

FRANCZEK



JOHN RELIAS

Partner

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John Relias is a founding partner of the firm and a member of the Education Practice Group at Franczek P.C.

John represents elementary and secondary school districts and governing boards throughout Illinois. John counsels and defends school districts on all areas of education law including special education, student rights, contracts, labor and employment, discrimination, tort actions, and civil rights in both state and federal courts and agencies. Several of his cases have set precedents in these areas.

Prior to forming the firm, John practiced law for 22 years at Vedder, Price, Kaufman & Kammholz, beginning in 1972.

John is recognized in Who's Who in America. He is a member of the Illinois and National Association of School Boards Council of School Attorneys. John is a past president of Wilmette School District No. 39, and served on that Board for 16 years (1989–1997, 2001–2009).

John serves on the board of directors for the Northwestern University Settlement Association, a nonprofit founded to provide resources that empower its West Town neighbors to take personal responsibility for overcoming the obstacles of poverty and improving the quality of their lives. The Settlement operates more than 70 programs and services, serving approximately 8,000 low-income neighbors each year.

Education

- J.D., cum laude, Northwestern University School of Law, 1972 (Order of the Coif)
- B.A., with highest distinction, Northwestern University, 1968, Phi Beta Kappa (history)

Bar & Court Admissions

- Illinois
- U.S. Supreme Court
- U.S. Courts of Appeal for the Seventh and Ninth Circuits
- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois – Trial Bar
- U.S. District Courts for the Central and Southern Districts of Illinois

Representative Experience

- An argued precedent-setting case, *Dale M. v. Board of Education*, 237 F.3d (7th 2001), which determined that public school districts were not responsible to fund residential placements when a determination of placement included non-educational factors.
- Served as counsel to the school district in *Patricia P. v. Board of Education*, 203 F.3d 402 (7th 2000), which set the standard across the country in regards to residential placement, the court found that if a parent does not cooperate in the initial evaluation process and meetings regarding residential placement the parent forfeits their rights for reimbursement for the placement costs.
- *Leak v. Board of Education*, 2015 Il. App. (1st) 143202 (2015). Served as lead counsel in a case of first impression, which determined that a superintendent of schools is not statutorily authorized to unilaterally transfer students to an alternative school for more than 10 school days.
- *Wilson v. Hinsdale Elementary School District 181*, 349 Il. App. 3d 243 (2nd Dist. App. Ct. 2004). Argued leading case that students can be disciplined for off campus conduct that could have caused disruption at school.

Recognition

John was recognized in Illinois Super Lawyers from 2007–2018. From 2011–2018, John was named a Leading Lawyer by Law Bulletin Publishing.