



Erie County Association of School Boards

“ ECASB BUSINESS CONNECTIONS ”



Above: Members of the Webster Szanyi’s Education Team. From top to bottom: Attorneys Susan M. McClaren Esq., Ryan G. Smith Esq., Melanie J. Beardsley Esq., and Marnie Smith Esq..



WEBSTER SZANYI LLP

Webster Szanyi provides general counsel to school districts on a day-to-day basis with respect to a variety of matters. They have extensive experience counseling districts on issues ranging from labor relations issues to student and staff misconduct to the reformation and implementation of internal policies and procedures. They frequently provide guidance and opinions on the Family and Medical Leave Act, Dignity for All Students Act, Freedom of Information Law, Open Meetings Law, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, residency and homeless issues, First Amendment issues, the annual meeting and election, and issues related to teacher certification, tenure and the Civil Service Law, to name a few. They provide the full range of services in contract negotiations for all bargaining units (i.e., teachers, non-instructional personnel, etc.). They have served as chief negotiator on behalf of school districts, and can also provide secondary assistance with the development of strategy and preparation of proposals related to collective bargaining. Their attorneys handle employee grievance proceedings from beginning to end, including arbitrations. They regularly issue advice with regard to tenured and probationary employees, as well as the discipline of classified and certified employees, including appropriate forms of discipline, ranging from the placement of written warnings in an employee’s personnel file to commencing 3020-a proceedings.

Their attorneys are experienced in handling matters with potential criminal implications, and in working with local police and independent investigators to achieve a satisfactory result for the district. They pro-



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Dr. Smith (retired Superintendent of East Aurora UFSD and Williamsville CSD) provides consulting services that focuses on Boards of Education and Superintendents relationships to improve governance. He will tailor a Board Retreat to meet the needs of the ever changing Board-Superintendent dynamic.



WEBSTER SZANYI LLP

vide counsel regarding student due process rights in disciplinary matters and regularly serve as Hearing Officer in Superintendent's Hearings. They pride themselves on rendering prompt and effective counsel, even in situations requiring an immediate response. The attorneys are well-accustomed to attending and presenting at Board of Education meetings, in both public and executive session, depending on the issue(s) at hand. They are frequently asked to provide opinions regarding the powers and duties of the Board of Education, as well as the rules and procedures that govern the Board. They frequently provide in-service training to school districts on numerous issues, including but not limited to bullying, sexual harassment, athletic liability, and risk management issues. They collaborate with school district clients to provide in-service trainings that are tailored to the needs or requests of each individual school district.

In addition, the attorneys have extensive experience representing school districts in litigation in both state and federal courts, as well as before the Equal Opportunity Commission, Division of Human Rights, and Public Employment Relations Board. This experience provides them with a unique perspective on issues that arise on a day-to-day basis, and allows them to readily identify potential subjects of litigation and help school districts defend against such claims, and often avoid litigation altogether.

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