



**Robbins Schwartz**  
One Team. Making Your Mission Ours.

---

## School Administrators' Conference

**October 9, 2024**

**Chicago**

190 South LaSalle Street, Suite 2550  
Chicago, IL 60603  
p 312.332.7760  
f 312.332.7768

**Champaign**

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

**Lisle**

550 Warrenville Road, Suite 460  
Lisle, IL 60532-4311  
p 630.929.3639  
f 630.783.3231

**Rockford**

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



**Robbins Schwartz**  
One Team. Making Your Mission Ours.

[www.robbsins-schwartz.com](http://www.robbsins-schwartz.com)

## Contents

|                                                                                                       |   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Schedule-at-a-Glance</b> .....                                                                     | 3 |
| <b>General Session</b>                                                                                |   |
| Walking A Thin Line: Employee & Student Speech Rights On and Off Campus .....                         | 4 |
| <b>Topic Sessions</b>                                                                                 |   |
| Responding to Employee Leave and Accommodation Requests in the Evolving Modern Workplace .....        | 5 |
| Anxiety and School Refusal: Collaboratively Constructing the Path Back to School .....                | 5 |
| Understanding Construction Litigation and Planning for Success .....                                  | 5 |
| Employment Rules for Schools: 10 Legislative Updates for HR Professionals .....                       | 6 |
| Mastering the Complex World of Public Bidding .....                                                   | 6 |
| Complex Parent Demands: Best Practices and Legal Pitfalls When Responding to Difficult Requests ..... | 7 |
| Lessons Learned from Title IX Litigation .....                                                        | 8 |
| Labor and Union Issues Affecting College Construction Projects .....                                  | 8 |
| Property Tax Disputes and Protecting Your Tax Base .....                                              | 8 |
| <b>Biographies</b> .....                                                                              | 9 |

## Schedule at a Glance

|                                |                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.</b>   | <b>REGISTRATION/BREAKFAST</b>                                                                                                                               |
| <b>8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.</b>  | <b>GENERAL SESSION</b>                                                                                                                                      |
| Grand Ballroom A/B             | Walking A Thin Line: Employee & Student Speech Rights On and Off Campus<br><i>Presented by: Joseph J. Perkoski and Caroline A. Roselli</i>                  |
| <b>10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.</b> | Break / Switch Rooms                                                                                                                                        |
|                                | <b><i>PLEASE SELECT ONE TOPIC TO ATTEND</i></b>                                                                                                             |
| <b>10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.</b> | <b>Session 1</b>                                                                                                                                            |
| Grand Ballroom A               | Responding to Employee Leave and Accommodation Requests in the Evolving Modern Workplace<br><i>Presented by: Kevin P. Noll and Holly E. Jacobs</i>          |
| Grand Ballroom B               | Anxiety and School Refusal: Collaboratively Constructing the Path Back to School<br><i>Presented by: Laura M. Sinars and Hannah M. May</i>                  |
| Cyprus Room, Floor 12          | Understanding Construction Litigation and Planning for Success<br><i>Presented by: Kenneth M. Florey and Katie DiPiero</i>                                  |
| <b>11:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.</b> | Break / Switch Rooms                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.</b> | <b>Session 2</b>                                                                                                                                            |
| Grand Ballroom A               | Employment Rules for Schools: 10 Legislative Updates for HR Professionals<br><i>Presented by: Catherine R. Locallo and Matthew M. Swift</i>                 |
| Cyprus Room, Floor 12          | Mastering the Complex World of Public Bidding<br><i>Presented by: Howard A. Metz and Logan K. Sweeney</i>                                                   |
| Santorini Room, Floor 2        | Lunch 1                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>12:30 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.</b> | Break / Switch Rooms                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>12:45 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.</b>  | <b>Session 3</b>                                                                                                                                            |
| Grand Ballroom B               | Complex Parent Demands: Best Practices and Legal Pitfalls When Responding to Difficult Requests<br><i>Presented by: Zaria N. Udeh and Hayley A. Willian</i> |
| Santorini Room, Floor 2        | Lunch 2                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>1:45 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.</b>   | Break / Switch Rooms                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.</b>   | <b>Session 4</b>                                                                                                                                            |
| Grand Ballroom A/B             | Lessons Learned from Title IX Litigation<br><i>Presented by: Michelle L. Weber, Nikoleta Lamprinakos, and Aidan C. Falk</i>                                 |
| Cyprus Room, Floor 12          | Labor and Union Issues Affecting School Construction Projects (2:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.)<br><i>Presented by: Howard A. Metz and Logan K. Sweeney</i>           |
|                                | Property Tax Disputes and Protecting Your Tax Base (2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.)<br><i>Presented by: Brittany Flaherty Theis and Scott L. Ginsburg</i>            |

---

## General Session | 8:30 a.m.

### **Walking A Thin Line: Employee & Student Speech Rights On and Off Campus**

School administrators continue to navigate challenging First Amendment issues involving students and staff. Our general session will explore the range of thorny issues school administrators are experiencing and can expect to confront related to student and staff expression in classrooms, on school premises as well as on social media. With the political season upon us and significant global issues raging, we can expect ever growing challenges in walking the narrow line that is First Amendment adherence.

#### **Presenters:**

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

[Caroline A. Roselli](#), Partner

---

## **Session 1 | 10:15 a.m.**

### **Please Select One Topic Per Session**

#### **Responding to Employee Leave and Accommodation Requests in the Evolving Modern Workplace**

The Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) obligates districts to provide eligible employees with unpaid leave of up to 12 weeks annually while the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) obligates schools to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities, unless doing so would cause an undue hardship. This presentation provides an overview a district's obligations under both the FMLA and the ADA, and analyzes recent trends with respect to leave entitlement and accommodations in the evolving modern workplace and how the two Acts can often overlap.

##### **Presenters:**

[Kevin P. Noll](#), Partner and [Holly E. Jacobs](#), Associate

#### **Anxiety and School Refusal: Collaboratively Constructing the Path Back to School**

School districts are increasingly faced with reports from parents that their student's anxiety is preventing them from attending school. We will review several cases where parents have challenged a school district's response to significant school refusal/school anxiety. In this review, we will identify strategies, interventions and plans that have worked and/or offered a FAPE to a student and those where the district's response was deemed inappropriate or insufficient resulting in orders for compensatory and/or private services or placements.

##### **Presenters:**

[Laura M. Sinars](#), Partner and [Hannah M. May](#), Associate

#### **Understanding Construction Litigation and Planning for Success**

Construction litigation is complex. Regardless of whether an architect's design or a contractor's means and methods are to blame, join Robbins Schwartz's construction lawyers as they provide an overview of construction litigation, from filing the complaint to reaching a favorable settlement or successful judgment--with limited expert fees and lower legal expense.

##### **Presenters:**

[Kenneth M. Florey](#), Partner, and [Katie DiPiero](#), Associate

---

## **Session 2 | 11:30 a.m.**

### **Please Select One Topic Per Session**

#### **Employment Rules for Schools: 10 Legislative Updates for HR Professionals**

We continue to see significant legislative changes focused on enhancing employee benefits and rights in the workplace. This session will provide attendees with an in-depth understanding of new or amended laws and regulatory guidance which will impact your workplace.

**Presenters:**

[Catherine R. Locallo](#), Partner and [Matthew M. Swift](#), Associate

#### **Mastering the Complex World of Public Bidding**

Public bidding can be complex, with numerous exceptions, steps, and challenges along the way. Our presentation is designed to help you understand the process and successfully navigate public bidding.

**Presenters:**

[Howard A. Metz](#), Partner, and [Logan K. Sweeney](#), Associate

---

## **Session 3 | 12:45 p.m.**

**Please Select One Topic Per Session**

### **Complex Parent Demands: Best Practices and Legal Pitfalls When Responding to Difficult Requests**

With increasingly unique and complex demands being made by parents/advocates as they relate to educational services, this presentation will explore what these general and special education demands look like, such as requests to record meetings and for specific prior written notice; (2) best practices for responding to such demands; and (3) how to ensure legal compliance when approaching these requests.

**Presenters:**

[Zaria N. Udeh](#), Partner and [Hayley A. Willian](#), Associate

---

## **Session 4 | 2:00 p.m.**

### **Please Select One Topic Per Session**

#### **Lessons Learned from Title IX Litigation**

Amidst the ever-changing landscape of Title IX, school districts are continuously working to adjust policies, procedures and practices to ensure their schools are in compliance with current laws and regulations. This presentation will examine recent Title IX cases, involving both employees and students, and provide participants with insight into how courts are evaluating schools' responses to sex discrimination claims. The presentation will also highlight best practices and tips for complying with Title IX.

##### **Presenters:**

[Michelle L. Weber](#), Partner, [Nikoleta Lamprinakos](#), Partner, and [Aidan C. Falk](#), Associate

#### **Labor and Union Issues Affecting School Construction Projects (2:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.)**

School construction projects often involve interactions with local trade unions at different stages of the work. From the initial contract award to potential work stoppages during construction, it is important for school administrators to understand how to handle these situations so as to minimize the impact on the project schedule. This presentation will include an overview of the Illinois Prevailing Wage Act, as well as address issues such as Responsible Bidder Ordinances, Project Labor Agreements, and setting up a proper reserve gate system to keep union picketing activity from bringing your project to a halt.

##### **Presenters:**

[Howard A. Metz](#), Partner and [Logan K. Sweeney](#), Associate

#### **Property Tax Disputes and Protecting Your Tax Base (2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.)**

The presentation will explain how property tax appeals can significantly impact a school district's revenue, emphasizing the importance of intervening in these cases to protect financial interests. We will discuss the risks of lost revenue, especially from large commercial and industrial property appeals, and the impact on school funding. By intervening, districts can actively participate in the appeal process, ensuring their concerns are heard and mitigating the losses. The session will include a discussion on the long-term benefits of intervention for maintaining stable budgets and avoiding unexpected financial shortfalls.

##### **Presenters:**

[Brittany Flaherty Theis](#), Partner and [Scott L. Ginsburg](#), Partner

## Biographies