

## School Administrators' Virtual Conference

Webinar  
September 25, 2020

Register [here](#)

**Chicago**

55 West Monroe Street, Suite 800  
Chicago, IL 60603  
p 312.332.7760  
f 312.332.7768

**Champaign-Urbana**

301 North Neil Street, Suite 400  
Champaign, IL 61820  
p 217.363.3040  
f 217.356.3548

**Collinsville**

510 Regency Centre  
Collinsville, IL 62234  
p 618.343.3540  
f 618.343.3546

**Bolingbrook**

631 East Boughton Road, Suite 200  
Bolingbrook, IL 60440  
p 630.929.3639  
f 630.783.3231

**Rockford**

2990 North Perryville Road, Suite 4144B  
Rockford, IL 61107  
p 815.390.7090

# Robbins Schwartz

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## Table of Contents

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>General Session</b> .....  | <b>3</b> |
| Navigating Freedom of Speech During a Time of Social Unrest.....  | 3        |
| <b>Topics</b> .....   | <b>4</b> |
| Bidding and Procurement: Legal Strategies and Best Practices During a Pandemic .....                                | 4        |
| A Whole New World: How to Safely Navigate the New Title IX Terrain .....  | 4        |
| COVID-19 Related Leave and COVID-19 Related Accommodation Requests .....  | 5        |
| Understanding Compensatory Services in the World of Covid-19 .....  | 5        |
| Staff Reduction and Cost Saving Measures as a Result of the COVID-19 Pandemic .....                                 | 6        |
| Pandemic Placements: A Discussion of Parental Unilateral Placements & District Responses During COVID-19 .....      | 6        |
| School Buildings and Operations: Understanding the Basics of Risk Management .....                                  | 7        |
| Employee Evaluations and Management of Performance in a Virtual Work Environment .....                              | 7        |
| Back to School Beginnings: A Legal Panel Focusing on Student and Special Education Frequently Asked Questions ..... | 8        |
| Navigating Revenue Issues and Fund Balances During COVID .....  | 8        |
| <br>  |          |
| <b>Biographies</b> .....  | <b>9</b> |

General Session 8:30 a.m. – 10 a.m.

## **Navigating Freedom of Expression in a Time of Social Unrest**

2020 will bring challenges for school districts as they navigate employee and student discussions and protests on current social issues such as Black Lives Matter, Blue Lives Matter, COVID-19, Mask Mandate, allegations of racism and injustice by police and the upcoming Presidential election. How can schools manage these diverse views and beliefs without violating the First Amendment's free speech and expression clause? How can schools manage student and employee morale and safety knowing that many will be offended, hurt, and angered by free speech expression? Many schools will face a polarized campus on current social and political issues. This presentation will address the challenges public schools have in complying with the First Amendment's protection of free speech and expression while maintaining a safe school free from substantial disruption. Additionally, we will discuss what "speech" is not protected, teachers claim to Academic Freedom and student and employee use of social media to "speak" and express various viewpoints which may be viewed as controversial and offensive.

### **Presenters:**

[Joseph J. Perkoski, Managing Partner](#)

[Frank B. Garrett III, Partner](#)

Breakout Sessions 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

## **Bidding and Procurement: Legal Strategies and Best Practices During a Pandemic**

Bidding and procurement can be a daunting process during “normal” times. This has only become more complicated during the pandemic. This session will address various options to properly conduct bidding utilizing strategies to deal with the “new normal”, such as electronic bid submissions, cooperative purchasing, and virtual pre-bid meetings and bid openings. We will also cover the fundamentals of bidding and purchasing which remain unchanged during these times by addressing some common (and not-so-common) situations which arise during the process.

### **Presenters:**

[Kenneth M. Florey, Partner](#)

[Howard A. Metz, Partner](#)

## **A Whole New World: How to Safely Navigate the New Title IX Terrain**

On August 14, 2020, the U.S. Department of Education’s new Rules governing how school districts must address allegations of sexual harassment under Title IX went into effect. This breakout session will provide a comprehensive analysis of the new Rules, along with recommendations for school districts to implement the new Rules while facing the unique challenges of the 2020-2021 school year.

### **Presenters:**

[Matthew M. Swift, Associate](#)

[Emily P. Bothfeld, Associate](#)

Breakout Sessions 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

## **COVID-19 Related Leave and COVID-19 Related Accommodation Requests**

Many educational institutions are wrestling with questions over how to modify their delivery of educational services to adapt to the pandemic – and the inevitable ensuing demands by unions to bargain any such changes in the work environment. While a college retains the right to decide how to provide instruction – full in-person, hybrid, totally remote – it may not violate the express terms of a collectively bargained agreement and may have an obligation to negotiate changes in the conditions of employment even when those changes do not violate the terms of a CBA. This section will review common issues which are being raised by unions over return to campus/work plans and what options colleges have to respond to them.

### **Presenters:**

[Catherine R. Locallo, Partner](#)

[Jessica A. Milligan, Associate](#)

## **Understanding Compensatory Services in the World of Covid-19**

This presentation will provide participants with an in-depth analysis of compensatory services claims and the legal standards applied by courts when determining liability for denials of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Additionally, this presentation will explore how these legal standards have been or would be applied to claims alleging denials of FAPE due to disruptions in special education services related to the COVID-19 pandemic and provide participants with recommendations for future planning.

### **Presenters:**

[Caroline A. Roselli, Partner](#)

[Michelle L. Weber, Associate](#)

**Breakout Sessions** 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

## **Staff Reduction and Cost Saving Measures as a Result of the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Illinois school districts need to consider methods to reduce their personnel costs due to increased expenses and reduced tax revenues related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This session will cover the various employment-related cost savings options available to Illinois school districts, including reductions in force (“RIFs”), furloughs, and voluntary retirement incentive plans. Collective bargaining implications associated with implementing these types of cost-savings measures, along with requirements and restrictions imposed by the Illinois School Code and other applicable laws, will also be reviewed in detail.

### **Presenters:**

[Philip H. Gerner, Partner](#)

[Thomas C. Garretson, Associate](#)

## **Pandemic Placements: A Discussion of Parental Unilateral Placements & District Responses During COVID-19**

This presentation covers parental unilateral placements and school district responses during COVID-19. School districts are experiencing an uptick in private parental placements with requests for reimbursement as a result of spring school closures and remote learning this fall. This presentation will highlight how school districts can meet FAPE requirements during periods of remote learning. This presentation will also include a review of recent case law updates addressing the requirements for unilateral placements and reimbursement obligations under the IDEA. Attendees can expect a discussion of practical considerations for responding to unilateral parental placements and requests for reimbursement given the unique in-person, hybrid and remote learning realities impacting instruction and the provision of FAPE during COVID-19.

### **Presenters:**

[Laura M. Sinars, Partner](#)

[Zaria N. Udeh, Associate](#)

Breakout Sessions 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

## **School Buildings and Operations: Understanding the Basics of Risk Management**

Risk management has always been an important consideration for school districts and other public and private education entities. Now, in the age of COVID, it is critical that schools identify, understand, and fully utilize all the tools available to manage risk for both remote and on-campus instruction, as well as for general operations. This breakout session will analyze specific COVID risks related to school buildings and operations and outline best practices for mitigating those risks. In addition to the mitigation directives and guidance from ISBE, IDPH, and the CDC, we will analyze critical contract provisions to incorporate in third-party and vendor contracts to enhance safety protocols and protect schools from potential liability. We will also examine potential limits on liability insurance coverage for contagion-related claims and several important tort immunities available to school districts concerning discretionary, health-related decisions.

### **Presenters:**

[Samuel B. Cavnar, Partner](#)

[Matthew J. Gardner, Partner](#)

## **Employee Evaluations and Management of Performance in a Virtual Work Environment**

This presentation will explore both the statutory requirements and suggestive guidance on evaluating both licensed and non-licensed staff during a disaster proclamation when in-person instruction is uncertain and remote learning is likely to occur or already occurring. Alternatives to formal evaluations, including the feasibility of deferring evaluations until the following school term will be discussed, as well as school districts' bargaining obligations related to same. School districts that choose to defer staff evaluative ratings, may still be interested in strategies for observing the learning environment both in-person and remotely for the purpose of providing feedback and managing immediate observable deficiencies with teaching performance.

### **Presenters:**

[Dennis L. Weedman, Partner](#)

[Kevin P. Noll, Associate](#)

**Breakout Sessions** 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

## **Back to School Beginnings: A Legal Panel Focusing on Student and Special Education Frequently Asked Questions**

School is Back...after months of summer planning, the 2020-2021 School Year is underway. Join us for a legal panel where we will discuss your frequently asked student and special education questions regarding back to school. Whether your district has started the year remotely, in-person or in some hybrid fashion, our panel will address your questions regarding face covering accommodations, confidentiality on virtual platforms, special education minutes and amendments, parents' requests to opt out of classes and much more.

### **Presenters:**

[Caroline A Roselli, Partner](#)

[Laura M. Sinars, Partner](#)

[Zaria N. Udeh, Associate](#)

### **Moderator:**

[Tabitha E. Hill, Associate.](#)

## **Navigating Revenue Issues and Fund Balances During COVID**

The COVID-19 pandemic has left uncertainty regarding the availability and use of property revenue. This breakout session will discuss property tax collection, and outline offensive and defensive strategies, and strategic decisions, to avoid revenue loss. We will discuss the current state of the real estate market and focus on Covid-19's impact on proceedings with the Assessor, Board of Review, Property Tax Appeal Board and the Courts. We will also discuss best practices for avoiding and defending your district against tax rate objections

### **Presenters:**

[Scott L. Ginsburg, Partner](#)

[Jessica L. Knox, Associate](#)



## Biographies

# Robbins Schwartz

## JOSEPH J. PERKOSKI

MANAGING PARTNER, CHICAGO

312.332.7760

jperkoski@robbins-schwartz.com

As managing partner, Joseph Perkoski represents educational institutions and public sector employers with a focus on board and executive leadership. Joseph also represents his clients on a broad range of labor and employment issues including collective bargaining, grievance arbitration and contract interpretation. Joseph has defended employers in unfair labor practice charges before the Illinois Education Labor Relations Board, the Illinois State and Local Labor Relations Boards and the National Labor Relations Board. In addition, Joseph has litigated on behalf of management claims involving civil rights, discrimination, wrongful discharge, and harassment issues.

### AWARDS

Illinois Super Lawyers, 2008-2020

### RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Contributing author, "Labor Issues in the Transactional Side of the Project," *Construction Law: Transactional Considerations*, IICLE (2017)

Contribution author, "Labor Relations: Contract Administration Including Unfair Labor Practices," *Illinois School Law: Personnel and Student Issues*, IICLE (2010, 2012, and 2015)

"Finding a New Way: Subcontracting Revisited," *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2011)

Contributing author, "Labor Issues in the Transactional Side of the Project," *Construction Law – Transaction Practice*, IICLE (2010)

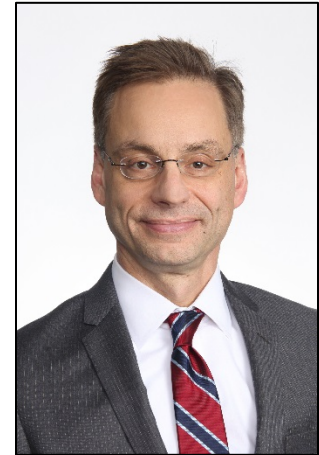
### RECENT PRESENTATIONS

*Legislative Update: A Review of New Laws Affecting Illinois Community Colleges*, Illinois Council of Community College Presidents Retreat (September 2019)

*Court Cases and Other Legal Updates for the Higher Education Workplace*, Illinois CUPA-HR Spring Conference (May 2019)

*Legal Update*, ICCCFQ Spring Conference (April 2019)

*Bargaining Updates, 3%, and Q & A*, Northwest Personnel Administrators (October 2018)



### PRACTICE AREAS

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

### EDUCATION

J.D., The Ohio State University, The Mortiz College of Law

M.A., The Ohio State University

B.A., *with honors*, The Ohio State University

### ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit

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

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

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

*Recent Amendments and Changes to State and Federal Employment Laws,*  
Illinois CUPA-HR Spring Conference (May 2018)

*SURS Legislation Update, ICCCFD Spring Conference (April 2018)*

Supreme Court of Illinois

Supreme Court of  
Wisconsin

Superior Court for the  
District of Columbia

**ORGANIZATIONS**

American Bar Association

Associated Colleges of  
Illinois, Trustee

Council of School  
Attorneys

Federal Bar Association

Illinois Association of  
School Business Officials

Illinois Bar Association

National School Boards  
Association

Wisconsin Bar Association

# Robbins Schwartz

## **FRANK B. GARRETT III**

**PARTNER, CHICAGO**

312.332.7760

fgarrett@robbins-schwartz.com

Frank B. Garrett III represents school districts, community colleges, local governmental bodies and public and private companies in all aspects of employment law, including complaints and charges of unlawful discrimination, wrongful termination, sexual harassment, civil rights violations, employee discipline and termination. Frank also counsels and provides training to employers in the following areas: ADA and FMLA compliance, avoiding claims of unlawful discrimination and harassment in the workplace: evaluation and discipline of employees, and diversity in the workplace.

Frank represents and defends clients in both state and federal courts, at the trial and appellate levels. He also practices before various administrative agencies such as the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board, the Illinois Human Rights Commission and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Frank is a regular speaker on employment law topics at both the state and national level.

Frank is approved by the Illinois State Board of Education to provide school board member training. He is an active member of the American Bar Association and Illinois Council of School Attorneys.

### **AWARDS**

Illinois Leading Lawyer, Government and Regulatory-Related  
Illinois Leading Lawyer, Employment and School Law  
Illinois Super Lawyers

### **RECENT PUBLICATIONS**

"Extended Medical Leave Under ADA Soundly Rejected by 7th Circuit,"  
*Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2017)

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

"Big-box Employee's Attempt to 'Scam' Company Undercuts FMLA Claims,"  
*Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2015)

Employers Must Rethink Employee 'Look' Policies After High Court Decision,"  
*Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2015)



### **PRACTICE AREAS**

Education Law  
Labor & Employment  
Litigation

### **EDUCATION**

J.D., DePaul University  
College of Law

B.A., Oberlin College

### **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

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

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

Supreme Court of Illinois

“Using Social Network Screening as Part of the Hiring Process: Employers Should Proceed with Caution,” *Inquiry & Analysis*, National School Boards Association’s Council of School Attorneys (2013)

Contributing author, “Employment Discrimination,” *ILLINOIS SCHOOL LAW*, IICLE (1996, 1999, Supp. 2001, 2005, 2010 and 2012)

#### **RECENT PRESENTATIONS**

*Debunking Some Common Employee FMLA Leave Myths*, IASPA Annual Conference (January 2020)

*Legislative Update: A Review of New Laws Affecting Illinois Community Colleges*, Illinois Council of Community College Presidents Retreat (September 2019)

*Understanding New Changes to the Minimum Wage Law and Other Wage-Related Statutes*, Illinois GFOA Annual Conference (September 2019)

*Navigating the Legal Liability Minefield in the Recruitment, Interview and Selection of Qualified Applicants*, AASPA Personnel Administrator Boot Camp (June 2018)

*The Ever-Changing Landscape Under Title IX*, Joint meeting of Illinois Community College Presidents, Chief Academic Officers and Chief Student Services Officers (January 2017)

*Practical Guidance on Employee Misconduct Investigations and Discipline*, Illinois Association of School Personnel Administrators, Tenth Annual State Conference (January 2017)

#### **ORGANIZATIONS**

American Bar Association,  
Section on Labor and  
Employment

Chicago Bar Association

Cook County Bar  
Association

Illinois Council of School  
Attorneys

# Robbins Schwartz

## **CAROLINE A. ROSELLI**

**PARTNER, CHICAGO**

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[croselli@robbins-schwartz.com](mailto:croselli@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**

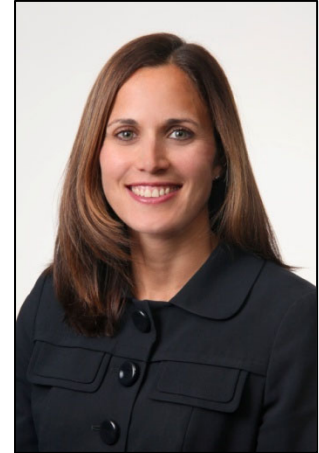
"Students Should Know the Consequences of Sexting," *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2015)

"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)

*Just What the Doctor Ordered: Responding to Increasing Requests for Homebound Instruction*, Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education Winter Conference (February 2018)

# 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**

"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)



### **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



*Community College Trustees Training Session, ICCTA (June 2019)*

*Community College Trustees Training Session, ICCTA (June 2017)*

**ORGANIZATIONS**

Chicago Bar Association

Illinois Council of School Attorneys

Illinois State Bar Association

Justinian Society of Lawyers; Scholarship Committee, Co-Chair

National Council of School Attorneys

UNICO National

# Robbins Schwartz

## **DENNIS L. WEEDMAN**

**PARTNER, COLLINSVILLE**

618.343.3540

dweedman@robbins-schwartz.com

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 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 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**

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



### **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

# 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)

*Interactive Purchasing Workshop*, Illinois ASBO Annual Conference (April 2017)

*Public Bidding: Requirements and Solutions to Common Bidding Problems* (April 2017)

### 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

*Top School Construction Problems and Solutions, 2016 Joint Annual Conference - Carousel of Panels (November 2016)*

*Solutions to Top Bidding and Construction Problems, Association of School Business Officials International 2015 Annual Meeting and Expo (October 2015)*

# Robbins Schwartz

## **LAURA M. SINARS**

**PARTNER, CHICAGO**

312.332.7760

lsinars@robbins-schwartz.com

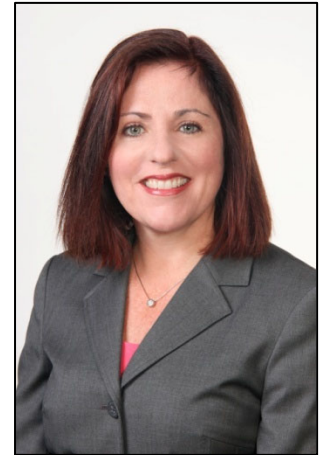
Laura Sinars focuses on special education and students' rights law. She counsels and represents public school districts at IEP meetings, due process hearings and mediation. She also represents districts at student expulsion and residency hearings. Laura has defended district decisions regarding evaluations, 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

## **SCOTT L. GINSBURG**

**PARTNER, CHICAGO**

312.332.7760

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

## **KENNETH M. FLOREY**

**PARTNER, CHICAGO & BOLINGBROOK**

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, "Meditation 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)

*Construction Contract Boilerplate Terms*, NBI (June 2017)



# Robbins Schwartz

## **SAMUEL B. CAVNAR**

**PARTNER, CHICAGO**

312.332.7760

scavnar@robbins-schwartz.com

Samuel Cavnar represents school districts, community colleges, municipalities, and various other public entities, along with private clients including owners, developers, general contractors, subcontractors, and various other commercial interests. Sam is an experienced negotiator of commercial and construction-related contracts, and he regularly counsels clients in the areas of board governance, bidding, procurement, tort immunity and risk management. Sam has been appointed Special Assistant State's Attorney in several matters involving construction-related transactions and litigation. Sam has successfully prosecuted and defended numerous lawsuits related to defaults, delays, extras, liquidated damages, design and construction defects, performance issues, non-payment and other similar commercial claims.

### **AWARDS**

Illinois "Rising Star", by Super Lawyers Magazine, in the area of Construction Litigation (2012-2017)

### **RECENT PUBLICATIONS**

"How Public Sector Entities Can Protect Themselves in Premise Liability Cases," *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2018)

"Property Tax Exemption for Charitable Remains Gray Area," *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2017)

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

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

### **RECENT PRESENTATIONS**

*Navigating the Public Bidding and Contract Process*, IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference (January 2020)

*Statutory Requirements and Ethical Considerations for Public Officials*, Illinois GFOA Annual Conference (September 2019)

*Public Procurement for Construction Projects*, ICCCFD Conference (April 2018)

*Public Procurement for Construction Projects*, Cotter Consulting (January 2018)

*Competitive Bidding and Contract Administration*, IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference (January 2018)



### **PRACTICE AREAS**

Commercial Transactions  
Construction Law  
Real Estate Development

### **EDUCATION**

J.D., Wayne State  
University Law School;  
Managing Editor, *The  
Wayne Law Review*

B.A., Michigan State  
University

### **ADMITTED TO PRACTICE**

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

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

Supreme Court of Illinois

Supreme Court of  
Michigan

*Legal Considerations Related to Renewable Energy, Sustainability for PK-12 Schools, IASB/IASA/Illinois ASBO 85<sup>th</sup> Joint Annual Conference (November 2017)*

*Best Practices for Bidding and Contracting, Illinois Council of School Attorneys, In-House Counsel Networking Meeting (October 2017)*

**ORGANIZATIONS**

American Bar Association, Forum on the Construction Industry

Chicago Bar Association

Illinois Association of School Business Officials

# 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.

### **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)

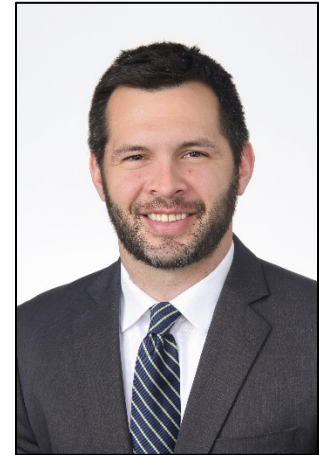
"School District and Zoning Exemptions," *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2015)

### **RECENT PRESENTATIONS**

*Construction Law 101*, National Business Institute (December 2019)

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

*Construction Purchasing & Bidding Common Problems & Solutions*, Illinois ASBO (March 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

*Construction Contracts: Boilerplate Language Landmines You May Not Know, ,*  
National Business Institute (February 2019)

*The Anatomy of a Mechanics Lien Claim: Preparing, Serving and Filing Notices  
and Claims,* Illinois State Bar Association Continuing Legal Education (May  
2018)

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

*Community College Funds – Lawful Expenditures and Practical Considerations,*  
Spring ICCCFD Conference (April 2018)

# Robbins Schwartz

## **PHILIP H. GERNER III**

**PARTNER, CHICAGO**

312.332.7760

pgerner@robbins-schwartz.com

Phil Gerner counsels and represents school districts and community colleges in collective bargaining negotiations, union representation petitions and IELRB proceedings, teacher evaluations, remediations and dismissals, employee discipline and discharge issues, labor contract administration and grievance arbitration and other labor and employment issues. Phil has represented school districts and community colleges in numerous labor arbitrations, unfair labor practice hearings, tenured teacher dismissals and IDHR and EEOC proceedings. Phil has successfully handled a number of appellate court appeals on issues of significance for educational employers, including short-term employee bargaining unit exclusion standards, teacher evaluation plan bargaining obligations and RIF/seniority rights of tenured teachers.

Phil is a frequent presenter for IASB, IASA, Illinois ASBO, ICCTA and other educational employer associations on a full range of labor and employment issues, including collective bargaining negotiations, teacher evaluation and remediation, school administrator employment contracts, employee discipline and discharge, and public employee speech and concerted activity issues.

### **AWARDS**

Illinois Leading Lawyer, Employment and School Law, 2004-2012

### **RECENT PUBLICATIONS**

"Hot Topics in Collective Bargaining," *IASB.COM*, IASB (2014)

Contributing author, "Labor Relations: Contract Administration Including ULPs," *Illinois School Law*, IICLE (2005, 2010 and 2012)

"Collective Bargaining Implications of the Performance Evaluation Reform Act of 2010 (SB 315) and the Education Reform Act (SB 7)," *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2011)

### **RECENT PRESENTATIONS**

*After Janus: Implication for Labor and Management*, Chicago-Kent College of Law (November 2018)

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

*Employee Misconduct Investigations and Discipline: Best Practices to Minimize Employer Liability*, In-Service (November 2018)



### **PRACTICE AREAS**

Education Law  
Employee Benefits  
Labor & Employment  
Litigation

### **EDUCATION**

J.D., Washington  
University School of Law

B.A., *cum laude*, St.  
Lawrence University

### **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

*Public Pension Changes, the Impact of Janus, President Employment Contracts, and RIF, ICCTA (September 2018)*

*Public Pension Changes, the Impact of Janus, and RIF, ICCCP (September 2018)*

*How to Successfully Evaluate and Remediate Tenured Teachers to Effectively Defend Legal Challenges to the Remediation Plan/Process, IASPA (January 2018)*

*At the Table: Bargaining Trends, Key Contract Issues, and Management Strategies, ICSA (November 2017)*

# Robbins Schwartz

## **SUSAN E. NICHOLAS**

**ASSOCIATE, 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

## ZARIA N. UDEH

ASSOCIATE, CHICAGO

312.332.7760

zudeh@robbins-schwartz.com

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)

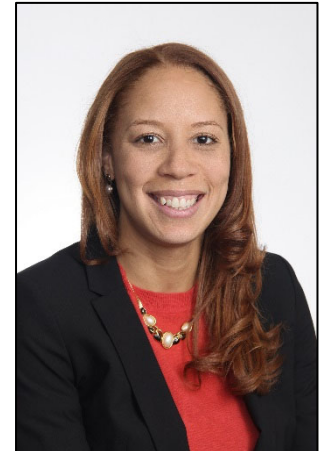
*Responding to Requests & Complaints of Transgender Students*, IASB/IASA/IASBO Joint Annual Conference (November 2017)

*Handling IEP and 504 Plan Disputes*, National Business Institute (November 2017)

*SB 100...One Year Later: Lessons Learned* (October 2017)

*Transgender Students Update: The Ever Changing Legal Landscape* (October 2017)

*Unilateral Placement for Special Education Students: A Big Gamble?*, IAASE (February 2017)



### 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

## **MICHELLE L. WEBER**

**ASSOCIATE, 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

# 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

## EMILY P. BOTHFELD

ASSOCIATE, CHICAGO

312.332.7760

ebothfeld@robbins-schwartz.com

Emily practices in the area of education law with a focus on student and higher education matters. She counsels school districts and higher education institutions on a variety of issues, including matters related to student discipline, Title IX, free speech, student disability rights, student data privacy and policy development. She has extensive experience representing educational institutions in responding to complaints filed with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, Illinois State Board of Education, Office of the Illinois Attorney General and Illinois Department of Human Rights. Emily regularly represents school districts and higher education institutions in state and federal court on civil rights and constitutional claims and breach of contract claims.

Prior to joining Robbins Schwartz, Emily represented students with disabilities in special education matters. Emily attended the George Washington University Law School, where she was a member of the George Washington International Law Review and the GW Law Moot Court Board. Prior to attending law school, Emily taught high school mathematics and science in Hangzhou, China.

### RECENT PUBLICATIONS

"Disabled Athlete Can't Support ADA Claims," *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2018)

### RECENT PRESENTATIONS

*Legislative Update: A Review of New (and Proposed) Laws Affecting Illinois Community Colleges' Risk Management Practices*, Illinois Community College Chief Financial Officers Fall Conference (October 2019)

*A Student's "Right" to a College Education: Due Process Rights in Academic and Non-Academic Discipline*, Illinois Community College Chief Student Services Officers' Summer Meeting (June 2019)

*Updates and Recent Developments out of the U.S. Department of Education*, Chicago Bar Association Education Law Committee Spring Seminar (March 2019)

*Legal Hot Topics for Nursing Program Administrators and Faculty*, Illinois Organization of Associate Degree Nursing (March 2019)



### PRACTICE AREAS

Education Law  
Special Education  
Student Discipline

### EDUCATION

J.D., *with honors*, George Washington University Law School

B.S., *cum laude*, Vanderbilt University

### ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit

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

Supreme Court of Illinois

### ORGANIZATIONS

Chicago Bar Association

Illinois Council of School Attorneys

National Council of School Attorneys

# Robbins Schwartz

## **THOMAS C. GARRETSON**

**ASSOCIATE, CHICAGO**

312.332.7760

tgarretson@robbins-schwartz.com

Tom practices in the area of labor and employment law. Tom counsels employers in all aspects of labor and employment law, including employee discipline, labor relations, 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.

Prior to joining Robbins Schwartz, Tom worked in the Labor Relations Department for a large public health system. During law school, Tom interned in the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's Chicago district office.

### **RECENT PRESENTATIONS**

*Employee Misconduct Investigations and Discipline: Best Practices to Minimize Employer Liability* (September 2018)

*Compliance with Mandated Reporter Obligations Under ANCRA*, In-Service (June 2018)

*Conducting Effective Workplace Investigations*, In-Service (June 2018)



### **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

# Robbins Schwartz

## JESSICA L. KNOX

ASSOCIATE, CHICAGO

312.332.7760

[jknox@robbins-schwartz.com](mailto:jknox@robbins-schwartz.com)

Jessica practices in the firm's commercial, construction, real estate, public finance, and taxation practice groups. Jessica represents clients such as townships, school districts, community colleges, and private entities in real property taxation and assessment appeals. She also represents clients in the areas of commercial transactions and construction law, including drafting and negotiating contracts, litigation, and alternative dispute resolution.

Prior to joining Robbins Schwartz, Jessica's practice involved representing clients on commercial and residential real estate transactions, leases, employment contracts, and residential tax appeals. Jessica also previously represented lenders in residential foreclosures in both Washington State and Illinois.

### RECENT PUBLICATIONS

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)

### RECENT PRESENTATIONS

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

*Construction Law 101*, NBI (December 2019)



### PRACTICE AREAS

Commercial Law  
Construction Law  
Property Tax &  
Revenue Preservation  
Real Estate Development

### EDUCATION

J.D., *cum laude*, Florida  
Coastal School of Law

B.A., University of  
Minnesota

### ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

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

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

Supreme Court of Illinois

# Robbins Schwartz

## JESSICA A. MILLIGAN

ASSOCIATE, 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 PRESENTATIONS

*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