

Executive Summary: NIA Executive Board Election

The Northwestern Illinois Association (NIA), a regional special education cooperative spanning ten counties in Illinois, is holding its even-numbered year election for the NIA Executive Board. Local Boards of Education are required to cast their official votes during a regularly scheduled school board meeting. All completed ballots must be returned to the NIA Business Office no later than August 7, 2026.

Voting Requirements

According to the NIA Articles of Agreement, member districts must cast two separate votes:

- One (1) vote for the Director of Special Education.
- One (1) vote for the Member-at-Large.

Candidate Qualifications

Matt Zilm (Candidate for Director of Special Education)

- **Current Leadership:** Serves as the Director of Special Education for the Ogle County Education Cooperative, a role he has held since July 2017.
- **Background & Experience:** Began his career in August 2005, spending nine years as a resource teacher before advancing to Assistant Principal in charge of Special Education at Belvidere Central Middle School. He additionally served as a Special Education Coordinator for the Ogle County Education Cooperative for two years.

Corena Steinmeyer (Candidate for Member-at-Large)

- **Current Leadership:** Serves as the Director of the Lee County Special Education Association, a role she has held since July 2010.
- **Background & Experience:** Brings 34 years of diverse educational experience, spanning roles as a special education teacher, Student Services Coordinator, Principal, and Director of Special Education.
- **Education:** Holds a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education and Physical Education from Morningside College, a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership from Aurora University, and a Director of Special Education endorsement from Phoenix University.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Education vote for Matt Zilm for Director of Special Education and Corena Steinmeyer for Member-at-Large. Both candidates possess extensive administrative histories and specialized expertise within Subregion III, specifically leading the special education programs for Ogle and Lee counties. Their deeply rooted experience in the region ensures qualified, stable leadership to support and guide stakeholders in providing appropriate public education across the cooperative.