

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The firm's representation of public schools and colleges dates back to the 1920s, when founder J.S. Bracewell first served as a board member of the Harrisburg School District (which is now part of Houston Independent School District). Decades later, Bracewell served as lead counsel for the Houston Independent School District (HISD) in its successful transition from a segregated to a fully integrated system in the 1970s and 1980s. We also assisted HISD in establishing the Houston Community College (HCC) as a component of HISD, and subsequently helped the HCC become an independent entity, and currently serve as general counsel for the 55,000-student institution. We continue to advise HISD on numerous operational issues, such as the recent purchase of a technology training campus site and buildings.

Today, we continue to play a leading role in the evolution of education law in Texas and in other states. Bracewell advises public-school clients in virtually every area of law relating to their day-to-day challenges and long-term objectives. These matters include

- Administrative appeals
- Contract negotiation
- Desegregation
- Election law
- Eminent domain and condemnation
- Governmental relations
- Open government laws
- Personnel law
- Public finance
- Real estate and construction
- Religion in schools
- Student rights and discipline

Our attorneys focus on the prevention of legal problems through regular consultation with decision makers. Bracewell publishes legal guidance manuals and provides legal workshops and seminars on the Open Meetings Act, Public Information Act, disabilities laws, conflicts of interest, privacy rights and student discipline. We routinely provide clients with form letters and notices that can be adapted for immediate use. Further, we maintain a legal advisory service, which provides timely legal updates to school officials by e-mail.

We have particular experience in counseling public schools on compliance with the full spectrum of federal, state, and local employment laws. Our attorneys have unparalleled experience in advising educational institutions regarding picketing and strikes on campuses and at school district facilities.