



QUARTERLY E-NEWSLETTER

July – September 2014

LEGAL UPDATES

July 2014

- A new Illinois law, Public Act 98-0705, requires the Illinois State Board of Education to adopt a definition of Dyslexia and establish an advisory group to develop training for educators on Dyslexia, including multi-sensory, systematic and sequential instruction in reading.

August 2014

- Suburban school districts throughout the Northern Illinois area are fighting a newly proposed Illinois Senate Bill (SB 16) which would amend the school code to cut \$480 million in aid from 474 “wealthy” suburban school districts and redistribute the funding to poorer school districts in central and southern Illinois. The bill, which already has been passed by the Senate, is currently on hold in a House committee where further discussions will be held prior to the fall session begins in November 2014.
- A new Illinois law (P.A. 98-0639) will require all Illinois charter schools to comply with federal and state laws and regulations regarding the education of students with disabilities and the instruction of English language learners.
- A new Illinois law (P.A. 98-0716) makes changes to the Employment of Teachers Article of the School Code by requiring new or existing employees to be subject to additional health examinations, as well as a provisions that school boards may require all employees (not just teachers) to “furnish evidence of continued professional growth.”

September 2014

- The U.S. Supreme Court recently refused a request to hear a lawsuit which challenged California’s law prohibiting licensed psychologists and other mental health workers from providing “conversion therapy,” (a type of treatment aimed to change sexual orientation from homosexual to heterosexual) to minors. In its denial, the high court let stand a previous 9th Circuit appellate decision that found that California had demonstrated such therapy had no scientific merit and the law did not violate free-speech rights of mental health professionals and patients.
- An Illinois impartial due process hearing officer recently found that a parents’ dispute of a re-evaluation and request for an Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE) for their Autistic child was considered “frivolous,” as the District’s assessment met all the procedural requirements and utilized a variety of assessment tools. The hearing officer in the matter noted that the parents’ demand for an IEE “clearly” met the frivolousness standard, as the evaluation conducted by the District included, “... [A] comprehensive evaluation, for which Parent provided no meaningful level of challenge...”

MEMORIAL PAGE

A memorial page was recently added to the WTH website chronicling the life and legacy of our recently departed partner and friend, Brooke R. Whitted. Please visit the new page at:

<http://www.wthlawfirm.com/brooke-r-whitted-memorial/>

UPCOMING PRESENTATIONS

Date	Title/Topic	Organization
10/21/14	How to Obtain Mental Health and School Records in Illinois	Lake County Bar Association
11/6/14	The Latest Legal Issues Impacting Special Educators	Illinois Council for Exceptional Children
11/7/14	Best Practices in Non-Public Special Education Programs	Illinois State Board of Education
11/10/14	Illinois Special Education Law	National Business Institute
2/3/15	Special Education Laws Made Simple	National Business Institute
2/6 and 2/7/14	Special Education Updates and Legal Hot Topics	Illinois Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders

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