

School Law Update

January, 2016

Eileen Brownlee Joins Boardman & Clark and Other Reminders

Boardman & Clark School Law Practice Group Welcomes Eileen Brownlee

The School Law Practice Group of Boardman & Clark LLP is proud to announce that Eileen Brownlee has become a member of our firm. Eileen joins Boardman & Clark with an established practice and over 30 years of experience in the areas of school law, municipal law, and public sector employment law.

Eileen is a 1984 graduate cum laude of Marquette University Law School. Prior to joining Boardman & Clark, Eileen was the sole member of her firm, Kramer & Brownlee LLC, located in Fennimore, Wisconsin, where she has served school districts, cities, villages, and other municipal corporations throughout the state of Wisconsin. Eileen has a wide practice that includes policy and ordinance drafting and implementation, labor negotiations, salary and benefit analyses, grievance and prohibited practice hearings, employee misconduct investigations, advice on employee improvement plans and performance evaluations, and analysis of and application of all major federal and state labor and employment statutes, including FMLA, ADA, ADEA and other discrimination laws. Eileen has received numerous recognitions for contributions to her practice areas, including the George Tipler Award for Distinguished Service in School Law from the Wisconsin School Attorneys Association (WSAA) and Fellowship of the Wisconsin Bar Foundation. She will maintain her office in Fennimore.

For over fifty-five years, Boardman & Clark's School Law Practice Group has continuously served as general counsel and special counsel to school districts throughout Wisconsin. We currently represent over 125 school districts, CESAs, charter schools, and technical colleges. With the addition of Eileen, our School Law Practice Group consists of fifteen attorneys and one paralegal. Eleven of our attorneys have over ten years' experience working with school districts, with seven of those having over twenty-five years' experience.

Educational Options Notice

For districts which have not already published their Educational Options Notice, Wisconsin Statutes §118.57 requires this new notice to be published by January 31st and annually thereafter. This is a class 1 notice and it must also be available on the district's website. The notice must describe the educational options available to residents of the district, including public schools, private schools participating in a parental choice program, charter schools, virtual schools, full-time open enrollment, youth options, course options, and options for pupils enrolled in a home-based private educational program. The notice must also include information about the availability of the most recent (2013-14, in this instance) accountability report on the school's internet site. Finally, the notice shall also list the most recent §115.385(2) performance category for each school in the district.

The following Department of Public Instructions website links may be helpful:

- January 15, 2016 Important Requirements under 2015 Act 55:
<http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/administrators/e-mail/ed-options-info.pdf>

- Accountability Reports: <http://dpi.wi.gov/accountability/report-cards>
- Educational Options: <http://dpi.wi.gov/ed-options>

Attorney General Has Updated Open Meetings and Open Records Compliance Guidelines

The Wisconsin Attorney General's office has recently updated two useful compliance guides for those records custodians and others who deal with open meetings and open records issues. These guides contain citations to the statutes, court cases, and Attorney General Opinions and many of the citations are hyper-linked to the source documents. They can be an invaluable resource to help navigate these areas.

- Wisconsin Public Records Law Compliance Guide:
<https://www.doj.state.wi.us/sites/default/files/dls/2015-PRL-Guide.pdf>
- Wisconsin Open Meetings Law Compliance Guide:
<https://www.doj.state.wi.us/sites/default/files/dls/2015-OML-Guide.pdf>

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