

Peter J. Maher

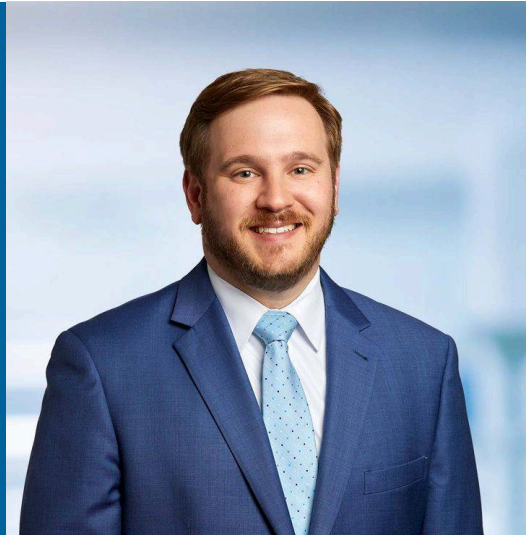
Partner

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Hartford

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Peter Maher represents boards of education and other entities in all areas of school law, with an emphasis on special education issues and labor and employment matters. A former educator, Peter draws on his firsthand knowledge of the needs and goals of school stakeholders to provide practical, community-specific and timely counsel that helps prevent problems when possible and solve them when necessary. Whether navigating sensitive special education matters or advising on day-to-day district operations, he partners with his clients to identify opportunities and pursue a clear path in the face of today's challenges.

In special education matters, Peter takes a proactive approach to potential disputes, helping school districts work collaboratively with parents to address students' unique needs. He advises school leaders and special education administrators on their legal obligations under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, among other laws and regulations. His experience as a special education teacher and mentor for new teachers, as well as his knowledge of research-based practices in the delivery of special education programming, enables him to identify and address complicated issues in a practical manner.

Peter regularly represents clients in special education planning and placement team meetings, mediation, State Department of Education and Office for Civil Rights (OCR) complaints and due process proceedings and related court appeals. When new requirements or legal developments arise, Peter takes action quickly, helping public schools understand and implement effective practices and policies to meet their legal obligations and students' needs.

Peter provides broad-ranging counsel on all general school law issues involving the day-to-day operations of a public school district. He advises clients on budget matters, board policy

development and student discipline and bullying issues. He also assists districts in understanding their obligations under mandated reporting laws, the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Title IX and constitutional issues.

Peter's labor and employment practice includes representing boards of education in collective bargaining negotiations for certified and non-certified staff and counseling clients on personnel matters, including employee discipline and issues under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Before obtaining his law degree, Peter served as a lead teacher at Centennial School of Lehigh University, a state-approved private special education day school that is nationally recognized for its use of positive behavioral interventions and supports with students with significant emotional/behavioral disorders and autism. A teacher at heart, Peter is a frequently requested speaker at state and national conferences on a variety of school law topics and routinely provides professional-development training for school personnel.

Prior to joining Shipman, Peter served as a law clerk to the Honorable Thomas I. Vanaskie of the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit.

Distinctions

- Listed as a Connecticut Super Lawyer Rising Star®: *Schools & Education* (2015-2022)
- Listed in Best Lawyers Ones to Watch®: *Education Law* (2021-2023)
- New Leader in the Law, *Connecticut Law Tribune* (2022)
- Member of The Fellows of the American Bar Foundation (2022)
- CALI Excellence Awards for Administrative Law (2011), Center for Children's Advocacy (2011), Criminal Law (2009), Federalism (2012), Health Care Law and Regulation (2012), Labor Law (2012), Problems in Constitutional Law (2012), Special Education Law (2011) and Torts (2009)
- William F. Starr Fellowship Award
- *Connecticut Law Review* Student Note Award/Alumni Association Award
- University of Connecticut Law School Foundation Prize for Exceptional Achievement in Scholarship

Teaching Positions

- University of Connecticut: Adjunct Professor, Neag School of Education (2015-2020)
- Centennial School of Lehigh University, Lead Teacher (2007-2009); Teacher Associate (2005-2007)

Professional Affiliations

- American Bar Association

- Connecticut Bar Association
- Massachusetts Bar Association
- Hartford County Bar Association
- National School Boards Association Council of School Attorneys
- Connecticut School Attorneys Council; President (2015-2016); Secretary (2014-2015)

Credentials

Education

- University of Connecticut School of Law, J.D., 2012, with highest honors
- Lehigh University, M.Ed., 2007, B.A., 2005, with honors
- Lehigh University, B.A., 2005, with honors

Bar Admissions

- Massachusetts
- Connecticut, 2012

Court Admissions

- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit
- U.S. District Court, District of CT