

# ECASB LEGAL BRIEF

An ECASB Monthly Newsletter about the Latest Legal Issues



## ATTORNEY SPOTLIGHT:

*Tracie L. Lopardi*



**HARRIS BEACH** PLLC  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Ms. Lopardi received her Bachelor of Arts Degree from State University of New York at Geneseo and attended Syracuse University College of Law, where she earned her JD, magna cum laude. She has been admitted into the Geneseo Alumni Association where she received the Distinguished Service award in 2015, Super Lawyers for Labor and Employment Law since 2015 and Buffalo Business First Legal Elite of Western New York since 2012. Tracie practices in the area of Labor and Employment Legal Practice, Higher Education and K-12 Education. Ms. Lopardi conducts independent workplace investigations involving harassment, discrimination, retaliation, bullying and workplace violence; and conducts workplace training concerning all aspects of employment law and human resources. She has extensive experience in negotiating, litigation and arbitrating labor and employment law disputes. Tracie handles claims in state and local courts as well as before administrative agencies.

Tracie is a former board member for Meals on Wheels of Buffalo and Erie County, former co-legislative liaison for the Society of Human Resource Managers/ Buffalo Niagara Human Resource Association, is a volunteer attorney for the

## The School Attorney

*Law Firms will send out invoices to school districts. The amount that a school district spends on legal firms would be documented in the financial statements. School districts may end up working with one, two, or three or more law firms representing different areas of the school related business. A school district may experience higher than normal expenses related to legal expenditures if they are involved in litigation, negotiations, or when they have a capital project approved. There are school districts that will also utilize the legal services provided by either Erie 1 BOCES or Erie 2 CC BOCES. There are a handful of districts that have a school attorney sit at the Board of Education table during school board meetings to advise them if issues should develop during the course of the meeting.*

## Harris Beach Law Offices -

*Harris Beach Attorneys, PLLC has offices in Albany, Buffalo, Ithaca, Long Island, New York City, Rochester, Saratoga, Syracuse, and White Plains in New York state with additional offices in Newark, New Jersey; New Haven Connecticut; and Washington D.C.*

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Say Yes to Education in Buffalo and a board member for Literacy Buffalo Niagara. Ms Lopardi has been loyal to her family's teaching roots as an adjunct professor at Niagara University where she has taught Education Law to students enrolled in the Educational Administration programs.

Tracie represents school districts before the New York State Commissioner of Education and in Education Law 3020-a and Civil Service Law Sections 71, 73, and 75 hearing regarding discipline of tenured educators and permanent non-instructional employees. She also provides guidance and counsel to higher education institutions on a diverse array of matters including labor and employment as well as Title IX, student athletics and NCAA compliance. Ms. Lopardi is a frequent presenter at ECASB events and has presented at the WNY Summer Law Conference sponsored by ECASB and the Western New York Educational Service Council.



Above: Ms. Lopardi presents at the 2022 WNY Law Conference held at Salvatore's. Traci presented on Employee Issues - Disciplinary Proceedings and Other Issues.

## The Board & More Legal Issues Recent Developments in New York State and Around the Country

*The following items are headlines from around the country related to legal issues in schools ... where would you stand? :*

- *After contentious debate Florida district's board rejects proposal to name October LGBTQ Month.*
- *California moves one step closer to making kindergarten mandatory.*
- *Parent group files suit against Minnesota district seeking to ban display of Black Lives Matter posters in schools.*
- *Increasing number of states that permit medical use marijuana are allowing local districts to decide whether to allow such use on school property.*
- *Coalition of parents and civil rights organizations seeking summary judgement in suit against State of Maryland claiming Baltimore district is underfunded by \$705 million.*
- *Teacher's union initiates strike a day before the new school year begins forcing Ohio district to possibly begin the school year with online instruction.*
- *Attorney plans to file a class action suit seeking \$27 billion in damages on behalf of Uvalde mass shooting victims.*

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For Legal Advice - Please consult your school attorney.