



Robbins Schwartz
One Team. Making Your Mission Ours.

Purchasing & Construction Virtual Conference

Conference Program

February 25, 2025

Chicago

190 South LaSalle Street, Suite 2550
Chicago, IL 60603
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Champaign

301 North Neil Street, Suite 400
Champaign, IL 61820
p 217.363.3040
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Lisle

550 Warrenville Road, Suite 460
Lisle, IL 60532-4311
p 630.929.3639
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Rockford

2990 North Perryville Road, Suite 4144B
Rockford, IL 61107
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Schedule at a Glance

- 8:30 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.** **GENERAL SESSION**
- Making Purchasing and Procurement Easier: Essential Bidding Strategies and Leveraging the Recent Amendment to the Governmental Joint Purchasing Act
- Presented by: Howard A. Metz and Kenneth M. Florey*
- 9:15 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.** Mitigate Risks: Best Practices for Effective Risk Management and Insurance Strategies for Public Contracts and Construction
- Presented by: Matthew J. Gardner and Christopher R. Gorman*
- 10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.** **Break**
- 10:15 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.** **RESUME GENERAL SESSION**
- Construction Pitfalls: Key Considerations for Public Bodies to Avoid Problems on a Construction Project
- Presented by: Nicole L. Karas and Matthew J. Gardner*
- 11:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.** Read (or Write) the Fine Print! Negotiating Contracts for Public Entities
- Presented by: Christopher R. Gorman and Logan K. Sweeney*

Session 1 | 8:30 a.m.

Making Purchasing and Procurement Easier: Essential Bidding Strategies and Leveraging the Recent Amendment to the Governmental Joint Purchasing Act

This presentation will focus on purchasing and procurement requirements for Illinois local governments—from school districts and community colleges to park districts and municipalities. Our attorneys will walk through compliance requirements and strategies for purchasing and procurement through common exemptions and newly enacted amendments to the Illinois Governmental Joint Purchasing Act that provide public bodies with greater flexibility when relying on cooperative purchases through other government agencies.

Presenters:

[Howard A. Metz](#), Partner and [Kenneth M. Florey](#), Partner

Session 2 | 9:15 a.m.

Mitigate Risks: Best Practices for Effective Risk Management and Insurance Strategies for Public Contracts and Construction

Join Robbins Schwartz construction and transactional attorneys to discuss the importance of mitigating risk and properly insuring public entities in connection with common transactions including construction projects, facility use agreements, leases, and software purchases involving personally protected information. The presentation will address various types of insurance for applicable transactions, contract terms that protect public bodies, and the Tort Immunity Act that public entities can rely on to mitigate risk.

Presenters:

[Matthew J. Gardner](#), Partner and [Christopher R. Gorman](#), Partner

Session 3 | 10:15 a.m.

Construction Pitfalls: Key Considerations for Public Bodies to Avoid Problems on a Construction Project

Public construction is complex. The parties involved often have overlapping responsibilities, tasks, schedules and liabilities. Moreover, the risks can be just as complex, ranging from unknown conditions at the project site and weather to supply chain issues and pandemics. In this presentation, Robbins Schwartz's construction lawyers will discuss common construction project problems and how to avoid them.

Presenters:

[Matthew J. Gardner](#), Partner and [Nicole L. Karas](#), Senior Counsel

Session 4 | 11:00 a.m.

Read (or Write) the Fine Print! Negotiating Contracts for Public Entities

Every transaction comes with terms and conditions. Those terms and conditions are agreed upon by the parties to a transaction but not always reduced to writing or properly reviewed. From complex construction contracts and real estate agreements, to purchase orders and website privacy policies, public bodies need to be aware of contract terms that could significantly impact its ability to benefit from any bargain. This presentation will identify key terms to consider, as well as strategies to negotiating the same.

Presenters:

[Christopher R. Gorman](#), Partner and [Logan K. Sweeney](#), Associate

Biographies



KENNETH M. FLOREY

Partner, Chicago & Lisle

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PRACTICE AREAS

Arbitration/Mediation
Commercial Law
Construction Law
Education Law
Energy Law
Litigation
Mediation
Municipal Law
Public Finance &
Taxation
Real Estate
Development
Zoning, Planning &
Land Use

EDUCATION

J.D., DePaul University
College of Law;
Managing Editor,
DePaul Journal of Art
and Entertainment Law

B.A., University of
Illinois at Urbana
Champaign

Ken Florey concentrates his practice representing public and private clients, including municipalities, school districts, community colleges, townships, libraries, private owners, contractors and design professionals regarding land use, municipal law, construction, tax, finance and litigation. Ken has also started offering his services as a mediator with an emphasis on construction disputes.

Ken was the Chair of the DuPage County Bar Association's Local Government Committee. He was appointed Special Assistant Attorney General to prosecute and defend construction litigation claims on behalf of the Illinois Capital Development Board. Ken is also a member of the Illinois ASBO Service Associate Advisory Committee. He served as a Trustee for the Village of Lombard for eight years and is a member of the Lombard Fire and Police Commission.

Mediator Certificate: Northwestern University 2017

Awards

Illinois Leading Lawyer, Construction Law; Governmental, Municipal, Lobbying & Administrative Law; Land Use, Zoning & Condemnation Law; and School Law

Illinois Association of School Business Officials, Above and Beyond Award

Illinois Institute for Local Government Law, Litigation Award

Recent Publications

Contributing author, "Competency in ADR: Assuring Ethical Practice through Competency and Communication," *DCBA Brief*, The Journal of the DuPage County Bar Association (2024)

Contributing author, "Navigating Construction Disputes: *The inevitable construction disputes can be navigated with a combination of knowledge, preparation, and outside guidance.*" *School Business Affairs* (November 2023)

Contributing author, "Diving into ADR Ethics: Exploring the Ethical Obligation of Attorneys as Advisors, Advocates, and Third-Party Neutrals," *DCBA Brief* (November 2023)

Contributing author, "Joint Purchasing Everything You Want to Know but Are Afraid to Ask!" *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2019)



ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

U.S. District Court for
the Northern District of
Illinois

Supreme Court of Illinois

Contributing author, “How Far Does the Law Allow Schools to Go?” *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2018)

Contributing author, “Top 11 Public Bidding Questions & Solutions” *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2018)

Co-author, “School Construction from Start to Finish: A Project Checklist,” *School Business Affairs Magazine*, ASBO (2018)

Contributing author, “Top 11 Public Bidding Questions,” *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2018)

Contributing author, “Top 11 Public Bidding Questions,” *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2018)

Contributing author, “Meditation a Win-Win for Clients and their Attorneys in Construction Litigation,” *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2018)

Recent Presentations

Contract Pitfalls to Avoid, Emerging SBO Summit (July 2024)

Alternative Dispute Resolution Section MCLE Program, DuPage County Bar Association (February 2023)

Cooperative Purchasing: Are We Doing it Right?, Illinois Association of School Personnel Administrators and Illinois Association of School Business Officials Regional Conference (October 2022)

Building a Construction Team and So Much More to Achieve Success with Your Project, Association of School Business Officials International (August 2022)

Ethics and ADR: Meditation and Arbitration Issues, DCBA (June 2022)

Cooperative Purchasing: Are You Doing it Right?, Illinois ASBO Annual Conference (June 2022)

Bidding Processes & Procedures: Best Practices in a Changing Environment, Illinois ASBO Annual Conference (May 2022)

Contracts and Conflicts: How Did We Get Here & Where are We Going?, Illinois ASBO Annual Conference (May 2022)

Wrapping Up the Year End in the Business Office: Do's and Don'ts, Illinois ASBO School Business Essentials (April 2022)





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PRACTICE AREAS

Commercial
Transactions
Construction
Public Finance &
Taxation
Real Estate
Development

EDUCATION

J.D., University of
Wisconsin Law School

B.A., University of
Utah

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

U.S. District Court for
the Northern District of
Illinois

Supreme Court of
Illinois

Supreme Court of Utah

Supreme Court of
Wisconsin

Matthew J. Gardner, a distinguished partner at Robbins Schwartz, boasts a multifaceted legal career spanning various practice areas. With expertise in construction, commercial transactions, real estate, and public finance, Matthew has emerged as a trusted advisor to both private and public project owners.

Matthew's practice revolves around guiding clients through the intricacies of construction and real estate projects. From property acquisition to contract negotiation, bidding, project management, and litigation, his comprehensive approach ensures that his clients navigate each phase of their projects seamlessly. Matthew also offers representation to contractors, subcontractors, and material suppliers, addressing payment claims, lien rights preservation, and defending against defect claims.

In addition to his construction and real estate practice, Matthew extends his legal acumen to the realm of education law and data privacy. Representing school districts, colleges, and educational technology companies, he drafts and negotiates data privacy agreements, software license agreements, and service agreements. He has contributed significantly to evolving legal frameworks in education privacy matters and is renowned for his adeptness in addressing risks associated with data breaches or ransomware attacks.

Beyond his legal practice, Matthew is deeply involved in the legal community. He has served as the past Chair of the Chicago Bar Association Construction Law and Mechanics Lien Subcommittee and is an active member of various legal associations, including the Illinois State Bar Association and Chicago Bar Association Judicial Evaluation Committee. Matt also dedicates his time to pro bono services, reflecting his commitment to serving the community.

What sets Matthew apart is his genuine passion for collaborating with colleagues to find innovative solutions to clients' challenges. His dedication to excellence and unwavering commitment to his clients have established him as a leading figure in the legal community.

Awards

Illinois "Rising Star", by Super Lawyers Magazine, in the area of Construction Litigation (2021-2022)



ORGANIZATIONS

Chicago Bar Association

Illinois Association of
School Business Officials

Illinois State Bar
Association

Illinois Council of School
Attorneys

Recent Publications

Contributing author, “Environmental Issues” *Construction Law: Transactional Considerations*, IICLE (2021)

Contributing author, “School Property and Environmental Issues” *School Law: Organization, Finance, and Property*, IICLE (2017, 2021)

Contributing author, “Turner on Illinois Mechanics Liens,” *Chapter III – Making a Lien Against Private Property Enforceable* (2019)

Co-author, “School Construction from Start to Finish: A Project Checklist,” *School Business Affairs Magazine*, ASBO (2018)

Contributing author, “Top 11 Public Bidding Questions,” *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2018)

Contributing author, “Meditation a Win-Win for Clients and their Attorneys in Construction Litigation,” *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2018)

Recent Presentations

Sustainable Design: Procurement and Other Considerations for a Successful Project, Illinois ASBO Annual Conference (April 2024)

Data Breaches and Ransomware Attacks: Strategies for Preventing and Responding to Cybersecurity Incident, Large Unit District Association (March 2024)

Bidding and Managing a Successful Construction Project, 2024 IADP/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference (January 2024)

Best Practices When Responding to a Data Breach or Cyber Incident, Secured Schools: K-12 Data Privacy and Cybersecurity Conference (January 2024)

Legal Requirements Schools Must Consider for Data Privacy and an Update on the Evolution of Lawsuits Against Schools Arising From Data Breaches, Secured Schools: K-12 Data Privacy and Cybersecurity Conference (January 2024)

Legal Update for Illinois Community College Chief Financial Officers, Illinois Community College Chief Financial Officers Spring Conference (April 2023)

Best Practices for Safeguarding Data in an Increasingly Digital World, SecurED Schools: K-12 Data Privacy and Cybersecurity Conference (January 2023)

Bidding 101, IASBO Emerging SBO Summit (July 2022)

Legal Considerations Related to Renewable Energy, Illinois ASBO Administrator Academy: Sustainability for PK-12 Schools (May 2022)

School Bidding, Procurement, and Prevailing Wages: From the Basics to the Advanced, IASA Spring Legal Seminar (March 2022)





CHRISTOPHER R. GORMAN

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PRACTICE AREAS

Commercial
Transactions
Construction
Labor & Employment
Litigation
Municipal
Real Estate

EDUCATION

J.D., University of
Minnesota Law School

B.A., *Presidential
Scholar*, University of
Minnesota - Twin Cities

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

Supreme Court of
Illinois

U.S. District Court for
the Northern District of
Illinois

Christopher R. Gorman practices in the firm's commercial, construction, and real estate practice groups, representing public sector clients in commercial transactions, contracting, construction related transactional matters, and data & privacy law. Christopher has also served in the firm's labor and employment practice group and counseled employers in all aspects of labor and employment law, including labor relations, collective bargaining, grievance and dispute resolution, workplace investigation, employee discipline, terminations and reductions in force, and employment discrimination. Christopher also advises clients on board governance and compliance with the Illinois Freedom of Information Act and Open Meetings Act.

Christopher's strengths as an attorney are evident in his approach to law. He brings a unique perspective to the table, given his background as in-house counsel for not-for-profit organizations and public bodies as well as his comprehensive understanding of various practice areas. He values ethical principles and understands the significance of alternative dispute resolution when it aligns with his clients' best interests.

In his legal practice, Christopher finds the most joy in representing individuals who are deeply committed to their roles in public service, recognizing the significance of their contributions. This alignment of values and a shared commitment to public service underscores the core of his legal practice.

Christopher's decision to become a lawyer was deeply rooted in his passion for government and public service. Prior to joining Robbins Schwartz, Christopher served as in-house counsel for a nonprofit organization, a charter school management organization and a state regulatory agency overseeing higher education financing. In his career, Christopher has overseen labor relations for the first unionized charter school in the country, assisted in the development of state legislation and administrative rules, and influenced the U.S. and Treasury Department's decision to reintroduce the U.S. Savings Bond as a form of tax refund, promoting savings among low-income families.

Christopher's contributions extend beyond the courtroom. He has authored numerous publications, addressing critical legal issues and serving as a valuable resource for the legal community. He has also been a prominent figure in legal presentations, sharing his insights with fellow professionals.



ORGANIZATIONS

Illinois State Bar
Association

DuPage County Bar
Association

Illinois Local Government
Lawyers Association

Illinois Association of
School Business Officials

Beyond his legal career, Christopher is a devoted coach for his children's sports activities when given the opportunity. He finds solace in the great outdoors, enjoys cooking, and maintains a commitment to regular exercise. Moreover, he possesses a deep interest in change management and organizational design, which he's cultivated through certification courses.

Recent Publications

Contributing author, "Labor Relations: Contract Administration Including Unfair Labor Practices," *Illinois School Law*, IICLE (2024)

Contributing author, "Competency in ADR: Assuring Ethical Practice through Competency and Communication," *DCBA Brief*, The Journal of the DuPage County Bar Association (2024)

Contributing author, "School District Emergency Purchasing," *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2024)

Contributing author, "Diving into ADR Ethics: Exploring the Ethical Obligations of Attorneys as Advisors, Advocates, and Third-Party Neutrals" *DCBA Brief*, The Journal of the DuPage County Bar Association (2023)

"Navigating Public Bidding Requirements under the Illinois School Code," *Update*, Illinois Association of School Business Officials (2022)

Contributing author, "Labor Issues in the Transactional Side of the Project," *Construction Law: Transactional Considerations 2021 Edition*, IICLE (2021)

"Continuing Controversy Over FCC's Efforts to Improve Broadband Connectivity," *Energy, Utilities, Telecommunications and Transportation Newsletter*, Illinois State Bar Association (2021)

"The Future of For-Profit Online Charter Schools," *Labor and Employment Law Quarterly*, American Bar Association (2016)

Recent Presentations

2024 Community College Legal Updates, Illinois Community College Chief Financial Officers Spring Conference (April 2024)

Best Practices for Safeguarding Data in an Increasingly Digital World, SecurED Schools: K-12 Data Privacy and Cybersecurity Conference (January 2023)

School Bidding, Procurement, and Prevailing Wages: From the Basics to the Advanced, IASA Spring Legal Seminar (March 2022)

Making Sense of the Alphabet Soup: FERPA, COPPA, SOPPA, ISSRA, MHDDCA and PIPA, The Learning Technology Center of Illinois SecurED Schools Annual Conference (January 2022)





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PRACTICE AREAS

Commercial Transactions
Construction
Park District
Real Estate Development

EDUCATION

J.D., DePaul University
College of Law, *summa
cum laude*, Order of the
Coif

B.S., Valparaiso
University

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

Supreme Court of Illinois

ORGANIZATIONS

Illinois State Bar
Association

DuPage County Bar
Association

Nicole Karas focuses her practice on local government and corporate law. She serves as outside general counsel to local governmental clients providing a wide range of legal assistance. Nicole counsels clients on major construction, land acquisition, contract drafting and negotiation, intergovernmental cooperation agreements, board policies, personnel policies, employment issues, contracts for purchases of goods and services, Open Meetings Act, FOIA issues, and ordinance/resolution drafting.

Nicole represents corporate and non-for-profit clients in various matters, including entity formation, real estate matters, contract review, leases and other transactional matters.

Recent Publications

"Guide to the Open Meetings Act and FOIA," *Illinois Association of Park Districts* (2023)

"Buyer Beware – Construction Project and Contract Pitfalls," *Illinois Association of School Business Officials Magazine* (2017)

Recent Presentations

Bidding and Managing a Successful Construction Project, 2024 IADP/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference (January 2024)

Bidding 101: Bidding Requirements, Exceptions and Strategies for Cooperative Purchase, IADP/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference (January 2023)

Managing a Successful Construction Project, IADP/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference (January 2023)





HOWARD A. METZ

Partner, Chicago

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PRACTICE AREAS

Commercial
Transactions
Construction
Education
Energy
Litigation
Municipal
Public Finance &
Taxation
Real Estate
Zoning, Planning &
Land Use

EDUCATION

J.D., IIT Chicago-Kent
College of Law

B.S., Political Science,
University of Iowa

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

U.S. District Court for
the Northern District of
Illinois

Supreme Court of
Illinois

Howard A. Metz is an experienced legal professional known for his expertise in advising and representing various private and public entities, including school districts, community colleges, park districts, and municipalities. His legal practice spans a range of areas, with a primary focus on real estate, commercial transactions, construction law, and land use and zoning matters.

Howard has made significant contributions, particularly in resolving complex construction cases. His expertise includes handling disputes related to architectural fees, construction defects, bidding issues, and construction delays. Additionally, Howard has been actively involved in litigating matters pertaining to zoning laws and municipal control over school property.

Howard's legal practice is diverse and includes areas such as commercial law, construction law, education law, energy law, litigation, municipal law, public finance and taxation, real estate law, and zoning, planning, and land use.

As a prolific writer, Howard has contributed to various publications, sharing his insights on topics crucial to his practice.

Recent Publications

Contributing author, "School District Emergency Purchasing," *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2024)

"Navigating Public Bidding Under the Illinois School Code" *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO

Contributing author, "Joint Purchasing Everything You Want to Know but Are Afraid to Ask!" *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2019)

Contributing author, "Public Body Social Media Rules Make Retention, Read Retrieval Imperative," *Chicago Law Bulletin* (2019)

Contributing author, "How Far Does the Law Allow Schools to Go?" *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2018)

Co-author, "School Construction from Start to Finish: A Project Checklist," *School Business Affairs Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2018)



ORGANIZATIONS

Illinois Association of
School Business Officials

Illinois Council of School
Attorneys

Contributing author, “Organization, Finance, and Property,” *Illinois School Law*, Illinois Institute for Continuing Legal Education (2017)

“Look Before You Leap: Evaluating Your Joint Purchasing Options,” *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2016)

Contributing author, “School Property and Environmental Issues,” *Illinois School Law*, Illinois Institute for Continuing Education Legal Education (2010 and 2012)

Recent Presentations

Innovative Solutions to Student Transportation Challenges, Illinois ASBO School Business Essentials Lunch & Learn Series (January 2024)





LOGAN K. SWEENEY

Associate, Chicago

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lsweeney@robbins-schwartz.com

PRACTICE AREAS

Commercial Transactions
Construction
Labor & Employment
Municipal
Public Finance & Taxation
Real Estate
Zoning, Planning &
Land Use

EDUCATION

J.D., Loyola University
Chicago School of Law

B.A., University of
Minnesota, Twin Cities

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

U.S. District Court for the
Northern District of
Illinois

Supreme Court of Illinois

ORGANIZATIONS

Chicago Bar Association

Logan K. Sweeney is a member of the firm's construction, commercial transactions, public finance & taxation, and real estate practice groups. Logan represents private and public project owners, including school districts, community colleges, park districts, and municipalities. She assists with construction and development projects, beginning with property acquisition, zoning, contract negotiation and bidding, project management, and any resulting litigation.

Logan's professional journey revolves around her love for working with clients who are equally passionate about what they do. She finds immense satisfaction in collaborating with individuals and businesses to navigate complex legal matters and to chart a course toward success. Her approach to legal practice is marked by empathy, understanding, and a determination to serve her clients' best interests.

Prior to joining Robbins Schwartz, Logan worked at a transactional law, litigation, and government relations law firm in Chicago, Illinois where she gained experience in a wide array of practice areas. Logan now utilizes her diverse legal background and experience to best serve Robbins Schwartz and its clients.

Outside of the legal realm, Logan enjoys embarking on culinary adventures by trying new restaurants, embracing the joy of running, and traveling.

Recent Publications

Contributing author, "School District Emergency Purchasing," *UPDATE Magazine*, Illinois ASBO (2024)

Recent Presentations

Contract Pitfalls to Avoid, Emerging SBO Summit (July 2024)

Best Practices When Responding to a Data Breach or Cyber Incident, Secured Schools: K-12 Data Privacy and Cybersecurity Conference (January 2024)

