

Robbins Schwartz

Virtual School Administrators' Conference

Webinar
September 23, 2021

Chicago

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f 312.332.7768

Champaign

301 North Neil Street, Suite 400
Champaign, IL 61820
p 217.363.3040
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Collinsville

510 Regency Centre
Collinsville, IL 62234
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550 Warrenville Road, Suite 460
Lisle, IL 60532-4311
p 630.929.3639
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Rockford

2990 North Perryville Road, Suite 4144B
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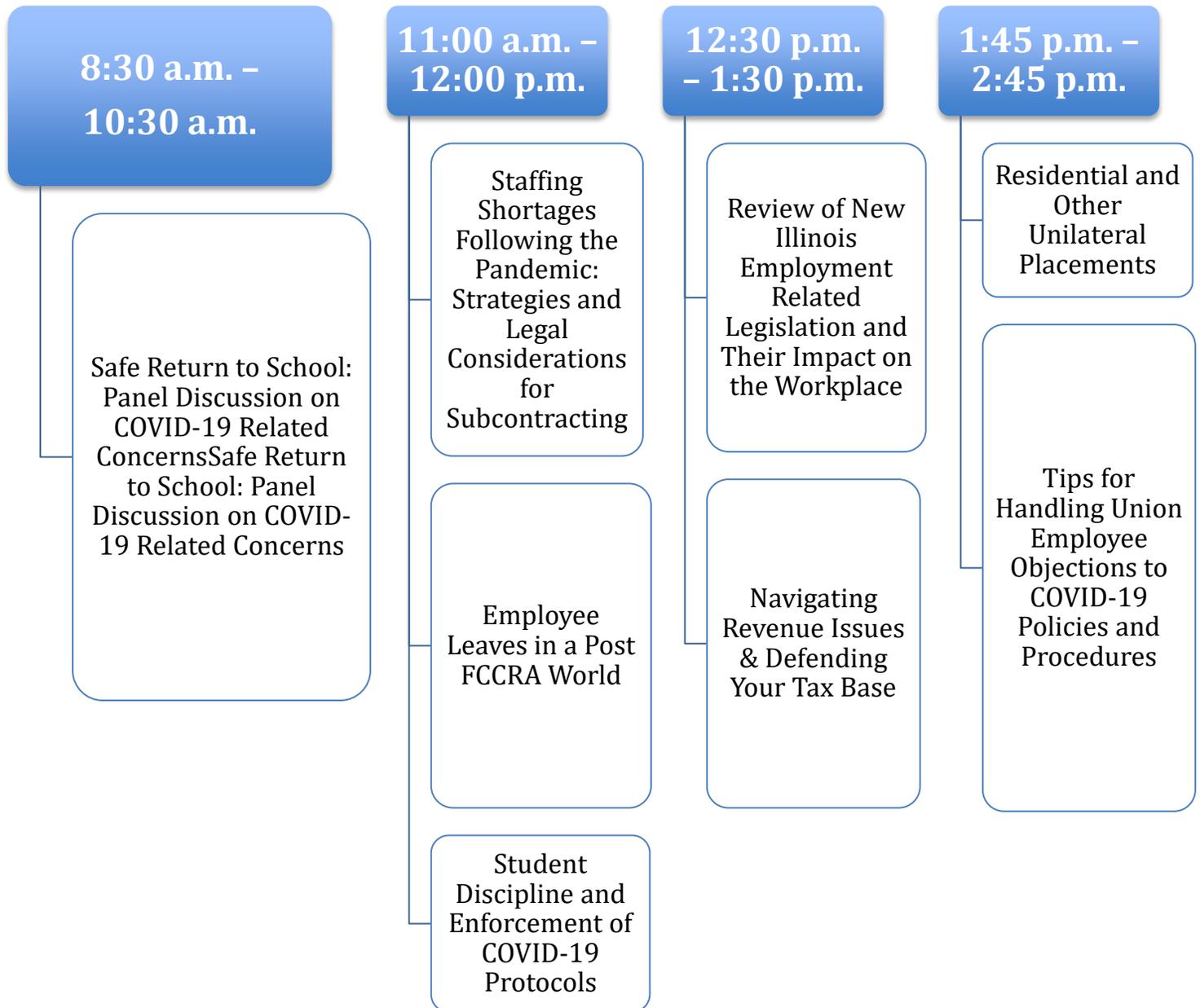
Robbins Schwartz

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Schedule-at-a-Glance



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General Session | 8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Safe Return to School: Panel Discussion on COVID-19 Related Concerns

Get the latest updates on the state's Covid-19 requirements and the legal rights and obligations for school districts implementing these requirements. The panel will discuss the challenges schools may encounter and provide practical guidance on how best to comply with the state mandates for staff and students.

Presenters:

[Caroline A. Roselli](#), Partner

[Todd K. Hayden](#), Partner

[Matthew J. Gardner](#), Partner

[Matthew M. Swift](#), Associate

Session 1 | 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Please Select One Topic Per Session

Staffing Shortages Following the Pandemic: Strategies and Legal Considerations for Subcontracting

Learn how to address staffing shortages in non-instructional positions while complying with labor laws from a panel of attorneys with experience in commercial transactions and employment matters. This presentation will review the Illinois School Code requirements for third-party contracts for non-instructional services, provide an overview of labor and bargaining issues and address short- and long-term strategies for dealing with staffing shortages during the pandemic and beyond. The panelist will also review critical contract terms to be included in third-party contracts as well as those clauses to be avoided.

Presenters:

[Kenneth M. Florey](#), Partner

[Howard A. Metz](#), Partner

[Christopher R. Gorman](#), Associate

Employee Leaves in a Post FCCRA World

The COVID-19 pandemic created immense challenges for school administrators responsible for managing employee absences and leaves. The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) required school districts to provide employees with paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave for specific reasons related to COVID-19. Although FFCRA expired on December 31, 2020, school districts are still left processing COVID-19 related employee absences and leave requests. This presentation provides practical guidance and best practices for processing COVID-19 related absences and leave requests post-FFRCRA. Attendees will gain an understanding of a school district's obligations under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the Illinois School Code.

Presenters:

[Jessica A. Milligan](#), Partner

Robbins Schwartz

Session 1 | 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Please Select One Topic Per Session

Student Discipline and Enforcement of COVID-19 Protocols

The 2021-2022 school term has started with new disciplinary issues such as enforcing COVID-19 protocols in compliance with The School Code and potential limitations on student discipline for off campus speech. This presentation will cover ensuring student, staff, and visitor safety through student discipline for failure to comply with COVID 19 mitigation measures, including the wearing of masks, the implications of restricting student speech, and best practices in implementing student discipline.

Presenters:

[Zaria N. Udeh](#), Partner

[Susan E. Nicholas](#), Senior Counsel

[Erin E. Ruth](#), Associate

Session 2 | 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Please Select One Topic Per Session

Review of New Illinois Employment Related Legislation and Their Impact on the Workplace

This session will update you on the latest status of the most important bills from the Spring 2021 legislative session related to labor and employment issues at school districts. Please join us as we discuss the impacts on school districts and practical considerations for compliance, as well as when the new laws go into effect.

Presenters:

[Catherine R. Locallo](#), Partner

[Matthew M. Swift](#), Associate

Navigating Revenue Issues & Defending Your Tax Base

Discussions of new legislation and impact of Covid on issues impacting revenue; Overviews of common claims filed by taxpayers seeking refunds of taxes from School Districts; Basics of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district establishment and strategies for getting involved when a TIF district is proposed by a municipality and for negotiating a TIF intergovernmental agreement with a municipality.

Presenters:

[Scott L. Ginsburg](#), Partner

[M. Neal Smith](#), Partner

Session 3 | 1:45 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.

Please Select One Topic Per Session

Tips for Handling Union Employee Objections to COVID-19 Policies and Procedures

The seemingly never-ending release of new COVID-19 orders, rules, and guidance from the State relating to requirements imposed on school personnel has, in turn, led to frequent objections from employees and their bargaining representatives. We will review the latest bargaining challenges resulting from such mandates as the face covering and vaccination/testing requirements and discuss strategies for negotiating effective agreements with your unions. We will also review the latest objections frequently raised by individual employees to the public health requirements, as well as recommended employer responses in order to limit district liability.

Presenters:

[Dennis L. Weedman](#), Partner

[Thomas C. Garretson](#), Associate

Residential and Other Unilateral Placements

How should a school district respond to a notice of a unilateral placement parent? Join Laura and Michelle to discuss the steps a school district should take when learning of a parent's decision to place a child outside of the District. Laura and Michelle will discuss the important procedural responses, the defenses to be explored and general standards Courts have established when considering a parent's request for funding for a private placement.

Presenters:

[Laura M. Sinars](#), Partner

[Michelle L. Weber](#), Associate

Biographies:

Robbins Schwartz

CAROLINE A. ROSELLI

PARTNER, CHICAGO

312.332.7760

crocelli@robbins-schwartz.com

Caroline Roselli practices in the areas of special education law and student rights. She counsels school districts and colleges concerning student discipline, student records, policy development, students' rights and other student-related matters. She assists school districts in responding to complaints from the Illinois State Board of Education and Office of Civil Rights and she regularly represents public school districts at IEP meetings, due process hearings, mediations, student expulsion and suspension hearings and residency hearings. Caroline has successfully defended school district decisions and prevailed at due process hearings on issues regarding eligibility, requests for residential placements and denial of FAPE claims.

Caroline has presented at annual conferences for both the Illinois Association for School Boards and for the Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education. She is a co-author of the "Special Education" chapter of the Illinois Institute of Continuing Legal Education's School Law treatise. Caroline also regularly conducts workshops and in-service programs on a variety of special education related topics, including IEP compliance, response to intervention and child find, evaluation procedures, eligibility determinations, autism litigation and discipline of special education students.

AWARDS

Illinois Emerging Lawyer, School Law (2017-2018)

Illinois "Rising Star," Super Lawyers Magazine, Schools and Education Law (2012-2017)

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

"Students Should Know the Consequences of Sexting," *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2015)

"What Does State Law Say about Measles Prevention and Control in Schools?" *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2015)

Contributing author, "Special Education," *Illinois School Law*, IICLE (2010, 2012 and 2015)

RECENT PRESENTATIONS

Due Process: To Go or Not to Go? Special Education Update, Illinois Council of School Attorneys, 33rd Annual Seminar on School Law (November 2019)



PRACTICE AREAS

Education Law
Special Education
Student Discipline

EDUCATION

J.D., *cum laude*, Loyola University Chicago School of Law

B.A., University of Notre Dame

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

Supreme Court of the United States

U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois

Supreme Court of Illinois

ORGANIZATIONS

Chicago Bar Association

Illinois Bar Association

Illinois Council of School Attorneys

National Council of School Attorneys

Seclusion, Restraint, and Time Out 2020, Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education Region 1 Roundtable (November 2019)

Risk Assessment, Threat Assessments and the Impact on Students with Disabilities, Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education Fall Conference (October 2019)

Legal Issues Related to School Safety and Security: Addressing the Complex Challenges Facing Schools, Large Unit District Association, (May 2019)

Responding to Requests for Homebound Instruction, Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education Webinar (April 2019)

Tips for Preparing Legally Defensible Eligibility Determinations for Specific Learning Disability, Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education Roundtable Presentation (March 2019)

Absenteeism, School Refusal, and Truancy in Special Education: Legal Issues when Students Don't or Can't Come to School, Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education Roundtable Presentation (March 2019)

Escalating Student Behavior and Safety Concerns: Legal Options and Considerations, Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education Winter Conference (February 2019)

The Ins & Outs of Residential Placements: Rules, Regulations, & Recommendations, Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education Fall Conference (October 2018)

Robbins Schwartz

TODD K. HAYDEN

PARTNER, LISLE

630.929.3639

thayden@robbins-schwartz.com

Todd Hayden practices in the areas of school and municipal law. He provides governmental employers with guidance and counseling regarding labor and employment, including employee discipline and termination, board governance, collective bargaining, contract, public finance and transactional matters.

Todd has represented employers in various employer-employee disputes including federal and state litigation, EEOC/Department of Human Rights charges, State Labor Board Proceedings and grievance and arbitration proceedings. Todd has extensive experience in collective bargaining, including unit formation proceedings, negotiations, mediation and interest arbitration. He has performed construction contract reviews, served as local bond counsel and worked on school boundary changes.

Todd is approved by the Illinois State Board of Education to provide school board member training.

AWARDS

Illinois Leading Lawyer, Employment Law: Management, Labor Law: Management, School Law and Governmental, Municipal, Lobbying & Administrative Law, 2015

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Contributing author, "Civil Rights Litigation," *Illinois School Law*, IICLE (2017)

RECENT PRESENTATIONS

Collective Bargaining for School Board Members and Administrators, IASB/IASA/Illinois ASBO Joint Annual Conference (November 2018)

Employee Free Speech and the Public Employer, HR Source Employment Law Conference at Northern Illinois University (September 2018)

Practical Advice for Maintaining a Harassment Free Workplace, IASA (February 2018)



PRACTICE AREAS

Commercial Transactions
Education Law
Employee Benefits
Labor & Employment
Litigation
Municipal Law
Public Finance & Taxation
Student Discipline

EDUCATION

J.D., *cum laude*, Indiana
University School of Law

B.A., University of
Michigan

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

Supreme Court of the
United States

U.S. Court of Appeals for
the Seventh Circuit

Trial Bar of the U.S.
District Court for the
Northern District of Illinois

U.S. District Court for the
Northern District of Illinois

Supreme Court of Illinois

ORGANIZATIONS

Illinois Council of School
Attorneys

Illinois State Bar
Association

Will County Bar
Association – Local
Government Committee

Robbins Schwartz

MATTHEW J. GARDNER

PARTNER, CHICAGO

312.332.7760

mgardner@robbins-schwartz.com

Matthew Gardner is a member of the firm's construction, real estate, and public finance practice groups. Matt represents private and public project owners over the course of construction and development projects, beginning with property acquisition, zoning, contract negotiation and bidding, project management, surety and warranty claims and any resulting litigation concerning payment, delays or design or construction defects. Matt also represents contractors, subcontractors and suppliers on a variety of construction-related matters, including payment claims, preserving and enforcing lien rights and defending defect claims.

Matt is the past Chair of the Chicago Bar Association Construction Law and Mechanics Lien Subcommittee (2018-19), has testified before the General Assembly on construction-related matters, and is a member of the Illinois State Bar Association and Chicago Bar Association Judicial Evaluation Committee. Matt has also performed pro bono services representing clients through Chicago Volunteer Legal Services and Franciscan Outreach.

AWARDS

Illinois "Rising Star", by Super Lawyers Magazine, in the area of Construction Litigation (2020-2021)

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Co-author, "School Construction from Start to Finish: A Project Checklist," *School Business Affairs Magazine*, ASBO (2018)

Contributing author, "Top 11 Public Bidding Questions," *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2018)

Contributing author, "Meditation a Win-Win for Clients and their Attorneys in Construction Litigation," *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2018)

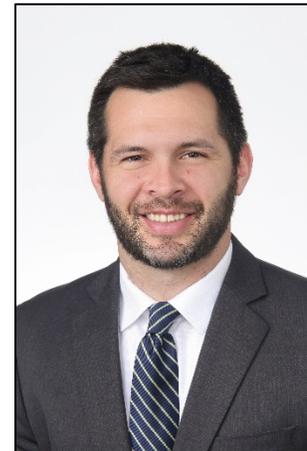
Contributing author, "Organization, Finance, and Property," *Illinois School Law*, IICLE (2017)

"The Good, The Bad and The Ugly of School Bidding Requirements," *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2016)

"School District and Zoning Exemptions," *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2015)

RECENT PRESENTATIONS

Construction Law 101, National Business Institute (December 2019)



PRACTICE AREAS

Commercial Law
Construction Law
Public Finance & Taxation
Real Estate Development

EDUCATION

J.D., University of
Wisconsin Law School

B.S., University of Utah

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

U.S. District Court for the
Northern District of Illinois

Supreme Court of Illinois

Supreme Court of Utah

Supreme Court of
Wisconsin

ORGANIZATIONS

Chicago Bar Association

Illinois State Bar
Association

Foolproof Contract that Abide by State Laws, 2019 Illinois ASBO Annual Conference (May 2019)

Construction Purchasing & Bidding Common Problems & Solutions, Illinois ASBO (March 2019 *Construction Contracts: Boilerplate Language Landmines You May Not Know*, National Business Institute (February 2019)

The Anatomy of a Mechanics Lien Claim, Illinois State Bar Association (May 2018)

Robbins Schwartz

MATTHEW M. SWIFT

ASSOCIATE, CHICAGO

312.332.7760

mswift@robbins-schwartz.com

Matthew is a member of the labor and employment practice group. He counsels employers in various aspects of labor and employment law, such as employee discipline, labor relations, wage and hour, and employment discrimination matters under both federal and state laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, Family and Medical Leave Act, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, and Illinois Human Rights Act. He also represents clients in state and federal courts and advises on Illinois Freedom of Information Act and Open Meetings Act matters.

Before he joined Robbins Schwartz, Matthew served as in-house counsel and FOIA Officer for the Illinois Office of the Governor. In that role, he counseled dozens of agencies on compliance with sensitive FOIA requests, advised on current and potential litigation issues, and served as a legal liaison to the Illinois Department of Human Rights and the Illinois Human Rights Commission.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

“All Together Now – Employment Law Issues in the New Title IX Rules,”
Chicago Daily Law Bulletin (2020)

“Life After Leave: Bringing Employees Back in a COVID-19 Age” *Best Practices Magazine*, American Association of School Personnel Administrators (2020)



PRACTICE AREAS

Labor & Employment

EDUCATION

J.D., University of Chicago
Law School

M.P.P., University of
Chicago, Harris School of
Public Policy

B.B.A., *summa cum laude*,
Baylor University

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

U.S. District Court for the
Northern District of Illinois

Supreme Court of Illinois

ORGANIZATIONS

Chicago Bar Association

Robbins Schwartz

KENNETH M. FLOREY

PARTNER, CHICAGO & LISLE

312.332.7760

kflorey@robbins-schwartz.com

Ken Florey concentrates his practice representing public and private clients, including municipalities, school districts, community colleges, townships, libraries, private owners, contractors and design professionals regarding land use, municipal law, construction, tax, finance and litigation. Ken has also started offering his services as a mediator with an emphasis on construction disputes.

Ken was the Chair of the DuPage County Bar Association's Local Government Committee. He was appointed Special Assistant Attorney General to prosecute and defend construction litigation claims on behalf of the Illinois Capital Development Board. Ken is also a member of the Illinois ASBO Service Associate Advisory Committee. He served as a Trustee for the Village of Lombard for eight years and is a member of the Lombard Fire and Police Commission.

MEDIATOR CERTIFICATE: NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY 2017

AWARDS

Illinois Leading Lawyer, Construction Law; Governmental, Municipal, Lobbying & Administrative Law; Land Use, Zoning & Condemnation Law; and School Law

Illinois Association of School Business Officials, Above and Beyond Award

Illinois Institute for Local Government Law, Litigation Award

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Contributing author, "Joint Purchasing Everything You Want to Know but Are Afraid to Ask!" *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2019)

Contributing author, "How Far Does the Law Allow Schools to Go?" *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2018)

Contributing author, "Top 11 Public Bidding Questions & Solutions" *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2018)

Co-author, "School Construction from Start to Finish: A Project Checklist," *School Business Affairs Magazine*, ASBO (2018)

Contributing author, "Top 11 Public Bidding Questions," *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2018)

Contributing author, "Mediation a Win-Win for Clients and their Attorneys in Construction Litigation," *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2018)



PRACTICE AREAS

Commercial Law
Construction Law
Education Law
Energy Law
Litigation
Mediation
Municipal Law
Public Finance & Taxation
Real Estate Development
Zoning, Planning & Land Use

EDUCATION

J.D., DePaul University
College of Law; Managing
Editor, *DePaul Journal of
Art and Entertainment
Law*

B.A., University of Illinois
at Urbana-Champaign

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

U.S. District Court for the
Northern District of
Illinois

Supreme Court of Illinois

Contributing author, "Organization, Finance, and Property," Illinois School Law, IICLE (2017)

"Construction Project and Contract Pitfalls" *Update Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2017)

"The Good, the Bad and the Ugly of School Bidding Requirements," *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2016)

"Settlement Crumbles; Appeals Court Declines to Put Pieces Back Together," *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2015)

"On Public Display: Advertising in Schools," *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2015)

RECENT PRESENTATIONS

Foolproof Contract that Abide by State Laws, 2019 Illinois ASBO Annual Conference (May 2019)

Construction Contracts: Boilerplate Language Landmines You May Not Know, NBI (February 2019)

Legal, Legislative and Ethics Update, ICCTA (November 2018)

Purchasing Processes, Problems & Solutions, Illinois ASBO (September 2018)

Navigating Property Tax Assessment Complaints and the PTAB, Illinois ASBO & IASPA (October 2018)

Construction Disputes: Bring Home a Win for Your School District, ASBO International (October 2018)

Construction Project Problems or Solutions After Construction is Done, Illinois ASBO (October 2018)

Construction and Purchasing Disputes and Resolutions, ASBO International Conference (September 2018)

Construction, Bidding and Purchasing in Township Government, Township Officials of Illinois Online Seminar (August 2018)

Administrators Legal Session II, Concordia University (August 2018)

Construction Disputes and Resolutions, Illinois ASBO Conference (May 2018)

Top Solutions and Problems for Bidding and Construction, Illinois ASBO Annual Conference (May 2018)

Lead Testing Update: Everything You Need to Know, Illinois ASBO Conference, (May 2018)

Robbins Schwartz

SCOTT L. GINSBURG

PARTNER, CHICAGO

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sginsburg@robbins-schwartz.com

Scott focuses his practice in the area of real property taxation and assessment appeals, where he has tried several cases before the State of Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board, and he litigates cases in the circuit court on valuation and tax rate objections.

Scott also practices in the area of commercial transactions and local government, including contract drafting and review, litigation and alternative dispute resolution. He has experience in representing general contractors, local governments and business owners in all aspects of civil litigation.

Prior to joining Robbins Schwartz, Scott concentrated his practice on litigation, in the areas of commercial disputes, construction defects and labor and employment issues. Scott is also a former judicial extern to the Honorable Michael J. Reagan, United States District Judge, Southern District of Illinois.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Author, "*PTAB Clarifies Uniformity Standards for Income Properties*," Illinois State Bar Association's *Tax Trends* (2015)

Author, "*Chicago Bears Football Club v. The Cook County Department of Revenue*, 2014 IL App (1st) 122892," *Tax Trends*, Illinois State Bar Association (2014)

Contributing author, "Illinois Supreme Court Clarifies Standard Review for Zoning Decisions," *Illinois Municipal Review* (2008)

RECENT PRESENTATIONS

Property Tax Assessment Challenges and How to Defend Your Tax Base, PMA Financial Network, LLC (June 2020)



PRACTICE AREAS

Commercial Law
Construction Law
Education Law
Energy Law
Litigation
Municipal Law
Public Finance & Taxation
Real Estate Development
Zoning, Planning & Land Use

EDUCATION

J.D., Washington
University School of Law

B.A., DePauw University

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

U.S. District Court for the
Northern District of Illinois

Supreme Court of Illinois

ORGANIZATIONS

Illinois State Bar
Association, State and
Local Taxation Section
Council, Member

Robbins Schwartz

CATHERINE R. LOCALLO

PARTNER, CHICAGO

312.332.7760

clocallo@robbins-schwartz.com

Catherine Locallo's practice focuses on labor and employment law and board governance matters. She counsels employers in all aspects of employment law including hiring, employment contracts, employee discipline issues, terminations and reductions in force, collective bargaining and labor relations, nonimmigrant worker visas and employment discrimination matters. She also counsels public bodies on compliance with Illinois' Freedom of Information Act and Open Meetings Act. Catherine has extensive experience representing clients in court and administrative agency proceedings involving discrimination, retaliation, and harassment claims.

Catherine is approved by the Illinois State Board of Education to provide school board member training.

AWARDS

Illinois "Rising Star," Employment & Labor Law (2015-2018)

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

"Effective January 1, 2022: Vast Expansion of VESSA," *Employment and Labor Law Flashpoints*, IICLE (2021)

"Illinois Committed to Restrictive Covenant Reform Through Passage of Senate Bill 672," *Employment and Labor Law Flashpoints*, IICLE (2021)

"Plaintiff's Cat's Paw Theory of Liability Failed To Scratch Surface," *Employment and Labor Law Flashpoints*, IICLE (2021)

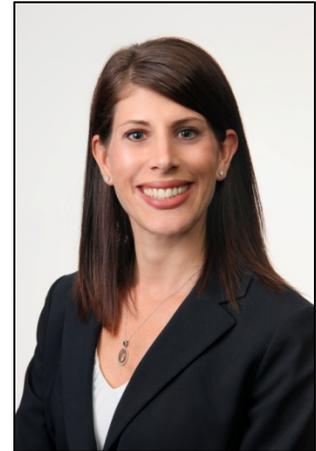
"Walmart Need Not Change Shift Rotation Practice To Accommodate Religious Beliefs" *Employment and Labor Law Flashpoints*, IICLE (2021)

"CBA Provision Clearly Rebutted At-Will Employment Presumption for IT Employee," *Employment and Labor Law Flashpoints*, IICLE (2021)

"Employer's Judgment and Job Description Defeat Failure To Accommodate Claim," *Employment and Labor Law Flashpoints*, IICLE (2021)

"Recent Department of Labor Opinion Letters: Pay for Training and Travel," *Employment and Labor Law Flashpoints*, IICLE (2021)

"Sexual Harassment Prevention Training Compliance Required Before New Year," *Employment and Labor Law Flashpoints*, IICLE (2020)



PRACTICE AREAS

Education Law
Labor & Employment
Litigation

EDUCATION

J.D., *cum laude*, The John
Marshall Law School,
Order of John Marshall

B.S., Southern Illinois
University

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

U.S. Court of Appeals for
the Seventh Circuit

U.S. District Court for the
Central District of Illinois

U.S. District Court for the
Northern District of Illinois

Supreme Court of Illinois

"Will 'Scabby the Rat' Live To Fight Another Day?" *Employment and Labor Law Flashpoints*, IICLE (2020)

"Superintendent's Police Report is Protected Speech" *Employment and Labor Law Flashpoints*, IICLE (2020)

"Changing the Landscape: Abusive Conduct Not Protected Under NLRA" *Employment and Labor Law Flashpoints*, IICLE (2020)

"COVID-19 Changes to Claims for Unemployment Benefits in Illinois" *Employment and Labor Law Flashpoints*, IICLE (2020)

"Seventh Circuit: Jury, Not Judges, Must Decide Coach's Sex Discrimination Claim" *Employment and Labor Law Flashpoints*, IICLE (2020)

"Examining DOL Rule on New Employee Leave Rights" *Employment and Labor Law Flashpoints*, IICLE (2020)

"Better Safe Than Sued – Issuing Timely FMLA Notices" *Employment and Labor Law Flashpoints*, IICLE (2020)

"Unions Strike Back Through Amendments to Illinois Public Labor Acts" *Employment and Labor Law Flashpoints*, IICLE (2020)

"First Amendment Protections Get Broader for Government Employees," *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2016)

"Regulatory Changes to the Illinois Wage Payment and Collection Act," *Justinian Society Newsletter* (2015)

"New FOIA Amendments to Ease Burden on Public Bodies," *Justinian Society Newsletter* (2015)

"Illinois Supreme Court Determines Arbitration Award Ordering Reinstatement of a Paraprofessional was Binding Because the Award 'Drew Its Essence' from the CBA," *Justinian Society Newsletter* (2014)

"When the Music Stops, Why Not Require Certain Title VII Plaintiffs to Find a Chair on Which to Rest Their Complaint," *The John Marshall Law Review*, (2009)

RECENT PRESENTATIONS

Is PERA Dead?? Implementation of a Local Appeals Process for Unsatisfactory Ratings, IASPA Annual Conference (January 2020)

A Workshop on Compliance with the Open Meetings Act and Illinois Freedom of Information Act, LUDA Annual Conference (October 2019)

Community College Trustees Training Session, ICCTA (June 2019)

ORGANIZATIONS

Chicago Bar Association

Illinois Council of School Attorneys

Illinois State Bar Association

National Council of School Attorneys

Treasurer, Justinian Society of Lawyers

Co-Chair, Justinian Society of Lawyers Endowment Fund Scholarship Committee

Member, Oakton Community College Paralegal Advisory Committee

Member, Triton College School of Business Advisory Legal Committee

Member, Board of Directors, Glenview Stars Hockey Association

UNICO National

Robbins Schwartz

HOWARD A. METZ

PARTNER, CHICAGO

312.332.7760

hmetz@robbins-schwartz.com

Howard Metz counsels and represents school districts, community colleges, park districts and municipalities with respect to real estate, commercial transactions, construction law and land use and zoning matters. He has resolved construction cases involving issues such as disputed architectural fees, construction defects, bidding disputes and construction delays. Howard has also litigated issues involving zoning laws and municipal control over school property.



RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Contributing author, "Joint Purchasing Everything You Want to Know but Are Afraid to Ask!" *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2019)

Contributing author, "Public Body Social Media Rules Make Retention, Ready Retrieval Imperative," *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2019)

Contributing author, "How Far Does the Law Allow Schools to Go?" *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2018)

Co-author, "School Construction from Start to Finish: A Project Checklist," *School Business Affairs Magazine*, ASBO (2018)

Contributing author, "Organization, Finance, and Property," *Illinois School Law*, IICLE (2017)

"Look Before You Leap: Evaluating Your Joint Purchasing Options," *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2016)

Contributing author, "School Property and Environmental Issues," *Illinois School Law*, IICLE (2010 and 2012)

RECENT PRESENTATIONS

Foolproof Contract that Abide by State Laws, 2019 Illinois ASBO Annual Conference (May 2019)

Construction Contracts: Boilerplate Language Landmines You May Not Know, NBI (February 2019)

PRACTICE AREAS

Commercial Transactions
Construction Law
Education Law
Finance
Municipal Law
Real Estate Development

EDUCATION

J.D., IIT Chicago-Kent
College of Law

B.S., University of Iowa

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

U.S. District Court for the
Northern District of Illinois

Supreme Court of Illinois

Robbins Schwartz

JESSICA A. MILLIGAN

PARTNER, CHICAGO

312.332.7760

jmilligan@robbins-schwartz.com

Jessica counsels school districts and community colleges in all aspects of labor and employment law, including employee investigations, discipline and termination, civil rights, and federal and state employment discrimination matters under the Americans with Disabilities Act, Family and Medical Leave Act, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Illinois Human Rights Act, and Title VII. Jessica also advises employers regarding collective bargaining, contract interpretation, grievance arbitrations, and unfair labor practices. Jessica represents clients in a variety of venues including both federal and state court, as well as the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Illinois Department of Human Rights.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Contributing author, "Employment Discrimination," *School Law: Personnel and Student Issues, IICLE (2021 Edition)*

RECENT PRESENTATIONS

Navigating Payroll Laws: Wages and Recordkeeping Requirements, Illinois ASBO (March 2021)

Leave and Accommodation Requests: A Panel Discussion, Large Unit District Association (February 2021)

Employee Misconduct Investigations and Discipline During a Pandemic: Best Practices to Minimize Employer Liability, IASPA Annual Conference (January 2021)

Leave and Accommodation Rights in the COVID-19 Workplace, Illinois Council of School Attorneys and Illinois Association of School Boards (October 2020)

Free Speech on Campus, Illinois Community College Chief Student Service Officers (March 2020)

Navigating Payroll Laws, Illinois ASBO Bookkeepers Conference (March 2020)

Administrators Legal Update, Concordia University (December 2019)

Navigating Background Checks in Today's Environment, Illinois ASBO (May 2019)

Employee Misconduct Issues: Effective Management Strategies for Defensible Discipline/Discharge, Concordia University (April 2019)



PRACTICE AREAS

Labor & Employment

EDUCATION

J.D., *cum laude*, Michigan State University College of Law

B.A., Michigan State University

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois

U.S. District Court for the Central District of Illinois

U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Illinois

U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan

U.S. District Court for the Western District of Michigan

Supreme Court of Illinois

Supreme Court of Michigan

ORGANIZATIONS

American Bar Association

Illinois Bar Association

Illinois Council of School
Attorneys

Michigan Bar Association

National Council of School
Attorneys

Robbins Schwartz

LAURA M. SINARS

PARTNER, CHICAGO

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Laura Sinars focuses on special education and students' rights law. She counsels and represents public school districts at IEP meetings, due process hearings and mediation. She also represents districts at student expulsion and residency hearings. Laura has defended district decisions regarding evaluations, services and placement of special education students in due process hearings. She has successfully prevailed in hearings to defend against parents' unilateral private placements. In the area of student rights, Laura has assisted clients with routine student issues related to records, discipline, health and 504 questions. She has also assisted clients with building strong residency and discipline cases which proceed to hearing and has successfully defended districts' decisions in state and federal courts. Laura has represented districts before federal and state agencies including the Illinois State Board of Education, the Illinois Guardianship and Advocacy Commission and the Office for Civil Rights.

AWARDS

Illinois Super Lawyers, 2005-2018

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Contributing author, "Special Education," *Illinois School Law*, IICLE (2005, 2010, 2012 and 2015)



PRACTICE AREAS

Education Law
Special Education
Student Discipline

EDUCATION

J.D., University of Notre
Dame Law School

B.A., University of Notre
Dame

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

U.S. Court of Appeals for
the Seventh Circuit

U.S. District Court for the
Central District of Illinois

U.S. District Court for the
Northern District of Illinois

Supreme Court of Illinois

Robbins Schwartz

M. NEAL SMITH, JR.

PARTNER, LISLE

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Neal represents municipalities, school districts, community colleges and other local governmental clients as well as companies and individuals in a wide range of complex legal matters. In addition to representing clients in tort and commercial litigation, Neal represents clients in several unique areas of the law including land use and zoning litigation, construction litigation and election law and campaign finance matters. Neal has represented clients in state and Federal Court and before administrative agencies such as the Illinois State Board of Elections, the Illinois Commerce Commission, and the Illinois Labor Relations Board.

Neal advises clients in contract drafting and review. For local governmental clients, he prepares and reviews ordinances, resolutions and intergovernmental agreements, attends board and committee meetings and advises elected and appointed officials and employees on all types of legal issues that concern local governmental clients.

AWARDS

Illinois Leading Lawyer, Election, Political & Campaign Law; Governmental, Municipal, Lobbying & Administrative Law; Land Use, Zoning & Condemnation Law; and School Law

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Author, "Court affirms candidate's ballot removal, resolves lower court split," *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2021)

Co-Author, "Variations, Special Uses, and Appeals from Administrative Decisions" *Land Use Law: Practice and Procedure, IICLE* (2021)

Author, "Residency" *Election Law, IICLE* (2020)

Author, "Vacancies in Office and Vacancies in Nomination" *Election Law, IICLE* (2020)

Author, "Federal courts weigh in on state's Nov. 3 ballot access requirements," *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2020).

Co-author, "High Court Gives Detailed Account on Torts, Discretionary Immunity," *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2020)

Author, "Campaign Finance and Disclosure Requirements in Illinois" *DCBA Brief* (2020).



PRACTICE AREAS

Commercial Law
Construction Law
Litigation
Municipal Law
Real Estate Development
Zoning, Planning & Land Use

EDUCATION

J.D., *cum laude*, Northern Illinois University College of Law

B.A., Hampden-Sydney College

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

U.S. District Court for the Central District of Illinois

U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois

Supreme Court of Illinois

ORGANIZATIONS

American Bar Association
Chicago Bar Association
DuPage County Bar Association
Illinois Bar Association
Will County Bar Association

Co-author, "Alarm Contractors' Argument Gets Green Light to Challenge Ordinance," *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2019)

Author, "Police Officers' and Firefighters' Pension Boards" *Municipal Law: Financing, Tax and Municipal Property*, IICLE (2018)

Co-author, "1st District Refuses to Sanction 'Side Letter' Pension Spike," *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2018)

"Settlement Crumbles; Appeals Court Declines to Put Pieces Back Together," *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2015)

"On Public Display: Advertising in Schools," *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2015)

"Could Your Township Benefit From the Work of a Committee?" *Township Perspective*, Township Officials of Illinois (2013)

Co-author, "Annual Town Meetings" and "Town Budget and Levy Process," *Township Clerks Handbook*, Township Clerks of Illinois (2013)

"What to do when Unsafe Properties Pose a Threat to the Welfare of the Citizens in your Township," *Township Perspective*, Township Officials of Illinois (2012)

RECENT PRESENTATIONS

Legal Issues Impacting Not-for-Profit Corporations in Illinois, Bolingbrook Area Chamber of Commerce Nonprofit Coalition (February 2020)

Statutory Requirements and Ethical Considerations for Public Officials, Illinois Government Finance Officers Association (September 2019)

Intervening in Pension Board Disability Hearings, 106th Annual Conference of the Illinois Municipal League (September 2019)

Robbins Schwartz

ZARIA N. UDEH

PARTNER, CHICAGO

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Zaria practices in the area of education law focusing in the areas of special education and students issues. Zaria counsels school districts with respect to IEP meetings, 504 accommodations, OCR, ISBE, and IDHR complaints, due process hearings, residency and homeless dispute hearings, student discipline matters, board policy and student handbook review, FOIA requests, student record compliance and contract review. Zaria also counsels community colleges on student related issues.

Prior to joining Robbins Schwartz, Zaria worked for the Chicago Public School District, where she represented the district as a special education attorney in due process matters and special education disputes.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

"Medical Cannabis at School Wins Legislative OK," Chicago Daily Law Bulletin (2018)

RECENT PRESENTATIONS

Use of Restraint & Seclusion: The Risks & Challenges Districts Face, IAASE (October 2018)

Legal Update in Special Education, Superintendent Leadership Conference (June 2018)

Current Trends Related to Placement and LRE: A Review of Recent Guidance from the Courts, IAASE (February 2018)

"Free Speech" Issues on Public College Campuses, ICCSSO (January 2018)



PRACTICE AREAS

Education Law
Special Education
Student Discipline

EDUCATION

J.D., DePaul University
College of Law

B.A., Yale University

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

U.S. District Court for the
Northern District of Illinois

Supreme Court of Illinois

Supreme Court of the
Commonwealth of
Massachusetts

ORGANIZATIONS

Chicago Bar Association

Robbins Schwartz

DENNIS L. WEEDMAN

PARTNER, COLLINSVILLE

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Dennis Weedman represents school districts, community colleges, county boards and other units of local government in labor negotiations and employment related matters, including complaints and charges of discrimination, wrongful termination litigation, claims of sexual harassment, civil rights violations and unfair labor practice charges. Dennis also advises clients on the handling of grievances, as well as represents public entities in labor arbitration hearings. He has represented employers in more than 200 arbitration hearings and has handled more than a hundred union organizational cases before the various public sector labor relations boards. Following certification of the bargaining unit, Dennis also serves as a negotiator and advisor for collective bargaining agreements, having negotiated several hundred labor contracts for public employers.

Dennis's area of practice extends well beyond just labor and employment matters. He counsels clients in all areas of personnel management, including employee leave rights, overtime obligations, and employee disciplinary matters, as well as in the areas of board governance, general education law and student rights and responsibilities. Dennis has served on the Illinois State Bar Association's Labor and Employment Section and is a frequent presenter for the Illinois Association of School Boards and at statewide conferences, including the Chicago-Kent School of Law Public Sector Labor Relations Conference.

Dennis has over twenty-eight years of experience representing public entities in labor and employment disputes. Prior to joining Robbins Schwartz, Dennis served as an Administrative Law Judge with the Illinois Labor Relations Board and was Labor Relations Counsel for Governor James Edgar through the Illinois Department of Central Management Services.

Dennis is approved by the Illinois State Board of Education to provide school board member training.

AWARDS

Illinois Leading Lawyer, Employment Law: Management, Labor Law: Management, School Law and Governmental, Municipal, Lobbying & Administrative Law, 2015

RECENT PRESENTATIONS

Collective Bargaining Workshop, Regional IASBO Conference (April 2021)

Legislative and Decisional Law Update, Illinois Community College Presidents' Council (March 2021)



PRACTICE AREAS

Education Law
Labor & Employment
Litigation
Municipal Law
Student Discipline

EDUCATION

J.D., Southern Illinois
University School of Law

B.A., University of Illinois
at Urbana-Champaign

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

U.S. District Court for the
Central District of Illinois

Supreme Court of Illinois

ORGANIZATIONS

Illinois Council of School
Attorneys

Illinois Local Government
Lawyers Association

Illinois State Bar
Association

Collective Bargaining Update, Large Unit District Association (February 2021)

Legal Ethics: Ethical Considerations during the Pandemic, Illinois Kent School of Law 36th Annual Public Sector Labor Relations Conference (December 2020)

Pre-K to Grade 12 Return to School, Southwest Leadership Council (September 2020)

Collective Bargaining Workshop, Regional IASBO Conference (March 2020)

Nuts and Bolts of Grievance Handling and Pre-Arbitrations Strategies, 35th Annual Kent School of Law Public Sector Labor Relations Conference (November 2019)

New College Board of Trustee Member Training, Illinois Community College Board (September 2019)

Managing Creditable Earnings under TRS New 3% Limitation Threshold, Annual and Regional IASBO Conferences (April 2019)

Robbins Schwartz

THOMAS C. GARRETSON

ASSOCIATE, CHICAGO

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Tom counsels employers in all aspects of labor and employment law, including internal misconduct investigations, disciplinary action, labor relations, collective bargaining, and federal and state employment discrimination matters under the Americans with Disabilities Act, Family and Medical Leave Act, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Illinois Human Rights Act, Title VII, and other federal and state anti-discrimination and wage laws. Tom represents employers in a variety of venues, including federal/state courts, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Illinois Department of Human Rights, and federal/state labor boards.

Prior to joining Robbins Schwartz, Tom worked in Labor Relations for the Cook County Health System. During law school, Tom interned with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's Enforcement Unit.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

"Get off my Property: SCOTUS Limits Union Access to Employer Premises," *Employment and Labor Law Flashpoints*, IICLE (2021)

"Recent Department of Labor Opinion Letters: Pay for Training and Travel," *Employment and Labor Law Flashpoints*, IICLE (2021)

"Seventh Circuit: Jury, Not Judges, Must Decide Coach's Sex Discrimination Claim," *Employment and Labor Law Flashpoints*, IICLE (2020)

"Unions Strike Back Through Amendments to Illinois Public Labor Acts," *Employment and Labor Law Flashpoints*, IICLE (2020)

"Heading Into the New Year with New Employment Laws," *Employment and Labor Law Flashpoints*, IICLE (January 2019)

RECENT PRESENTATIONS

Employee Misconduct Investigations and Discipline During a Pandemic, IASPA Annual Conference (January 2021)

Is it ADA, FMLA, or Other Leave? Navigating the Murky Waters of Employee Leave Benefits, IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference (January 2020)

Updates from the DOL: New Developments for FMLA, FLSA, and IWPCA, IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference (January 2020)

A Step-by-Step Guide to the ADA Interactive Process, IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference (January 2019)



PRACTICE AREAS

Labor & Employment

EDUCATION

J.D., Chicago-Kent College of Law

B.A., *with honors*, Michigan State University

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois

Supreme Court of Illinois

ORGANIZATIONS

Chicago Bar Association

Conducting Employee Misconduct Investigations: Best Practices to Minimize Employer Liability, IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference (January 2019)

Robbins Schwartz

CHRISTOPHER R. GORMAN

ASSOCIATE, CHICAGO

312.332.7760

cgorman@robbins-schwartz.com

Chris practices in the firm's commercial, construction, and real estate practice groups, representing public sector clients in commercial transactions, contracting, construction and related transactional matters. Chris has also served in the firm's labor and employment practice group and counseled employers in all aspects of labor and employment law, including labor relations, collective bargaining, grievance and dispute resolution, workplace investigation, employee discipline, terminations and reductions in force, and employment discrimination. Chris also advises clients on board governance and compliance with the Illinois Freedom of Information Act and Open Meetings Act.

Prior to joining Robbins Schwartz, Chris served as in-house counsel for a nonprofit organization, a charter school management organization and a state regulatory agency overseeing higher education financing.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Contributing author, "Labor Issues in the Transactional Side of the Project," *Construction Law: Transactional Considerations 2021 Edition*, IICLE (2021)

"Continuing Controversy Over FCC's Efforts to Improve Broadband Connectivity," *Energy, Utilities, Telecommunications and Transportation Newsletter*, Illinois State Bar Association (2021)

"The Future of For-Profit Online Charter Schools," *Labor and Employment Law Quarterly*, American Bar Association (2016)



PRACTICE AREAS

Commercial Transactions
Construction Law
Labor & Employment
Real Estate Development

EDUCATION

J.D., University of
Minnesota Law School

B.A., University of
Minnesota – Twin Cities;
Presidential Scholar

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

Supreme Court of Illinois

ORGANIZATIONS

Chicago Bar Association

Illinois State Bar
Association

Robbins Schwartz

SUSAN E. NICHOLAS

SENIOR COUNSEL, CHAMPAIGN

217.363.3040

snicholas@robbins-schwartz.com

Susan E. Nicholas focuses her practice on serving employers, educational entities, municipalities and other public bodies in all aspects of labor and employment law and general student matters.

Susan is the former President and Treasurer of the Decatur Bar Association's Executive Board. She also served as a Macon County Teen Court Moderator.

Prior to joining Robbins Schwartz, Susan practiced in a variety of areas including family law, criminal defense, estate planning, and civil litigation. Susan is also a former Assistant State's Attorney in the Macon County State's Attorney Office.

AWARDS

Illinois "Emerging Lawyer" by *Emerging Lawyers Magazine* (2015)

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Contributing author, "Employment Discrimination," *Illinois School Law*, IICLE (2010, 2012 and 2014)

RECENT PRESENTATIONS

Ethics and Conflicts of Interest for Municipal Elected Officials, Illinois Municipal League Newly Elected Officials Workshop (June 2017)

Navigating the FLSA: Compliance and Avoiding Common Pitfalls, Illinois Association of School Board Administrators Workshop (October 2017)

Western Illinois Administrator's Roundtable (2016, 2017, 2018)



PRACTICE AREAS

Education Law
Employee Benefits
Labor & Employment
Litigation
Municipal Law
Student Discipline

EDUCATION

J.D., *magna cum laude*,
Southern Illinois
University School of Law

B.A., Illinois Wesleyan
University

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

U.S. Court of Appeals for
the Seventh Circuit

U.S. District Court for the
Central District of Illinois

U.S. District Court for the
Northern District of Illinois

Supreme Court of Illinois

Supreme Court of
Missouri

ORGANIZATIONS

Illinois State Bar
Association

Decatur Bar Association

Robbins Schwartz

ERIN E. RUTH

ASSOCIATE, CHICAGO

312.332.7760

eruth@robbins-schwartz.com

Erin focuses her practice primarily on special education and students' rights law. She assists school districts in responding to complaints from the Illinois State Board of Education and Office for Civil Rights. Erin also advises school districts regarding 504 issues, student discipline matters, and the IEP process.

Erin was a First-Grade teacher before starting her legal career. Prior to joining Robbins Schwartz, Erin worked at a family law firm handling a variety of divorce and family law matters, including child-related issues, maintenance, property division, orders of protection, and post-divorce matters.



PRACTICE AREAS

Education Law
Students & Special
Education
Student Discipline

EDUCATION

J.D., Chicago-Kent College
of Law

B.A., University of Illinois
at Urbana-Champaign

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

Supreme Court of Illinois

ORGANIZATIONS

Chicago Bar Association

Illinois State Bar
Association

Robbins Schwartz

MICHELLE L. WEBER

SENIOR COUNSEL, CHICAGO

312.332.7760

mweber@robbins-schwartz.com

Michelle practices in the area of education law with a focus on special education and student matters. She counsels school districts and community colleges regarding the IEP process, due process, Section 504, student discipline, board policy and student records.

Prior to joining Robbins Schwartz, Michelle worked as an attorney for Waukegan Public Schools and Chicago Public Schools, focusing in special education. She has experience counseling IEP teams and school administrators, representing districts in complex due process hearings and developing policies and procedures for school districts. Prior to starting law school, Michelle was a Middle School Language Arts Teacher in Los Angeles, CA.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

"DeVos Rollbacks Could Hit Schools Hard," *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2017)

RECENT PRESENTATIONS

Risk Assessments, Threat Assessments and the Impact on Students with Disabilities, Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education Fall Conference (October 2019)

Escalating Student Behavior and Safety Concerns: Legal Options and Considerations, Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education Winter Conference (February 2019)

Student Bullying Legal Framework & Recommended Practices, In-Service (August 2018)



PRACTICE AREAS

Education Law
Special Education
Student Discipline

EDUCATION

J.D., Loyola University
College of Law

M.A., Loyola Marymount
University

B.A., Trinity College

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

Supreme Court of Illinois

ORGANIZATIONS

Chicago Bar Association

Illinois Council of School
Attorneys