



Melissa M. Grand

Shareholder

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Melissa Grand concentrates her practice in litigation with a focus in education law, consumer financial services, and commercial litigation.

Melissa M. Grand helps clients navigate the complex laws and regulations governing the education and consumer finance industries.

Melissa is an experienced education law attorney who represents independent schools, charter schools, charter school management organizations, and other educational institutions on all manner of education law, compliance, and operational issues. She focuses on delivering cutting-edge advice to help her clients navigate the ever-changing education landscape, including providing advice to a myriad of schools throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Melissa works closely with schools to develop COVID-19 parent/student and employee return-to-school plans, policies and procedures that comply with national, state and local laws as well as department of education and health authority guidance, all while adhering to each school's unique culture. With respect to COVID-19, Melissa also provides counsel regarding health and safety practices for students, teachers, janitorial staff, health staff, visitors and volunteers, outbreak and re-closure plans, and other key considerations. Additionally, she provides guidance on the legal and regulatory aspects of the COVID-19 vaccine in school settings and considerations in requiring the vaccine for employees and students.

Melissa advises schools on parent/student handbooks, employee handbooks, enrollment contracts, vendor contracts, immunization issues as well as on federal law compliance issues when schools are recipients of federal financial assistance. She routinely provides training to school boards of trustees, administration and employees on topics including Title IX, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), open meetings/ethics laws and other board governance matters.

Melissa also represents banks, mortgage lenders and financial services clients in mortgage-related litigation. She handles cases involving a broad range of federal statutes and regulations pertaining to consumer finance, including the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA), Regulation Z, the Truth in Lending Act (TILA) and the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act (FDCPA).

In addition, Melissa represents large and small companies in all manner of complex commercial disputes. She has extensive experience practicing in Louisiana district courts and courts of appeal.

Professional Honors & Activities

- Listed in *The Best Lawyers in America*® for Consumer Law (2023, 2024)
- *Louisiana Super Lawyers* "Rising Star" in Business Litigation (2018, 2019, 2021, 2022)
- *Louisiana Super Lawyers* "Rising Star" in Schools and Education (2019)
- Board Member – Advisory Counsel for the Global Geospatial Institute
- Baton Rouge Area Chamber Leadership Class of 2018
- THRIVE Baton Rouge – Secretary and Member of the Board of Directors (2015 – 2017)
- THRIVE Foundation – Member of the Board of Directors (2017 – 2019)
- Capital Area United Way – Community Impact Cabinet, At-Large Member (2018 – present)

- American Bar Association, Section of Litigation; Business Torts and Unfair Competition Committee, Co-Chair – Unfair Trade Practices Subcommittee (2015 – present)
- Baton Rouge Bar Association – Holiday Star Committee (2014 – 2018)
- Baton Rouge Bar Association – Chair, Holiday Star Committee (2017)
- Louisiana State Bar Association (2009 – present)
- Boys Hope Girls Hope of Baton Rouge – Chair, Board of Directors and President (2014); Board of Directors, Secretary (2013); Board of Directors (2011 – 2013)



Publications

- "AI in the Classroom – New Guidance From the Department of Education," republished July 14, 2023, in *Texas Lawyer* (June 2023)
- "New CDC Guidance for K-12 Schools: Update Your COVID-19 Policies and Protocols for Back-to-School" (July 2021)
- "Biden Administration Rollback: Are Collegiate Students Employees?," republished in *New Orleans CityBusiness* (March 2021)
- "COVID-19 Relief: New Funding Available for Schools" (March 19, 2021)
- "COVID-19 Vaccinations: Will K-12 Students Be Mandated to Take Them?," republished in *New Orleans CityBusiness* (December 2020)
- "Coronavirus: What K-12 Schools Should Do Now" (March 10, 2020)
- "Bank Litigation Arising from Check Fraud Schemes and Client Trust Accounts," American Bar Association, Business Torts & Unfair Competition (June 2016)
- "Protecting Granny: Recent Developments in Nursing Home Litigation in Louisiana," *Louisiana Law Review*, Issue 2 (Winter 2009)



Speaking Engagements

- "Playing Your Role in Advocating for Charter Schools," Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools (December 2022)
- "Charter School Mythbusters," Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools Bottom Line Training (March 2022)
- "Charter School Mythbusters!", 2021 Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools Charter School Conference (December 2021)
- "Return to Work Best Practices and Legal Requirements," Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools Webinar (May 2020)
- "Preparation and Considerations When Stay-at-Home Orders are Lifted," Louisiana REALTORS® (May 2020)
- "Lease/Tenant Issues During COVID-19: What's an Owner to Do?," Louisiana REALTORS® Webinar (April 2020)
- "The Dos and Don'ts of Maintaining Nonprofit Status," Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools' Bottom Line Training (March 2020)
- Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools Annual Conference (December 2019)
- "Developing Social Media Policies," Southern Association of Independent Schools Annual Conference (October 2019)
- "The Top Special Education Legal Mistakes (and How to Avoid Them)," National Business Institute (May 2019)
- Legal Panel Presenter – Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools Annual Conference (December 2018)
- "Protecting Student Data in an (Un)secure World," Southern Association of Independent Schools Annual Conference (October 2018)

- "Essential Components of a 504 Plan," National Business Institute, "Special Education Law From A to Z" seminar (June 2018)



Webinars

- Return to School Plan: Key Legal, Policy, and Operational Considerations for Independent Schools (August 2020)
- Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools (May 2020)
- Lease/Tenant Issues During COVID-19: What's an Owner to Do? (April 2020)



Education

- Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center, J.D., D.C.L., 2009
 - Board of Editors, Senior Editor – *Louisiana Law Review*
- Louisiana State University, B.A., 2005, cum laude



Admissions

- Louisiana, 2009
- Louisiana Supreme Court, 2009
- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana, 2009
- U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Louisiana, 2009
- U.S. District Court for the Western District of Louisiana, 2009
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, 2009