



Schulman,
Lopez, Hoffer
& Adelstein, LLP

ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS FOR
TEXAS NONPROFITS, PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

FIRM CV

Schulman, Lopez, Hoffer & Adelstein, LLP



Serving clients throughout Texas

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// 2021

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FIRM PROFILE

Attorneys Robert A. Schulman, Ricardo R. Lopez and Joseph E. Hoffer established Schulman, Lopez & Hoffer, LLP, in 2011 after practicing together for many years with another prominent Texas litigation and education boutique law firm. Jason Adelstein, with his commercial real estate team, joined the firm as a partner in April of 2015. Janet Robertson and Denise Pierce then merged in their practices joining the firm in summers 2017 and 2018 respectively. Together our attorneys have over 175 years of experience serving Texas public and private schools, nonprofit organizations and local government entities. We are proud of our ability to provide our clients with responsive, service driven legal advice.

One of our hallmarks is our accessibility. Our clients have unparalleled access to all of our attorneys no matter when or where needed. The way we implement our representation sets us apart. We work closely with each client providing one-on-one individualized attention that is responsive to client needs and we design a relationship from the start that utilizes all of our resources as efficiently and productively as possible.

Our attorneys are often recruited to speak at national, state, regional and local conferences including the National School Board Association, the National Alliance of Public Charter School

Attorneys, the Education Law Association, the Texas Public Charter Schools Association, the Texas Association of School Business Officials, the Texas Association of School Administrators, the University of Texas School Law Conference and others.

Our successes are not limited to the boardroom or the conference lectern; we are also skilled litigators in the federal and state trial courts, courts of appeals, the Texas Supreme Court and before administrative agencies. We respect the rules of court and procedure and adhere to the highest ethical standards and the Texas Lawyers Creed. Most importantly, our attorneys and staff are down-to-earth and can make often complicated legal matters easy to understand.

The Firm represents open-enrollment charter schools, multiple school districts and private schools, religious organizations, pre-schools and childcare operators, head start programs, nonprofit organizations as well as other education-related entities throughout Texas and Louisiana. **The Firm consults education organizations nationwide and serves as national legal council for many large school networks.**



SERVICES

- 1) Bond Council Services & Public Finance
- 2) Commercial Litigation & Civil Litigation before all Texas State & Federal Courts
- 3) Commercial Real Estate - Purchase, Sale, Leasing, Development
- 4) Construction Law
 - Procurement
 - Contracting
 - Construction and Post Construction
 - Infrastructure Development
- 5) Contract Law
- 6) Crisis Communication Services
- 7) Financial Compliance for Texas Public Schools
- 8) General Administrative Law
 - Open Records/Public Information
 - Open Meetings
 - Record Retention, FERPA
- 9) General Government Procedures
 - Procurement
 - Technology/Intellectual Property
 - Elections and Redistricting
 - Cyber Security Law
- 10) Nonprofit Corporations
- 11) Personnel and Employment/Labor Law
 - Staff Training and Development
 - Representation in Contested Matters
 - Employment Litigation
- 12) Preventive Advice and Counseling & Special Counsel to Boards
- 13) Public School Law
 - Student Rights and Discipline
 - Student Investigations
 - Free Speech/Religion
 - Nondiscrimination
 - Policies and Procedures
 - Governmental Immunity
- 14) School Start Up, Growth & Replication
- 15) Special Education
 - Due Process Hearings and Mediations
 - TEA and OCR Investigations
- 16) State and Federal Regulations, Guidelines & Administrative Law

OUR SERVICES

The firm offers full service bond counsel representation and has a commercial real estate group as well as an extensive portfolio of services. We are happy to share more about what our work includes or send additional materials. Please reach out with questions. **210-538-5385**



Schulman,
Lopez, Hoffer
& Adelstein, LLP

Employment Litigation Experience

DETAILS

The Firm and its attorneys have acted as general counsel, special counsel and defense counsel advising numerous entities in areas of complex employment litigation, including in all aspects of employment law (including sexual harassment, discrimination, retaliation, qui tam, FMLA, FLSA and other federal and state cause of action) and related claims. Defense clients for similar claims include numerous private schools, religious organizations, charter schools, school districts, childcare facilities, head start programs, and elder care facilities and programs.

The Firm provides representation in personnel-related hearings, administrative proceedings, and lawsuits of all types of employment-related matters including school law, civil rights/free speech, discrimination, harassment, retaliation, employee leave, and wage and hour (overtime) disputes. This representation may arise in a variety of contexts, such as the grievance/dispute resolution process, hearings before independent hearing examiners, hearings before a governing board, and actions filed in state and federal courts. The Firm employs an aggressive strategy designed to bring prompt resolution at the lowest possible cost. Specific strategies include: early investigation and assessment of a particular matter; applying governmental immunity whenever possible; development and implementation of a plan tailored to the particular circumstances pursuing summary disposition whenever possible; and thorough preparation for hearing or trial. *(continued...)*

EMPLOYMENT LITIGATION EXPERIENCE CONTINUED

The Firm handles cases from beginning to end, starting with the administrative process through litigation in state and/or federal court, including appeals at all levels. The Firm has had significant success in handling litigation in state and federal court including establishing positive caselaw for clients in the Fifth Circuit, numerous wins before the Texas Supreme Court and many intermediate Texas courts of appeals.

The Firm's litigation practice is statewide handling significant cases in El Paso, Dallas, Tarrant, Bexar, Harris, Travis, Galveston, Hidalgo, Cameron, Val Verde and many other counties and courts throughout Texas where our clients are located or conduct business.

We have deep experience in all forms of civil litigation from employment law,

civil rights, tort/immunity and commercial litigation in state and federal court, at both the trial and appellate levels, both directly by appointment and as members of panels and approved counsel lists for TASB, ACE Insurance, AIG Insurance, TAPS, PHLI, Liberty Mutual, Hanover, Arch, Cincinnati, United Educators, RSUI, UTICA, and on behalf of numerous other carriers statewide. The Firm has extensive experience in the Texas Courts, and regularly practices before the County, District and Appellate Courts. The Firm also has extensive experience litigating in Federal Court in the Western, Northern, Eastern and Southern Districts of Texas and has secured numerous victories for its clients at the Federal District Courts and the United States Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. The Firm also served as lead trial counsel in the last School Finance Trial in Travis County, Texas. The Firm has also handled numerous cases before the Texas Supreme Court, establishing law statewide.



ARTS

Examples of Significant Cases of the Firm and its Attorneys

CASES

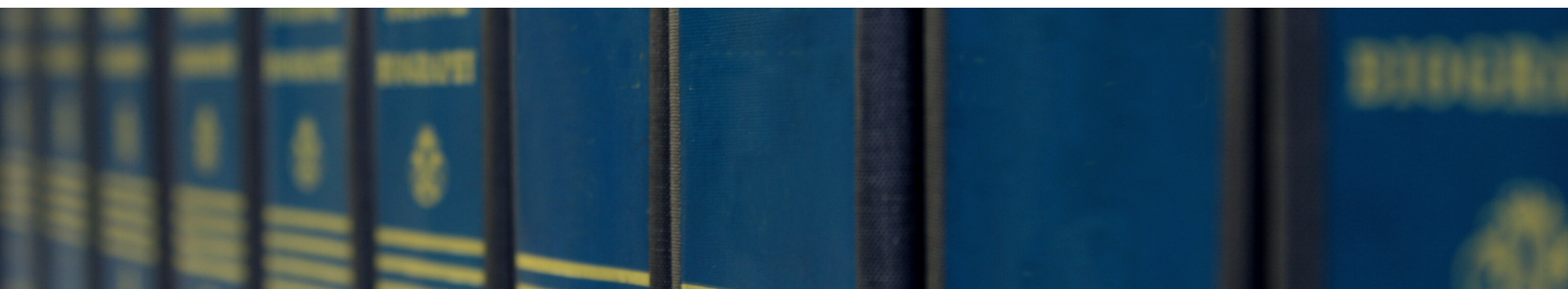
1. Odyssey 2020 Academy, Inc. v. Galveston Central Appraisal District, 585 S. W. 3d 530 (Tex. App. – Houston [14th Dist.], 2019)(Odyssey appeal to Supreme Court-PFR pending [last filing by GCAD in Mar 2020]).
2. Wynne v. Jubilee Academic Center, Inc., et al., No. A-19-CV-00739-JRN (W.D. Tex., Sept. 11, 2020)(Employment law claims brought under FMLA).
3. Democracy Prep, et al v. SA Alliance of Teachers & Support Personnel, 2019 WL 1548431 (Tex. App, San Antonio, April 10, 2019) pet. denied Mar. 13, 2020.
4. IDEA Public Schools v. Socorro Indep. Sch. Dist., 2020 WL 103853 (Tex. App. – Corpus Christi Jan. 9, 2020)(D's appeal pending).
5. Springboards to Education v. IDEA Public Schools, (S.D. Tex. 2019) (D's MSJ pending).
6. International American Education Federation, Inc. v. Dallas Central Appraisal District, (No. DC-18-18763, Tex. Dist. Ct. – Dallas, Oct. 4, 2019) (DCAD is appealing judgment).
7. International American Education Federation, Inc. v. Tarrant Appraisal District, No. 236-304400-18 (Tex. Dist. Ct. – Tarrant Co.) (P's MSJ hearing pending).
8. Daniel & Rocio Vasquez ANF of D.K.V. v. IDEA Public Schools, (S.D. Tex. 2019)(Dismissed).
9. Konark Limited Partnership v. BTX Schools, Inc. and BASIS Schools, Inc., 2018 WL 5808325 (Tex. App.-San Antonio, Nov. 7, 2018)
10. A.L. b/n/f M.L. v. Alamo Heights Indep. Sch. Dist., 2018 WL 4955220 (W.D. Tex., Oct. 12, 2018)
11. American YouthWorks, Inc. d/b/a American YouthWorks Charter School, et al. v. Texas Education Agency, et al., 555 S.W.3d 54 (Tex., Apr. 27, 2018) rehearing denied (Sep. 28, 2018)
12. Neighborhood Centers, Inc. v. Walker, 544 S.W.3d 744 (Tex., Apr. 13, 2018) (Employment law claims under Whistleblower Act)

EXAMPLES CONTINUED

13. Alamo Heights Indep. Sch. Dist. v. Clark, 544 S.W.3d 755 (Tex., Apr. 06, 2018) (Employment law claims brought under TCHRA)
14. Reyes v. San Felipe Del Rio Consolidated Indep. Sch. Dist., 2018 WL 1176487 (Tex. App.- San Antonio, Mar. 7, 2018) (Employment law claims)
15. Morath v. The Texas Taxpayer & Student Fairness Coal., 14-0776, 2016 WL 2853868, (Tex. May 13, 2016)
16. Marquez v. Garnett, 567 Fed.Appx. 214, 307 Ed. Law Rep. 742 (5th Cir. 2014)
17. Martinez v. South San Antonio Indep. Sch. Dist., 2013 WL 3280275 (W.D. Tex., Jun. 26, 2013) (Employment law claims)
18. Sundance at Stone Oak Ass'n v. North East Indep. Sch. Dist., 2013 WL 6022259 (Tex. App.- San Antonio, Nov. 13, 2013)
19. Garcia v. South San Antonio Indep. Sch. Dist., 2013 WL 5950122 (Tex. App.-San Antonio, Nov. 6, 2013) (Employment law claims)
20. Vallejo v. North East Indep. Sch. Dist., 2013 WL 3050484 (W.D. Tex., June 17, 2013) (Employment law claims)
21. In re: North East Indep. Sch. Dist., 2013 WL 2247485 (Tex. App.-San Antonio, May 22, 2013)
22. R.P. ex. rel. R.P. v. Alamo Heights Indep. Sch. Dist., 703 F.3d 801 (5th Cir. 2012)
23. Garza v. North East Indep. Sch. Dist., 415 Fed. Appx. 520 (5th Cir. 2011) (Employment law claims)
24. King v. Life School, 809 F.Supp 2d 572 (N.D. Tex., Aug. 9, 2011) (Employment law claims)
25. Mzyk v. North East Indep. Sch. Dist., 397 Fed. Appx. 13 (5th Cir. 2010) (Employment law claims)
26. Ohnesorge v. Winfree Academy Charter School, 328 S.W.3d 654 (Tex. App.-Dallas 2010) (Employment law claims)
27. Stannard v. North East Indep. Sch. Dist., 2010 WL 7114186 (5th Cir. 2010) (Employment law claims)

EXAMPLES CONTINUED

28. Herrera v. Eagle Pass Indep. Sch. Dist., 2008 WL 2221800 (Tex. App.-Amarillo, May 29, 2008) (Employment law claims)
29. Lyons v. North East Indep. Sch. Dist., 277 Fed. Appx. 455 (5th Cir. 2008) (Employment law claims)
30. North East Indep. Sch. Dist. v. Kelley, 277 S.W.3d 442 (Tex. App.-San Antonio 2008) (Employment law claims)
31. Guerra v. North East Indep. Sch. Dist., 496 F.3d 415 (5th Cir. 2007) (Employment law claims)
32. Avery v. Murphy, 2007 WL 2479822 (Tex. App.-San Antonio, Sep. 5, 2007)
33. Cavazos v. Edgewood Indep. Sch. Dist., 400 F.Supp.2d 948 (W.D. Tex., Aug. 3, 2005), aff'd 210 Fed.Appx. 414, (5th Cir. 2006) (Employment law claims)
34. Edgewood Indep. Sch. Dist. v. Macias, 2006 WL 2682300 (Tex. App-San Antonio, Sep. 20, 2006) (Employment law claims)
35. Plumbly v. North East Indep. Sch. Dist., 2006 WL 2469169 (W.D. Tex., Aug. 17, 2006) (Employment law claims)
36. Bowers v. Edgewood Indep. Sch. Dist., 2005 WL 2648332 (W.D. Tex., Oct. 4, 2005) (Employment law claims)
37. Prejean v. Cypress-Fairbanks Indep. Sch. Dist., 97 Fed. Appx. 480 (5th Cir. 2004) (Employment law claims)
38. Skinner v. San Felipe Del Rio Consolidated Indep. Sch. Dist., 95 Fed. Appx. 717 (5th Cir. 2004) (Employment law claims)
39. Vincent T. Garza Contracting Services, Inc. v. Harlandale ISD Public Facilities Corp., 2004 WL 1921010 (W.D. Tex., Aug. 26, 2004)
40. Perkins v. Alamo Heights Indep. Sch. Dist., 204 F.Supp.2d 991 (W.D. Tex., Apr. 9, 2002) (Employment law claims)



ATTORNEYS & KEY STAFF

PRINCIPALS IN THE FIRM

Joseph E. Hoffer, Managing Partner

Ricardo R. Lopez, Partner

Jason Adelstein, Partner



JOSEPH E. HOFFER

Managing Partner

Mr. Hoffer was born in Phoenix, Arizona, February 19, 1979. Admitted to Texas Bar 2006, Texas; admitted to Arizona and Arkansas Bar 2021; also admitted to practice before the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, U.S. District Court, Western District of Texas and U.S. District Court for the Northern District, Southern District, Eastern District and Western District of Texas.

Preparatory education, Southwest Texas State University (B.A. 2003, summa cum laude) and Texas A&M University–College Station. Legal education, St. Mary's University School of Law (J.D. 2006, Top 11%); Staff Writer, St. Mary's Law Journal (2004-05); Editorial Board Member and Research / Articles Editor, St. Mary's Law Journal, Dean's List, Author: Qui Tam: Survival of the Action and Fate of the Proceeds Following the Death of the Realtor. For the King and For Himself . . . and His Heirs. Member, State Bar of Texas and State Bar of Arkansas, Texas Council of School Attorneys, and Education Law Association.

Mr. Hoffer is a nationally recognized speaker on legal issues impacting public entities and nonprofit entities. He also regularly presents on nonprofit 501(c)(3) and corporate governance issues. Mr. Hoffer's practice focuses on the representation of Texas public entities in all areas, including civil litigation, employment law, financial/business transactions operations and litigation, construction, governance, nonprofit law, administrative law and litigation, and civil rights matters. Mr. Hoffer has extensive litigation experience both at the trial level and appellate level before state and federal courts of appeals.

He has been recognized as a Best Lawyer in the legal field by the Scene in SA magazine, a Rising Star by Texas Super Lawyers for multiple years, as Outstanding Lawyer for Schools by SA Magazine, and as Best Lawyer in Education Law in San Antonio Magazine. He was most recently recognized as a 2021 Best Lawyer in Scene in SA magazine for nonprofits and schools. Mr. Hoffer is based in the San Antonio office, but represents schools and entities statewide.



RICARDO R. LOPEZ

Partner

Mr. Lopez was born in Laredo, Texas, October 8, 1974. Admitted to Texas Bar 1999, Texas; also admitted to practice before the Supreme Court of Texas and the United States District Courts for the Western, Southern and Eastern Districts of Texas, and before the United States Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Preparatory education, Rice University (B.A. 1996); legal education, South Texas College of Law (J.D. 1999); Articles Editor, South Texas Law Review, National Champion Brief Writer-Varsity Moot Court Team, Dean's List.

Mr. Lopez's practice currently includes the representation of educational entities and other public and private employers in all areas, including labor, employment and civil rights matters. Mr. Lopez has successfully defended school districts in state and federal courts from claims under, among other things, Title VII, Section 1983, Title IX, the First Amendment, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Texas Commission on Human Rights Act, The Texas Workers' Compensation Act, and the Texas Whistleblower Act. Mr. Lopez has also successfully represented school districts in litigation arising from contract disputes and procurement issues, and has advised school boards on school contract issues. Mr. Lopez also has experience in administrative matters before school district boards of trustees and other state and federal agencies.

Mr. Lopez has been recognized as a Best Lawyer in the legal field by the Scene in SA magazine. He is a member of the State Bar of Texas; School Law Section of the Texas State Bar; Texas Council of School Attorneys; National School Boards Association; and is on the Planning Committee for the University of Texas School Law Conference. Mr. Lopez is based in the San Antonio office.



JASON M. ADELSTEIN

Partner & Department Head of Real Estate Group

Mr. Adelstein was born in San Antonio, Texas, May 8, 1980. Admitted to the Texas Bar 2006, Texas; also admitted to practice before the U.S. District Court, Western District of Texas and U.S. District Court, Southern District of Texas. Preparatory education, Columbia University in the City of New York (B.A. 2002).

Legal education, Southern Methodist University's Dedman School of Law (J.D. 2006). Mr. Adelstein is Board Certified in Commercial Real Estate Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization and is a member of The College of the State Bar of Texas. He is also a member of the Texas Bar Association and the San Antonio Bar Association.

Mr. Adelstein represents sophisticated public, private and institutional parties in the negotiation, acquisition, development, leasing, financing, operation and purchase/sale of all types of commercial properties, including educational, retail, industrial, office, and public use.

Mr. Adelstein also represents surface owners, mineral owners and operators as to the needs and concerns related to resource exploration and conservation, which provides him with invaluable insight regarding mineral rights that may impact his clients' purchasing real estate. Mr. Adelstein also assists clients in a wide range of other general legal and business issues, providing day-to-day legal advice and counsel. By developing a close working relationship with each of his clients, it is Jason's goal to become an important member of each of his client's management team by understanding each client's unique business and needs.

Mr. Adelstein has been recognized as a San Antonio Rising Star in the legal field in the Scene in SA magazine for 2009, 2011 and 2012 and 2014. He was also recognized as a Rising Star in Texas Super Lawyer, 2015-2019, and named as one of San Antonio's "Best of the Best" commercial real estate attorneys in San Antonio in 2014 through 2019.



JANET VAUGHAN ROBERTSON

Partner & Department Head of Public Finance Group

Ms. Robertson was born in Wewoka, Oklahoma, January 13, 1957, admitted to the Texas bar in 1989. Preparatory education, University of Texas at Austin (B.J. magna cum laude); legal education, University of Houston Law Center (J.D.). Ms. Robertson became a member of the Honor Society of Phi

Kappa Phi while at the University of Texas at Austin and of the International Legal Honor Society of Phi Delta Phi while at University of Houston.

With a solid background serving as corporate counsel to public and nonprofit corporations, Ms. Robertson focuses her practice on the public finance arena where she is a highly respected bond counsel, underwriter counsel, credit bank counsel, borrower counsel, issuer counsel and trustee counsel in connection with multi-million dollar municipal and conduit bond issues for school districts, charter schools, private schools and local governments.

Ms. Robertson's bond counsel and public finance law practice serves independent school districts, public charter schools, private schools, community colleges, cities, counties, health care facilities, continuous care retirement communities, cultural facilities, industrial development facilities, housing developments and other issuers in Texas and nationwide.

Ms. Robertson is a graduate of Leadership Houston Class XXXI and past Co-chair of its Education Day Committee. She is also a member of the Texas chapter of Women in Public Finance, the Alliance of Public Charter School Attorneys, National Association of Bond Lawyers, Houston Bar Association, Texas Bar Foundation and Texas Women Lawyers.



DENISE NANCE PIERCE

Partner

Denise Nance Pierce is a seasoned school law attorney who has served public schools with excellence for 20 years. Pierce has been at the center of the development of Texas charter law and regulation and is committed to the value of quality public education.

Prior to joining Schulman, Lopez, Hoffer & Adelstein, L.L.P., Ms. Pierce owned a solo practice, The Law Office of Denise Nance Pierce, P.C. From 2009 to 2015, she served as Vice President and General Counsel for the Texas Charter Schools Association (TCSA) and she began her legal career in 1995 as a staff attorney in the Legal Services Division at the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB).

Pierce received a J.D. from the University of Texas School of Law and a bachelor's degree in Economics & Political Science from Texas A&M University.

Ms. Pierce is licensed to practice law at the United States Supreme Court, the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, the Supreme Court of Texas, the Western District of Texas, and the Southern District of Texas. She is also an active Member of the School Law and Employment Law sections of the State Bar of Texas and the TASB Council of School Attorneys.

As a respected legal scholar and presenter in the charter school community, Denise serves on the Advisory Council for the Alliance of Public Charter School Attorneys, which is a national network of charter school attorneys.

Denise has served the Austin community through service on the boards of directors for the Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, the Austin Area Urban League and for the Roy F. and Joann Cole Mitte Foundation. In addition, she is an active member of the Austin chapters of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.; Jack and Jill of America, Inc.; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; and the Urban League.



CHRISTOPHER SCHULZ

Partner

Mr. Schulz is admitted by the Supreme Court of Texas and is also admitted to practice before the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas. Preparatory education, University of Texas at Austin (B.J., 2003), University of Kansas M.S. 2007); legal education University of Kansas (J.D.)

Mr. Schulz's practice includes the representation of educational entities, school districts, and other public and private entities in all areas, including disability law, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and special education matters under the IDEA, and administrative law matters.

From 2007 to 2010, Mr. Schulz was an Assistant Attorney General for the State of Texas. In that role, he worked in the Open Records Division interpreting the provisions of the Texas Public Information Act and conducting trainings for State of Texas employees. From 2010 to 2013, he worked privately, representing parents and students in due process hearings, mediations, disciplinary hearings, and local grievances. He also represented juveniles involved in the juvenile justice and DFPS systems. Mr. Schulz has defended public schools in due process complaints, Office for Civil Rights complaints, TEA complaints, and appeals to federal court. Mr. Schulz also has experience representing school boards in compliance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, Chapter 21 termination and nonrenewal hearings, appeals to the Commissioner of Education, and investigations into educator misconduct. He is an experienced public speaker who has presented on various topics, including FERPA, open records laws, the IDEA, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Mr. Schulz is a member of the Texas Council of School Attorneys and he is based in our Austin office



ALLEN KELLER

Partner

Mr. Keller is admitted to Texas Bar, 2009, Texas. Preparatory education, University of North Texas (B.A., 2004); legal education, St. Mary's University College of Law (J.D. 2009) (cum laude; St. Mary's Law Journal Editorial Board, 2008- 2009; St. Mary's Law Journal Staff Writer, 2007-2008). Member: San Antonio Bar Association.

Upon graduating from law school, Mr. Keller worked as a Briefing Attorney with the Fourteenth Court of Appeals in Houston, Texas (2009-2010). In 2010, he joined a prominent Houston education law firm. Mr. Keller's practice currently includes the representation of public schools, school districts and other public and private sector employers in all areas, including employment, civil rights, and special education matters. He is admitted to practice before all Texas Courts.



BRYAN P. DAHLBERG

Partner

Mr. Dahlberg was admitted to the Texas Bar 2008, Texas. Preparatory education, University of Texas (B.A., Philosophy 2005); legal education University of Houston Law Center (J.D. 2008). Member: School Law and Labor and Employment section of the State Bar of Texas.

Upon graduating from law school, Mr. Dahlberg worked for Magnum Hunter Resources Corp., Twomey May, P.L.L.C. and May, McCreght & Associates, P.L.L.C. in Houston. From March 2010 through July 2011, Mr. Dahlberg worked for a prominent Houston school district law firm before joining Schulman, Lopez & Hoffer in August 2011. Mr. Dahlberg's practice includes representing public schools, nonprofits and other government entities in real estate, construction disputes, and drafting and reviewing construction documents and AIA contracts. Additionally, his employment law experience includes defense of Title VII, hostile work environment, ADEA, workers' compensation retaliation, and FLSA/wage and hour claims.



MICHAEL HIGGINS

Of Counsel

Mr. Higgins was raised in Crosby, Texas, and Slidell, Louisiana. He was admitted to the Louisiana Bar in 2006, and to the Texas Bar in 2014. Mike completed his preparatory and legal education at Tulane University (B.A., 1998; J.D., 2006). He also earned a Master of Education from Delta State University (2000).

Mr. Higgins has extensive experience in employment issues, contracts, open meetings and public records law, insurance coverage, construction defects, and torts. He leads the Firm's Houston office. Mr. Higgins is admitted to practice before the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, U.S. District Court, Southern District of Texas, U.S. District Court, Middle District of Louisiana, and U.S. District Court Eastern District of Louisiana.

After receiving his undergraduate degree, Mr. Higgins spent two years as a middle school teacher in Tunica, Mississippi as a Teach for America corps member. He entered private practice, and after several years of representing plaintiffs and defendants in civil litigation, he joined the Louisiana Department of Education, serving first as its Accountability and Oversight Manager, and later as its Director of Law & Policy. In this role, he drafted regulations for the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.



MARK MORENO

Senior Counsel

Mr. Moreno is a native of South Texas. Preparatory education, DePaul University; legal education University of Iowa College of Law. Mr. Moreno joined Schulman, Lopez, Hoffer & Adelstein, LLP as Senior Associate in 2020.

Mr. Moreno represents clients in a wide range of general legal and business issues, providing day-to-day legal advice and counsel. His practice includes the representation of school districts, charter schools and other public and private entities in all areas, including the negotiation, acquisition, development, leasing and operation of all types of commercial real estate properties. *(continued)*

Moreno continued

Prior to joining the firm, Mr. Moreno served as National Director for KW Commercial, one of the fastest growing commercial real estate franchises in North America. In 2019, KW Commercial grew to over 2200 commercial members in 800 offices across the US and Canada and was ranked as a top 5 commercial real estate franchise.

Prior to joining KW Commercial, Mark served as Vice-President and General Manager for the Houston Region of McDonald's USA, LLC. In this role, he oversaw real estate, finance, marketing, business insights, operations, franchising and human resources for over 780 restaurants that were owned and operated by 140 franchisees. Mark is committed to community service and has served on the board of RMHC of San Antonio.



DANA HENRY

Senior Counsel

Mr. Henry is licensed to practice in all Louisiana State and Federal Courts, including the United States District Courts for the Eastern, Middle, and Western Districts of Louisiana. He is a member of the Louisiana Bar Association. Preparatory education, Howard University in Washington D.C; legal education, the Southern University Law Center in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Mr. Henry joined Schulman, Lopez, Hoffer & Adelstein, LLP as Senior Counsel in 2021 and leads the Firm's Louisiana education law and nonprofit entity practice. Dana Henry has engaged in community and legal advocacy as a litigator in the State of Louisiana since 2000. Mr. Henry began his legal career in New Orleans at Usry, Weeks, and Matthews as an Associate focusing on §1983 civil rights actions in the United States District Courts. But, his primary focus as a litigator has been in the areas of contracts, torts, juvenile law, and family law. Also, Mr. Henry has clerked for two (2) Judges in the Orleans Parish Civil District Court.

Additionally, Mr. Henry has worked professionally as a management consultant supporting the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, City Director at Stand for Children, a national education advocacy organization, and Vice-President of Education and Youth Development for the Urban League of Louisiana. Most recently, Mr. Henry served as Executive Director of Institutional Advancement at Einstein Charter Schools, a four (4) campus charter school network in New Orleans. Also, Mr. Henry has worked as an adjunct Faculty Member at the University of Phoenix and Herzing University facilitating lectures in Business Law, Contracts, and Torts.



MAIA K. LEVENSON

Senior Associate

Admitted to Texas Bar, 2013.; Preparatory education, University of Texas at Austin (B.S. with highest honors 2009); legal education, Harvard Law School (J.D. 2013). Maia's practice includes the representation of school districts, and other public and private entities in all areas, including employment, special education, and administrative law matters.

Ms. Levenson brings experience in international human rights law and advocacy, as well as domestic civil rights litigation, to the representation of the firm's clients.

She was a Vorenberg Equal Justice Summer Fellow, 2012; Harvard Human Rights Journal Board Member, 2011-2013; Harvard Women's Law Association Board Member, 2010-2013. Ms. Levenson is based in our Austin office.



CELINA G. WARREN

Senior Associate

Admitted to Texas Bar, 2012.; Preparatory education, Texas Christian University, B.B.A., 2007; legal education, St. Mary's University School of Law, J.D., magna cum laude, 2012. Her areas of expertise include business disputes, tort litigation, fiduciary responsibility and contract law.

Ms. Warren joined Schulman, Lopez, Hoffer & Adelstein, LLP in January 2017. Her practice includes representation of school districts, charter schools and other public entities in all areas. Prior to joining the Firm, Ms. Warren practiced commercial litigation at a prominent corporate litigation firm in San Antonio



JOHN J. JOYCE

Senior Associate

Mr. Joyce is licensed to practice in all state courts in Florida and Texas, as well as the Middle and Northern Districts of Florida. Preparatory education, University of Florida; legal education University of Florida Levin College of Law. His practice includes the representation of school districts, charter schools and other public and private entities in all areas.

Prior to joining Schulman, Lopez, Hoffer & Adelstein, LLP, Mr. Joyce was a litigator in Florida, litigating a diverse area of cases, including banking litigation, foreclosure, construction law, public records, business disputes, real property litigation, criminal defense and appeals. Prior to becoming a civil litigator, Mr. Joyce began his career as an assistant public defender, representing indigent clients accused of crimes.

Mr. Joyce attended the University of Florida Levin College of Law, where he received honors in Appellate Advocacy and Trial Practice courses and served as President of the John Marshall Bar Association from 2010-2011. During law school, Mr. Joyce served as a summer law student clerk to the Honorable David Gersten of the Third Circuit Court of Appeals in Miami, Florida. He is licensed to practice in all state courts in Florida and Texas, as well as the Middle and Northern Districts of Florida.



EMILY BONEY

Senior Associate

Ms. Boney is admitted to practice law in Texas, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania. Preparatory education, Grinnell College (B.A. with highest honors 2009); legal education, University of Iowa College of Law (J.D. with Distinction 2011). Ms. Boney's practice areas include representation of school districts and charter schools in employment law matters.

Prior to joining Schulman, Lopez, Hoffer & Adelstein, LLP, Ms. Boney practiced employment law in North Reading, Massachusetts. Ms. Boney began her legal career practicing employment law and family law in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She was a judicial intern for the Honorable John T. Bender in the Superior Court of Pennsylvania, 2010. She is fluent in Spanish.



ALYSSA SANDERSEN

Senior Associate

Ms. Sandersen is licensed by the State Bar of Texas (2014) and admitted to practice before the United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas (2016). Preparatory education, Austin College, B.A. (2011) – Summa Cum Laude; legal education, Baylor Law School, J.D. (2014) – Baylor Order of the Barristers

Ms. Sandersen's practice focuses on the representation of school districts, charter schools, and other public entities in special education matters under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Prior to joining SLHA, Ms. Sandersen practiced special education law at Houston-area firms and brings extensive experience representing clients in ARDs, mediations, due process hearings, and federal appeals.

Ms. Sandersen is an experienced public speaker who regularly presents at state and local conferences on issues related to special education and offers trainings on a wide array of school law issues. Ms. Sandersen is a member of several professional organizations including Texas Council of School Attorneys, State Bar of Texas School Law Section and Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education. She is also an active member of the Fort Bend Junior Service League where she serves local charitable organizations including those impacting individuals with disabilities.



JASMINE E. GRANT

Associate

Admitted to Texas Bar, 2016.; Admitted to practice before the U.S. District Courts in the Southern, Western, and Northern Districts of Texas; Preparatory education, The University of Texas at San Antonio, B.B.A., summa cum laude, 2009; legal education, The University of Texas School of Law, J.D., 2016.

Her practice includes the representation of school districts, charter schools, and other public and private entities in all areas, including labor and employment, governance, tort litigation, and contracts. She previously worked at a prominent corporate litigation firm in San Antonio.

Ms. Grant is a member of the Bexar County Womens' Bar, Board Member for the San Antonio YWCA and Deputy General Counsel for the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. She has also recently been recognized as a Rising Star Lawyer by Scene in S.A. Magazine, Winter 2021 and is a graduate of Bexar County Women's Bar LEAD Academy (2019), and San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Alex Briseño Leadership Development Program (2020). She is fluent in Spanish (written, legal and spoken).



KAREN ICE

Associate

Ms. Ice is admitted to practice law in Texas, Washington and Maryland. Preparatory education, State University of New York, at Geneseo, B.A. Political Science, 2010; legal education, Charlotte School of Law, J.D., 2014.; Judicial Law Clerk for the Honorable E. Gregory Wells in the Circuit Court for Calvert County, Maryland 2014.

Ms. Ice's areas of expertise include tort litigation, and contract law. Prior to joining the firm, Ms. Ice practiced real estate law, as well as civil insurance defense litigation in Annapolis, Maryland. Ms. Ice began her legal career in a general practice law firm focusing on family law in Southern Maryland.



CHRISTOPHER DEWITT

Associate

Admitted to Texas Bar, 2018; Admitted to the North Dakota State Bar, 2020; Preparatory education, University of the Incarnate Word, B.B.A. in Sports Management, Summa Cum Laude, 2015; legal education, St. Mary's University School of Law, J.D., Cum Laude, 2018.

Mr. DeWitt joined Schulman, Lopez, Hoffer & Adelstein, LLP in July 2021. Prior to joining the Firm, Mr. DeWitt practiced oil and gas law, real estate law and closed residential and commercial real estate transactions.



ROBERT A. SCHULMAN

Partner Emeritus (retired)

Mr. Schulman was born in Cleveland, Ohio, January 11, 1943. Admitted to Texas Bar, 1975, Texas; admitted to practice before the U.S. Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit; U.S. District Courts, Southern, Northern and Western Districts of Texas. Preparatory education, St. Mary's University (B.A. 1968); legal education, St. Mary's School of Law (J.D. 1974).



RAMON MEDINA

School Fiscal Operations Specialist & Technical Advisor

Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting, Master in Professional Accounting with a concentration in Auditing and Financial Reporting, Mr. Medina joined Schulman, Lopez, Hoffer & Adelstein, LLP, in January 2012 as a non-attorney Legal Investigator. *(continued)*

ATTORNEYS & KEY STAFF

Medina continued

Mr. Medina came to the Firm from the Texas Education Agency (TEA), where he spent 12 years directing, managing and supervising the audit, investigative, review and other monitoring activities over regional education service centers (ESCs), open-enrollment charter schools (OECS), school districts and Federal and state grant programs. During his tenure at the TEA, Mr. Medina conducted compliance, financial and performance audits of public schools, and he reviewed the annual financial and compliance reports filed by ESCs, OECS, independent school districts (ISDs), and nonprofit grantees.

Mr. Medina oversaw the State Compensatory Education program. He is also an author and developer of various modules of the TEA's Financial Accountability Systems Resource Guide. Mr. Medina provided business advisory services to public school officials and administrators, presented information regarding OECS issues and regulatory requirements to the State Board of Education, the Commissioner's Charter School Cabinet and TEA executive management, conducted presentations for the benefit of public school officials and administrators, independent auditors and TEA staff at various regional and statewide conferences and other forums and testified in administrative hearings, judicial proceedings, informal reviews and record reviews.

STEPHANIE BAZAN

Chief Communications Officer and Crisis Communications Advisor

Ms. Bazan received a M.A with distinction in Creative Writing from the University of Leeds in the U.K and a bachelor's degree in English Writing & Rhetoric from St. Edward's University in Austin, TX. Ms. Bazan joined the Firm in summer 2021. Ms. Bazan is the former Director of Communications, Signature Events & Programs at the Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Prior to joining the GAHCC, she was a marketing consultant whose work spanned many industries. She also previously served as Director of Marketing for LifeWorks, an Austin non-profit, and taught writing and design courses at St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas.

Ms. Bazan is an award-winning leader, mom, community advocate, philanthropist, public speaker, and champion for education equity with a long-standing career in communications. Known for her energy and creativity, her work has positively impacted the lives of many leaders through her elevation of the nationally-ranked Hispanic Austin Leadership program.

ATTORNEYS & KEY STAFF

TINA ASHMORE

Business Account Manager

Ms. Ashmore joined Schulman, Lopez, Hoffer & Adelstein, LLP in August 2012. Prior to joining the firm, Ms. Ashmore worked as a campus secretary/bookkeeper for a local High School Academy for four years. Ms. Ashmore has had previous accounting experience from the accounting office of a public school district and as a client account representative for a national insurance firm.

CYNTHIA PACHECO

Paralegal

Ms. Pacheco attended Southwest Texas State University and the University of Texas at San Antonio. Ms. Pacheco served as Research Assistant in preparation of a civil practice law forms guide authored by a former San Antonio College Professor/general law practitioner. Ms. Pacheco has worked as a Legal Assistant/Paralegal for over 30 years, and for the past 25 years has specialized in civil litigation practice and school law.

MARY ZAIONTZ

Paralegal

Ms. Zaiontz joined Schulman, Lopez, Hoffer & Adelstein, LLP in 2009 as a Research Paralegal. She received her B.S. in Mathematics from the University of California, Irvine (1986). From 1989-2007 she worked as a legal librarian for Matthews & Branscomb, P.C. managing one of the largest private law libraries in South Texas. From 2007-09 she worked as a Corporate Paralegal for Cox Smith Matthews Inc.

REGINA KARAKO

Paralegal

Ms. Karako joined the firm in April, 2015. Regina has extensive paralegal experience in multiple practice areas, including real estate, corporate, transactional, oil and gas, litigation and estate planning.



ATTORNEYS & KEY STAFF

AMY REED

Paralegal

Ms. Reed earned an Associate of Applied Science from Grayson County Community College in December 1999 and her Paralegal Certificate from the University of Houston at Clear Lake in August 2017. Amy has over 21 years of experience supporting attorneys in all phases of their practice. She joined the firm in November 2011. Prior to joining the firm, Amy worked as a Senior Legal Assistant for Clark, Miller & Campbell, in-house counsel for Farmers Insurance, focusing primarily on insurance defense litigation.

AMBER GARZA

Paralegal

Ms. Garza earned a B.A. in History with a Minor in Latin American Studies from the University of Texas at San Antonio in 2013. In Fall of 2017 Ms. Garza earned a certificate in Paralegal Studies. From 2014 to 2015 Ms. Garza taught English as a second language at a public elementary school in the rural countryside of South Korea. Upon returning from working abroad, Ms. Garza interned for a San Antonio City Council Person before beginning work with Schulman, Lopez, Hoffer & Adelstein, L.L.P. in late Spring of 2016.

TAYLOR NORMAN

Paralegal

Ms. Norman joined Schulman, Lopez, Hoffer & Adelstein in September of 2021. Ms. Norman received a Paralegal Certification from Center for Advanced Legal Studies in 2017, and is currently earning a B.S. in Business with a Small Business Management and Entrepreneurship Certificate from University of Phoenix. She is set to graduate in 2024. Prior to joining the Firm,, Ms. Norman worked as a paralegal for a education and employment law firm, focusing mainly on special education matters.

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Please contact our office if you would like
additional information.



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