



James A. O'Shaughnessy Attorney

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Bio

James O'Shaughnessy focuses his practice on the representation of public school districts, school boards, and other educational institutions, including charter schools and private schools. As leader of the firm's New Hampshire school law group, Jim's practice involves the full spectrum of school law matters, including board representation and governance, school district and SAU organization and budgets, cooperative and regional school district issues, school district annual meetings, policymaking, school safety, student discipline, Right to Know law, crisis management (assisting many districts navigate COVID-19), rights of students and school employees, teacher evaluations, staff misconduct investigations, labor relations and collective bargaining, and compliance with myriad state and federal laws and regulations.

Jim regularly represents public employers at the bargaining table, in grievance arbitration proceedings and mediations, in state court proceedings, and before numerous state administrative agencies. Jim also represents interstate NH-VT school districts, which involves the interpretation and application of the NH-VT Interstate Compact, RSA 200-B.

With a sophisticated understanding of the school law landscape, Jim develops and leads customized seminars and trainings on a variety of topics, and is one of the creative forces behind the firm's annual New Hampshire Principals Academy for school administrators.

In 2019, Jim was elected to serve a two-year term as the Chair of the New Hampshire Council of School Attorneys and was appointed to serve on the New Hampshire Legislative Commission to Study Cooperative

Practice Areas

Employment & Labor
Collective Bargaining
School & Education

Admissions

New Hampshire

School District Issues. Jim has been named by Best Lawyers USA in Employment Law – Management, Employment Law – Management, and Education Law, as well as a “Rising Star” in Super Lawyers in Education Law. Jim is a 2019 graduate of Leadership New Hampshire.

In his free time, Jim enjoys cooking, playing a variety of musical instruments, mountain biking, hiking, spending time with his family outdoors, practicing Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, and reading. He also serves on the board of Concord Northeast Baseball and Softball.

Education

University of New Hampshire School of Law, J.D., *magna cum laude*

Hamilton College, B.A.

Recognition

Best Lawyers, Employment Law – Management, 2021-2026, Labor Law – Management 2022-2025, Education Law (2021-2026)

Super Lawyers, Rising Star, Education Law 2019-2020

Representative Clients & Matters

- *Baer v. N.H. Dep't of Educ.*
- *Avery v. N.H. Dep't of Educ*
- *Appeal of Michael Silverstein*
- *Taylor v. SAU 55*
- Assisted cooperative school districts with amendments to their articles of agreement and apportionment formulas.
- Assisted school districts in separating from school administrative units and forming new school administrative units.
- Defended school districts in court over challenges to bond vote procedure.
- Defended school district in court regarding default budget calculation methodology.
- Successfully negotiated numerous collective bargaining agreements.
- Successfully defended school districts in unfair labor practice matters before the NH PELRB.
- Assisted school districts before the State Board of Education on a variety of matters, including school reassignment requests, appeals of local school board decisions, student bullying and cyberbullying appeals, and homeless and residency appeals.
- Negotiated tuition contracts between school districts and assisted school districts with the process for amending their AREA agreement.
- Prosecuted numerous school employee and teacher disciplinary matters before local school boards and arbitrators throughout the

state.

Publications

Contributing Author, [*New Hampshire School Law, 1st Edition*](#) (2019)
Revised (2020)

Is Cyber Bullying the next Columbine: Can New Hampshire Schools Prevent Cyber-Bullying and Avoid Liability, New Hampshire Bar Journal (Spring 2011)

Memberships

New Hampshire Bar Association Labor & Employment and Municipal Sections

New Hampshire Council of School Attorneys

National School Boards Association Council of School Attorneys

The Alliance of Public Charter School Attorneys

Concord Northeast Baseball and Softball
Board Member