Mr. Kava regularly represents boards of education in collective bargaining negotiations, and routinely conducts employee and student investigations. Mr. Kava has advocated on behalf of boards of education in teacher tenure proceedings, discrimination claims before the Office of Civil Rights and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, unfair labor practice claims before the Michigan Employment Relations Commission, and claims of collective bargaining violations through the mediation and arbitration process.



JEREMY D. CHISHOLM earned his bachelor's degree in Political Science with minor concentrations in economics, foreign affairs, and Spanish, from St. Mary's College of Maryland, and his J.D. from Ave Maria Law School in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Prior to practicing law in Michigan, Mr. Chisholm worked in Washington, D.C., for the United States Securities and Exchange Commission. Mr. Chisholm concentrates his practice in governance issues, working closely with boards to set and enforce policy, and to navigate the complexities of successfully directing sophisticated organizations. He is highly experienced in employment relations and labor law, while maintaining a broad practice serving the general needs of school clients.



DAVID A. COMSA graduated from Purdue University and received his Juris Doctor from the Detroit College of Law (now Michigan State University College of Law). Mr. Comsa started his legal career in private practice and was also the Chief of Human Resources for the Flint Community Schools and served as Deputy Superintendent and General Counsel for the Ann Arbor Public Schools for 16 years. Mr. Comsa is an adjunct Assistant Professor at Madonna University teaching the graduate course Legal and Ethical Issues in Education, since 2010. His practice is concentrated in representing educational institutions in education law, collective bargaining, and labor relations.



JULIA M. MELKIC earned her bachelor’s degree in psychology from Michigan State University and her Juris Doctorate from Wayne State University, where she graduated cum laude. While in law school, Ms. Melkic served as a Senior Articles Editor of the Wayne State Law Review and published an article regarding business improvement districts in Detroit. Ms. Melkic was co-counsel in a landmark Michigan Supreme Court ruling (*Michigan Gun Owners, Inc and Ulysses Wong v Ann Arbor Public Schools and Jeanice K. Swift*, July 27, 2018) that upheld Ann Arbor Public Schools’ Board Policy prohibiting visitors from “open carry” at school except as permitted by law.



JACQUELINE R. ZABLOCKI earned bachelor’s degrees in political science and French from Albion College, where she graduated summa cum laude. She then received her Juris Doctorate from Chicago-Kent College of Law, graduating magna cum laude and receiving a certificate in Labor in Employment Law. Ms. Zablocki was a member of the Chicago-Kent Law Review and was voted a member of the Order of the Coif.

Following law school, Ms. Zablocki worked for the Michigan Court of Appeals as a research attorney. She researched and analyzed legal questions in a variety of legal areas, including labor and employment law, administrative law, contracts, torts, civil procedure, and constitutional law. At Collins & Blaha, P.C., Ms. Zablocki concentrates her practice in employment law, special education law, and general education law.



ETHAN P. SCHULTZ earned his bachelor’s degree in English from Oakland University and his Juris Doctorate from Wayne State University. During law school he served as a Senior Articles Editor for the Wayne Law Review. At Collins & Blaha, P.C., Mr. Schultz practices in the areas of general education law, labor law, and employment relations.



DARIA S. MAJEWSKI earned her bachelor’s degree in education from Hope College, where she graduated summa cum laude. She then received her Juris Doctor from Thomas M. Cooley Law School, where she served as a member of the Thomas M. Cooley Law Review and graduated summa cum laude. During law school, Ms. Majewski won Cooley’s Melissa Mitchell Intra-School Moot Court Competition and competed on Cooley’s team for the New York City Bar Association’s National Moot Court Competition. Currently, Ms. Majewski focuses her practice in labor law, employment law, general education law, and special education law. Ms. Majewski also serves as an adjunct professor at Thomas M. Cooley Law School.



MARY C. BRADLEY earned her bachelor's degree in journalism from Murray State University and her Juris Doctorate degree from Michigan State University. While in law school, Ms. Bradley served as Editor-in-Chief of the International Law Review. Ms. Bradley participated in MSU Law's First Amendment Law Clinic, in which she taught Michigan high school journalism and communications students about their First Amendment rights. She was also elected the vice president of the Women's Law Caucus and argued in the Chicago Bar Association's Moot Court Competition. Ms. Bradley was awarded MSU Law's 2020-2021 Distinguished Law Student Leadership Award by the Diversity & Equity Services Office. At Collins & Blaha, P.C., Ms. Bradley focuses on general education law matters, as well as labor, employment, and discipline issues.



BRANDEN T. PRATHER received his undergraduate degree from the University of Michigan and received his Juris Doctor from Michigan State University College of Law. Mr. Prather represented MSU College of Law as a member in Moot Court Competitions and was awarded Best Brief in the MSU College of Law Moot Court Competition. Prior to entering law school, Mr. Prather taught German at the secondary level.



SHELBY C. MILLER earned her bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Toledo and graduated with honors. Ms. Miller earned her Juris Doctorate from the University of Toledo College of Law, where she graduated magna cum laude and achieved the ranking second in her class. While in law school, Ms. Miller served as an Executive Editor on the University of Toledo Law Review and earned the highest grade in the class in Property Law I, Property Law II, Labor Law, and all of her Trial Practice classes. Additionally, Ms. Miller competed on the Labor & Employment Law Moot Court Team for two years. She was elected to the Order of Barristers national honorary organization for her oral advocacy and brief writing skills, as well as her participation in Moot Court. Ms. Miller was awarded a Peggy Browning Fellowship as a result of her work as a legal intern for the Sugar Law Center for Economic & Social Justice, where she worked on matters in a variety of legal areas, including labor and employment law, contract law, and constitutional law. At Collins & Blaha, P.C., Ms. Miller concentrates her practice in employment law, special education law, and general education law.



LINDSAY P. HAZEN earned her bachelor's degree in science, technology, and society from the University of Pennsylvania and her Juris Doctorate from Wayne State University. While in law school, Ms. Hazen served as the National Team Liaison of the Mock Trial Board and represented Wayne State University Law School in several Mock Trial competitions as a member of the AAJ National Mock Trial Team. She also served as an Articles Editor on the Journal of Law in Society and published an article regarding custodial interrogations of children. Prior to entering law school, Ms. Hazen was a paralegal for the Department of Justice. At Collins & Blaha, P.C., Ms. Hazen practices in the areas of general education law, special education law, and employment relations.



ALEXANDER S. LINDAMOOD graduated with High Honors from Michigan State University with a bachelor's degree in Political Science, Pre-Law from Michigan State University. Mr. Lindamood earned his Juris Doctor from Michigan State University College of Law graduating cum laude. Mr. Lindamood received the Jurisprudence Award in Evidence and served as part of the Michigan Leadership Initiative. At Collins & Blaha, P.C., Mr. Lindamood focuses on general education law matters, labor, employment, and discipline issues.

OF COUNSEL



Robert J. Gavin graduated cum laude as a mechanical engineer from the University of Michigan College of Engineering. He earned his Juris Doctor from the DePaul University College of Law. Mr. Gavin concentrates his practice in providing bond counsel and general counsel services to municipalities, school districts, and charter schools. Mr. Gavin is a Nationally Recognized Bond Counsel and has broad experience in all types of public finance, including state aid notes and municipal bond financing. Mr. Gavin also focuses on general funding issues, including State School Aid and Revenue Sharing issues, competitive bidding issues, election issues, and contract negotiations for professional services, including architects and construction managers.



DAVID B. ROTH earned his bachelor's degree from Michigan State University and received his Juris Doctor from Michigan State University College of Law. At Collins & Blaha, P.C., Mr. Roth has represented Michigan school districts before the Teacher's Tenure Commission and in litigation of labor arbitration before the American Arbitration Association, and also conducted investigations of employee misconduct, including complaints of harassment and hostile work environment.



DONALD P. DENAULT, JR graduated from Wayne State University Law School in 1996. Mr. DeNault practices on all areas of municipal and school law, including Freedom of Information Act matters, Open Meetings Act compliance, police training, law enforcement issues, fire and building code matters, planning, and zoning, student discipline, bidding and purchasing, appeals, litigation defense, civil service, civil rights, governmental immunity, government contracts, ordinance drafting, ordinance prosecution, and policy preparation. In addition to representing school districts, cities, townships, and villages, Mr. DeNault was the primary attorney for the Macomb County Charter Commission in 2009.



PAUL H. SCOTT received his bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan with majors in political science and economics. He received his master's degree in public policy from Harvard University and received a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Michigan Law School. Mr. Scott was elected to the Michigan State House at the age of 26. He prides himself in using creative strategies, tools, and techniques, and strategically combining them with a "results oriented" focus to craft powerful litigating and negotiation blueprints for clients.

FIRM REFERENCES

SAMPLE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION CLIENTS

- **Ann Arbor Public Schools**, Dr. Jeanice Kerr Swift, Superintendent, (734) 994-2200
- **Atherton Community Schools**, John Ploof, Superintendent, (810) 591-9182
- **Bedford Public Schools**, Dr. Carl Shultz, Superintendent, (734) 850-6000
- **Carmen-Ainsworth Community Schools**, Catherine McGilvery, Superintendent, (810) 591-3700
- **Chippewa Valley Schools**, Ronald Roberts, Superintendent, (586) 723-2000
- **Dearborn Heights School District No. 7**, Dr. Ty Weeks, Superintendent, (313) 230-1000
- **Fenton Area Public Schools**, Heidi Ciesielski, Superintendent (810) 591-4700
- **Grand Blanc Community Schools**, Trevor L. Alward, Superintendent, (810) 591-6000
- **Grosse Ile Township Schools**, Valerie Orr, Superintendent, (734) 362-2581
- **Lake Fenton Community Schools**, Julie A. Williams, Superintendent, (810) 591-4141
- **LakeVille School District**, Michael Lytle, Superintendent, (810) 591-3980
- **Linden Community Schools**, Russell Ciesielski, Superintendent, (810) 591-0980
- **Monroe Public Schools**, Andrew Shaw, Interim Superintendent, (734) 265-3000
- **Mt. Morris Consolidated School District**, Mickie Kujat, Superintendent, (810) 591-8760
- **Plymouth-Canton Community Schools**, Dr. Monica Merritt, Superintendent, (734) 416-2701
- **Rochester Community Schools**, Dr. Robert Shaner, (248) 726-3000
- **Saline Area Schools**, Steve Laatsch, Superintendent, (734)401-4000
- **Taylor School District**, Griff Mills, Superintendent, (734) 374-1200
- **Utica Community Schools**, Robert Monroe, (586)797-1102
- **Warren Consolidated Schools**, Dr. Robert Livernois, Superintendent, (586) 825-2400

FIRM PHILOSOPHY and CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Most firms practicing in the area of education law maintain a large general practice in varied areas and a small department or group of attorneys who practice education or school law. In contrast, **Collins & Blaha, P.C.** offers School Districts a firm composed entirely of attorneys experienced in advising boards of education in school-specific law and all related areas. A review of the attorney profiles reflects the commitment of each and every attorney in the firm to education and school law. Because of the depth of its expertise in these specialized areas, **Collins & Blaha, P.C.** is able to offer the highest quality of representation at a very competitive rate.

Collins & Blaha, P.C. takes its obligations to its clients seriously and consistent with the Michigan Rules of Professional Conduct. As a result, our office will inform any client as soon as it is aware there is a possibility of a conflict of interest with respect to representation of the client. Our law firm has reviewed its current clients, and is not aware of any conflicts of interest that may arise with respect to our representation of the Board of Education of the Grosse Pointe Public School System.

FEES AND BILLING

Collins & Blaha, P.C. will provide legal services as requested by the Board.

Our fee for these services will be between \$250.00 and \$295.00 per hour depending upon the attorney providing the services. It is understood that John C. Kava and Jeremy D. Chisholm will be the primary service providers to the Board.

<u>ATTORNEY</u>	<u>FEE</u>
GARY J. COLLINS	\$295.00 /hour
WILLIAM J. BLAHA	\$295.00 /hour
LORIE E. STEINHAUER	\$295.00 /hour
AMBERLY ACUFF BRENNAN	\$295.00 /hour
JOHN C. KAVA	\$295.00 /hour
JEREMY D. CHISHOLM	\$295.00 /hour
DAVID A. COMSA	\$295.00 /hour
ROBERT J. GAVIN	\$295.00 /hour
DAVID B. ROTH	\$295.00 /hour
DONALD P. DENAULT, JR	\$295.00 /hour
PAUL H. SCOTT	\$295.00 /hour
JULIA M. MELKIĆ	\$270.00 /hour
JACQUELINE R. ZABLOCKI	\$270.00 /hour
ETHAN P. SCHULTZ	\$270.00 /hour
DARIA S. MAJEWSKI	\$270.00 /hour
MARY C. BRADLEY	\$250.00 /hour
BRANDEN T. PRATHER	\$250.00 /hour
SHELBY C. MILLER	\$250.00 /hour
LINDSAY P. HAZEN	\$250.00 /hour
ALEXANDER S. LINDAMOOD	\$250.00 /hour

The Board is responsible for all costs and disbursements advanced on behalf of the Board. Billing statements include the activity performed and the time spent on the task. Billing statements are mailed on a monthly basis and payment is due upon receipt of the statement.

CONTRACT

LEGAL REPRESENTATION AGREEMENT

Between

COLLINS & BLAHA, P.C.

And

The BOARD OF EDUCATION of the GROSSE POINTE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

- A. Collins & Blaha, P.C. will provide legal services as requested by the Board.
- B. Our fee for these services will be between \$250.00 and \$295.00 per hour depending upon the attorney providing the services. The Board is responsible for all costs and disbursements advanced on behalf of the Grosse Pointe Public School System. Billing statements include the activity performed and the time spent on the task. Billing statements are mailed monthly and payment is due upon receipt of the statement.
- C. This fee agreement would not cover any matter which is applicable to the rendering of an opinion or services in relation to the issuance of a financial bond or note. Fees for any financial opinion or transaction will be billed on a fixed fee basis, dependent on the size and complexity of the issuance.
- D. This agreement may be terminated by either party upon 30 days' notice.

GROSSE POINTE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM COLLINS & BLAHA, P.C.

Board President

Gary J. Collins

Date

Date