



Carlos Chavez

PARTNER

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PRACTICE AREAS

Municipal Law
School Districts

Carlos Chavez represents public school districts and other K-12 educational entities. His practice focuses on representing school districts in special education and student disability matters, including counseling, advice and all phases of dispute resolution. He also assists school districts in navigating their complex and ever-changing obligations under state and federal education law, including such issues as student discipline, student privacy, education record requests, and nondiscrimination.

Carlos routinely provides in-service trainings for school districts on these issues and has previously served as adjunct faculty in the area of school law for the University of Washington's Danforth Educational Leadership (Principals) and Leadership for Learning (Superintendent) programs. Carlos has also served as a guest speaker for the University of Washington-Bothell and Seattle University teacher certification programs, as well as the UW-Bothell's Enhancing Capacity for Special Education Leadership (ECSEL) program, a preparation program for directors of special education.

Prior to law school, Carlos served in the U.S. Army and U.S. Army Reserve. He had the opportunity to serve on two international peacekeeping missions working directly with local community members on various military information campaigns.

Carlos enjoys spending time with his family, including three children, two English Springer Spaniels, and four chickens.

Bar Admissions:

- Washington
- U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit
- U.S. Supreme Court

Education:

- University of California, Davis, B.A., International Relations and German, *cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa
- Stanford Law School, J.D.

Honors:

- Selected for *Washington Super Lawyers*, 2023-2026
- Selected for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America* in the field of Education Law, 2024-2027, and as Lawyer of the Year in Education Law in Seattle, 2027

Speaking:

- Confidentiality Issues for Student Assistance Programs, Lake Stevens School District
- Section 504: Educating Students with Disabilities, Franklyn Pierce School District
- Training, Supervision and Evaluation of Special Education Paraeducators, Washington School Personnel Association
- Student Discipline Issues: Refresher on Working with Students with Disabilities, Issaquah School District
- Special Needs Transportation: Providing Safe and Appropriate Transportation Services, Washington Association of Pupil Transportation
- Implicit Bias: A Review of Ethical and Practical Considerations in the Legal Profession, Washington State Association of Municipal Attorneys
- Dyslexia Update: Defense Attorney Perspective, Washington Association of School Administrators
- Special Education: Off-Campus and Extracurricular Activities, Washington Schools Risk Management Pool
- Section 504 in Review: Evaluations, Accommodations & Non-Discrimination Issues, Puget Sound Educational Service District
- Dispute Resolution under the IDEA: Considerations on Compromise, Pacific Northwest Institute on Special Education and the Law

Professional Organizations:

- Washington Council of School Attorneys, past president and board member

Representative Matters:

- *S.J. v. Issaquah School District*. Successfully defended student's special education program from initial administrative hearing through proceedings before the Ninth Circuit court of Appeals.
- *Miller v. Mukilteo School District*. Obtained summary dismissal of employment claims by classified employee in state court proceeding.
- *B.D. and D.D. v. Puyallup School District*. Successfully defended student's special education program from initial administrative hearing through proceedings before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, as well as through related state court proceedings.
- *Shearer v. Tacoma School District*. Obtained summary judgment in both state and federal court in favor of school district and individual defendant on contract-based employment claims.
- *R.Z.C v. Northshore School District*. Successfully defended student's special education reevaluation from initial administrative hearing through proceedings before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.
- *T.K. v. Mercer Island School District*. Successfully defended student's special education program from initial administrative hearing through appeal to the federal district court and obtained summary judgment on related state and federal claims.
- *L.F. v. Lake Washington School District*. Obtained summary judgement on federal lawsuit that school district's communication plan violated a parent's 1st Amendment rights and successfully defended same before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.
- *Crofts v. Issaquah School District*. Successfully defended student's special education program from initial administrative hearing through proceedings before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.