

**Request for Proposals
For
Executive Director Search Services**

National School Boards Association (NSBA)

September 21, 2021

RFP Issued

**September 28, 2021
by 5:00 PM ET**

Letter of Intent to Bid Due

**October 12, 2021
by 5:00 PM ET**

RFP Responses Due

1. Introduction

1.1 Summary

The National School Boards Association (“NSBA”) is issuing this Request for Proposal (“RFP”) to solicit responses from executive search firms interested in providing services related to identifying potential candidates for the position of NSBA Executive Director + Chief Executive Officer (“ED/CEO”). After careful review of responses received and associated due diligence performed by the Board of Directors of NSBA (“Board”), the Board will select one firm to perform the executive search services described in this document.

Respondents will vie for selection to provide executive search services as more fully described in Section 2. The submissions of all respondent firms shall be compared and evaluated pursuant to the evaluation criteria set forth in this RFP.

RESPONDENTS, PLEASE NOTE:

- a) Selection of a respondent under this RFP does not commit NSBA to procuring specific services pursuant to this RFP.
- b) The parties will negotiate contract terms upon selection. All contracts are subject to review by NSBA legal counsel and approval by the NSBA Board. A firm will be awarded the work upon signing of a contract, which will outline terms, scope, budget, and other necessary items. NSBA reserves the right to reject all proposals.

1.2 The National School Boards Association

NSBA is a federation of state associations and the U.S. territory of the Virgin Islands that represent locally elected school board officials serving approximately 51 million public school students regardless of their disability, ethnicity, socio-economic status, or citizenship. The core purpose of the National School Boards Association is to work exclusively with and through its member state school board associations in carrying out their missions in a full partnership to ensure each student everywhere has access to an excellent and equitable public education where they live, governed by high performing school board leaders. NSBA believes that public education is a civil right necessary to the dignity and freedom of the American people and that each child deserves equitable access to an education that maximizes their individual potential.

The pandemic has placed a new spotlight on the role of school board members. School boards face sensitive challenges and pressures as students return to school this fall and as all grapple with how public education in America may need to evolve. Board meetings have been embroiled in controversial political and social issues. Many school board members are facing online and in-person threats and harassment and are struggling amid heated protests over mask mandates, vaccination requirements, and equity efforts. All the while school boards must maintain focus on the fundamentals and long-term strategies associated with quality American education.

In this environment, NSBA is facing challenges, too. NSBA strives as always to be essential to its members and stakeholders. To serve its members, NSBA needs to be internally strong, effective, and focused on the evolving issues and environment. To that end, the organization continues our

path of internal transformation to increase our capacity to serve our members and their school boards and students. NSBA aims to bring on board a savvy, engaging, attuned, effective ED/CEO to govern, guide, and optimize these efforts.

1.3 The NSBA Board Search Committee

The Search Committee will be composed of the following members who have agreed to serve until the search is completed. They include Search Committee Chair Viola M. Garcia, NSBA President; Frank S. Henderson, Jr.; President-elect; Kristi Swett, Secretary-Treasurer; Charlie Wilson, Immediate Past President; NSBA Director Janine Bay Teske, Executive Committee; NSBA Director Floyd Simon, Jr., Executive Committee; NSBA Director Lydia Tedone, Executive Committee, NSBA Director Kirk Schneidawind, Executive Committee and Chair of the Organization of State Association Executive Directors (OSAED) who serves as Executive Director, Minnesota School Boards Association; and NSBA Director Devin Del Palacio; Chair, National Black Council of School Boards.

2. Services Required

2.1 Context

NSBA is seeking to procure the services of an executive search firm capable of conducting a search for candidates qualified to serve as the ED/CEO.

2.2 Scope of Services

The executive search firm shall assist NSBA in attracting, interviewing, and hiring a ED/CEO for NSBA. A Job Description (Attachment A) for the role is included.

The services that will be required shall include:

- a) Soliciting input from the Board, or a sub-committee thereof, through meetings and/or interviews to understand the issues, expectations, roles, responsibilities, qualifications, and appropriate experience criteria associated with the position.
- b) Developing a recruitment strategy, process, and timetable for completion of the work in consultation with the Board's Search Committee.
- c) Recruiting candidates through several different channels including advertising in nationally recognized publications and websites likely to attract qualified candidates, proactively reaching out to candidates in the marketplace that may not be actively seeking the position, accessing the firm's network of qualified candidates, and other best practice recruitment strategies utilized in the industry.
- d) Assessing the qualifications of interested candidates against those required in the Job Description and recommend potential candidates for interview to the Board's Search Committee.
- e) Supporting the Board's Search Committee and full Board in engaging in a rigorous interview, reference-checking, and hiring process to select the best candidate.

3. Submission of Responses

3.1 **Schedule**

- a) The RFP process will proceed according to the following anticipated schedule:

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- b) Responses must be received by the deadline stated above in 3.1.a. If NSBA determines that is in the best interests of NSBA to extend the deadline to allow for additional firms to be considered it will do so. NSBA assumes no responsibility or liability for late delivery or receipt of responses.
- c) NSBA assumes no responsibility or liability for late delivery or receipt of responses.
- d) The responses will be evaluated pursuant to the criteria set forth in this RFP. Notification of selection or non-selection of all respondents who submitted conforming responses will be mailed when the selection process is final.

3.2 **Instructions for Submission of Responses**

Respondents are cautioned to read carefully and conform to the requirements of this RFP. Failure to comply with the provisions of this RFP may serve as grounds for rejection of a response. Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted to: Dr. Viola Garcia, NSBA President, at violamgarcia@yahoo.com.

- a) All responses must be submitted electronically in pdf format to:
pboyd-king@nsba.org
- b) A statement indicating compliance with the terms, conditions, and specifications contained in this RFP must be presented in the response.
- c) Submission of the signed Authorized Respondent's Signature and Acceptance Form (Attachment B) shall satisfy this requirement.

3.3 **Information Required**

- a) Executive Summary: Respondents should provide a summary of their organization, their qualifications, and their proposed approach for working with NSBA. This summary should be a maximum of two pages in length.
- b) Statement of Firm Qualifications: All responses must include a statement of qualifications, experience, and description of the respondent firm and its history. The response should

indicate the firm's current and historical expertise in providing the executive search services identified in the RFP. Specifically, describe the type and number of CEO searches completed by the firm, and indicate the subsequent longevity held by successful candidates.

- c) **Staff Qualifications:** All responses must include names and titles of each individual who will be providing the executive search services under any work order, as well as written descriptions of the individual's experience. All respondents must identify the individual(s) who will have primary responsibility for contact and communications with NSBA and the person who is authorized to negotiate and contractually bind respondent. NSBA reserves the right to investigate and review the background of any or all personnel assigned to work under the Contract, including any work orders thereto, and, based on such investigations, to reject the use of any persons within NSBA's discretion.
- d) **Approach:** All responses should include a plan for performing the services that articulates what services and the level of effort that would be required for the engagement.
- e) **Billing Rates and Structure:** Respondent shall provide a cost proposal for their executive search services. As part of the cost proposal, please list each person that may perform services and their title, the proposed rate or blended hourly rate proposed, and the level of involvement anticipated for each component.
- f) **References:** All responses must include references from at least three clients of the firm, and preferably clients who have utilized the firm on matters related to executive search services. The references must include a contact person, a full address, and a phone number.
- g) **Nonprofit Experience:** All responses must include a description of the firm's experience in working with nonprofit organizations, public/government entities, and/or associations specifically in the area of an executive search.

4. Evaluation Process and Criteria

NSBA shall evaluate each response that is properly submitted. After submission and review of responses, interviews may be requested. Selection of a respondent to provide the executive search services will be based on the following criteria:

- a) Experience and qualifications of the firm, and more specifically individual team members to be assigned to the engagement, in performing executive search services for similar governmental and/or private organizations.
- b) Proposal's responsiveness to RFP requirements.
- c) Firm and staff's competence and knowledge demonstrated during the interview process, if applicable.
- d) Price

While the order of these factors does not generally denote relative importance, NSBA acknowledges that selecting best value providers primarily requires a balanced combination of (1) reasonable rates and the availability of flat fees, blended rates and caps on fees, and (2) strong experience and demonstrated expertise in providing executive search services.

NSBA reserves the right to consider such other relevant factors as it deems appropriate to hire the best value provider of the executive search services. NSBA may or may not seek additional information from respondents prior to making a selection.

This RFP does not commit NSBA to select any firm, award any work order, pay any costs incurred in preparing a response, or procure or contract for any services or supplies. NSBA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all submittals received, cancel or modify the RFP in part or in its entirety, or change the RFP guidelines, when it is in the best interests of NSBA to do so.

5. Other Provisions

5.1 General Information

- a) It is the policy of NSBA that contracts are awarded only to responsive and responsible respondents. In order to qualify as responsive, the respondent must respond to all requirements of the RFP in a complete and thorough manner. In order to qualify as responsible, the respondent must demonstrate: (1) the availability of adequate resources and staffing to efficiently and expeditiously service NSBA's needs; (2) the necessary experience, organization, qualifications, skills and facilities to provide the types of executive search services set forth in this RFP; (3) a satisfactory record of performance in the provision of the executive search services set forth in this RFP; (4) the ability and willingness to comply with the requirements of Federal and State law relative to equal employment opportunity.
- b) ANY PROPOSAL DETERMINED TO BE NON-RESPONSIVE TO THIS RFP, INCLUDING INSTRUCTIONS GOVERNING THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS, WILL BE DISQUALIFIED WITHOUT EVALUATION UNLESS THE EVALUATION COMMITTEE DETERMINES THAT THE NONCOMPLIANCE IS INSUBSTANTIAL.
- c) NSBA makes no guarantee that any specific executive search services will be purchased pursuant to any Contract entered into with respondent as a result of this RFP.
- d) Unless otherwise specified in this RFP, all communications, responses, and documentation must be in English, and all cost proposals or figures in US currency. All responses must be submitted in accordance with the specific terms of this RFP.
- e) Respondents are prohibited from communicating directly with any employee of NSBA except as specified in this RFP, and no other individual employee or representative is authorized to provide any information or respond to any questions or inquiries concerning this RFP.
- f) The goal of this RFP is to select and enter into a Contract with the respondent that will provide the best value of executive search services to achieve the procurement goals of NSBA. Respondents are therefore invited to propose alternatives which provide substantially better or more cost-effective performance than achievable under a stated RFP specification.
- g) Costs that are not specifically identified in the respondent's response and/or not specifically accepted by NSBA as part of the Contract will not be compensated under any contract awarded pursuant to this RFP. NSBA shall not be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by Respondents in responding to this RFP.
- h) Respondent's submitted Response shall be treated by NSBA as an accurate statement of Respondent's capabilities and experience. Should any statement asserted by respondent prove to be inaccurate or inconsistent with the foregoing, such inaccuracy or inconsistency shall constitute sufficient cause for rejection of the response and/or of any resulting

contract. The RFP evaluation committee will rule on any such matters and will determine appropriate action.

- i) NSBA reserves the right to amend the RFP at any time prior to the deadline for submission of responses.
- j) Submitted responses must be valid in all respects for a minimum period of one hundred and eighty (180) days after the deadline for submission.
- k) NSBA's prior approval is required for any subcontracted services under any Contract entered into as a result of this RFP. Selected respondents are responsible for the satisfactory performance and adequate oversight of their subcontractors. Subcontractors are required to meet the same requirements and are held to the same reimbursable cost standards as the selected respondents.
- l) The Contract and work orders entered into as a result of this RFP shall be on a fee for service basis. It is anticipated that NSBA shall select one respondent to this RFP and intends to enter into a Contract with one respondent. It is anticipated that the term of the Contract entered into pursuant to this RFP will be for a term of at least twelve months, with options for NSBA to renew it at its discretion.

5.2 Waiver Authority

NSBA reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to waive minor irregularities in submittal requirements, to request modifications of the response, to accept or reject any or all responses received, and/or to cancel all or part of this RFP at any time prior to awards.

5.3 Disclaimer

This RFP does not commit NSBA to award any funds, pay any costs incurred in preparing a response, or procure or contract for services or supplies. NSBA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses received, negotiate with all qualified respondents, cancel or modify the RFP in part or in its entirety, or change the response guidelines, when it is in its best interests.

ATTACHMENT A

NSBA JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR /CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
FLSA STATUS:	Exempt (FTE 1.0)
DEPARTMENT:	Executive
REPORTS TO:	Board of Directors
DIRECT REPORTS:	Chief Transformation Officer, Chief Legal Officer, Chief Advocacy Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Administrative Officer, Executive Assistant to the Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director
LAST REVISED:	September 2021
JOB SUMMARY:	Serves as chief executive officer of NSBA and has general responsibility for fulfilling its strategies and executing its policies.

Scope of the Position

The ED/CEO is responsible for leading and managing the members' Washington, D.C. Office and staff (now working remotely during the pandemic), a portfolio of programs and services responsive to member needs, as well as the Association's public education and education equity priorities.

The new ED/CEO will bring stakeholders together to transform the organization and its program, product, and service offerings to ensure that NSBA has a clearly established value proposition, and becomes known as a high-performance organization which advances the needs of its members by delivering high-quality products and services.

As the chief staff executive of the Association, the Executive Director is appointed by and directly responsible to the Board of Directors (Board), and serves as an ex officio, non-voting Board member.

Key Responsibilities

1. Develops a comprehensive membership plan which defines NSBA's value proposition; develops and delivers a strategic portfolio of programs and services which serve the diverse state associations' membership needs.
2. Oversees the communications to the state association members.
3. Provides recommendations and guidance to the Board and participates in strategic planning and strategy development discussions that meet the membership needs and advance public education and equity. Creates and implements a plan, in collaboration with the membership and building upon member survey data, that provides clarity around governance, and program, product, and service offerings.

4. Develops and recommends to the Board a revenue plan which takes into account the federation structure's unique needs.
5. Advocates for NSBA strategic priorities.
6. Plans and recommends for Board approval programmatic offerings designed to further NSBA's mission and vision.
7. Develops professional development programs and educational content to meet the state associations' needs.
8. Ensures educational equity best practices are at the core of training and professional development programs.
9. Provides oversight and support to national office programs and services, including, but not limited to: • Communications and marketing • Federal advocacy and public policy; • Legal advocacy; • Public advocacy; • Member and leadership services; and • Events: NSBA Annual Conference and Exposition, Equity Symposium, Advocacy Institute, COSA School Law Practice Seminar, CUBE Annual Conference, and Leadership Conference.
10. Establishes and maintains working relationships with other national organizations that affect public education policy.
11. Assures that NSBA has an effective external spokesperson with the media, Congress, federal agencies, and within national forums and meetings.
12. Advocates to enhance NSBA's federal, legal, and public positions and its constituencies.
13. Provides leadership in the recruitment, selection, and retention of competent, qualified staff to carry out NSBA's work.
14. Creates and maintains a member service-centric culture that attracts, motivates, engages, empowers, and maximizes a diverse staff.
15. Develops and inspires a high-performing staff team through objective goal setting, delegation, communication, performance reviews, professional development, and advancement opportunities.
16. Champions sound governance for the NSBA and its membership and navigates NSBA governance effectively. Role models this for staff.
17. Follows the Constitution and Bylaws, and within the constraints established in the NSBA's Resolutions, Beliefs and Policies, and governing principles, partners closely with the Board to further NSBA's mission, vision, and strategic plan.
18. Ensures that the Board is fully informed; provides, in a timely and accurate manner, the information necessary for the Board to perform its responsibilities and make informed decisions.
19. Provides recommendations and guidance to the Board and implements the Board's decisions

20. Ensures that the Board focuses on its fiduciary responsibility, nonprofit financial best practices, and generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) as they relate to sound financial stewardship.
21. Prepares and recommends an annual budget and IRS Form 990 for Board approval.
22. Manages NSBA's financial operations and budgetary process.
23. Makes recommendations that reflect NSBA's strategic priorities and revenue generation and ensures fiscal viability and sustainability.
24. Oversees and manages issues related to NSBA's Board-approved defined benefit pension plan as needed.

Experience and Qualifications

1. Bachelor's degree required; an advanced degree preferred.
2. At least five years of Executive Director/ CEO experience or the equivalent level leadership preferred.
3. Steeped in good governance experience with an association or nonprofit board of directors, preferably with experience transforming an organization's governance.
4. Passion and experience with public education issues a plus.
5. A commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion.
6. Successful experience driving new revenue generation.
7. Strong strategic thinking ability and experience in both planning strategically and translating those plans into operations.
8. A leadership and management style which recruits, develops, and retains highly qualified and competent staff members.
9. Dynamic communication and public speaking skills, including the ability to articulate the value of NSBA to its members, other stakeholders, and the public
10. High-level understanding of how to advocate successfully in both legislative and regulatory environments; familiarity with and/or successful public education issues experience a plus.
11. An advanced level of finance experience and planning, managing, and evaluating annual budgets and financial resources.
12. Track record of successful organizational change management and transformation evidenced by lasting results.
13. Proven ability to work with diverse populations across the wide political spectrum. Personal and Professional Qualities
14. Possesses a reputation as a charismatic, respected, and trusted leader.
15. Displays an inspirational and courageous approach to managing an organization.
16. Exhibits authentic, candid, and transparent communications skills.
17. Demonstrates strong relationship-building skills.
18. Engages and balances various stakeholders' needs in the role of NSBA change agent

ATTACHMENT B

**AUTHORIZED RESPONDENT'S SIGNATURE AND ACCEPTANCE FORM:
INTENTION TO SUBMIT PROPOSAL**

The undersigned is a duly authorized representative of the Respondent listed below. The Respondent has read and understands the RFP requirements. The Respondent acknowledges that all the terms and conditions of the RFP are mandatory, and that Respondent's response is compliant with such requirements.

The Respondent understands that, if selected by NSBA, the Respondent and the NSBA will execute a Contract.

Respondent agrees that the entire bid response will remain valid for sixty (60) days from receipt by the NSBA.

I certify that Respondent is in compliance with all corporate filing requirements and State tax laws. I further certify that the statements made in this Response to the RFP, including all attachments and exhibits, are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Respondent: _____
(Printed Name of Respondent)

By: _____
(Signature of Authorized Representative)

Title: _____

Date: _____