



KARL W. KRISTOFF

Partner

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Karl has practiced law since 1968 and has been engaged almost exclusively in both school law and public sector labor relations work for more than 40 years. Karl has been designated by the New York State Commissioner of Education as a hearing officer for cases arising under Part 83 of the Commissioner's Regulations concerning teacher certification.

During the course of his work for school districts, including his recent service as General Counsel for the Rochester City School District, Karl has been involved with administrator and teacher certification and tenure area matters, student discipline problems, school construction matters, school building closings, sales and leases, board of education and annual meeting questions, student transportation matters, competitive bidding for public contracts, environmental law problems, religious establishment and academic freedom questions, school borrowings, and human rights issues. He also has significant experience with placement of students with special educational needs and appeals from committees on special education decisions, as well as abolition of position matters, public employee collective negotiations, contract administration, grievance handling and arbitration, improper practice cases before the Public Employment Relations Board, public employee strikes and other job actions, certified and non-certified employee discipline and dismissal cases (including more than 50 cases under Section 3020-a), unemployment insurance and workers' compensation matters, and appeals to the Commissioner of Education and the courts.

Karl served on active duty with the U.S. Air Force as a judge advocate and special court military judge. Thereafter, he was appointed to various positions in the Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard of the United States, including staff judge advocate, assistant adjutant general, and commander for the headquarters, New York Air National Guard. He retired from his state service in 1999 with the rank of major general.

The Guaranty Building
140 Pearl Street
Suite 100
Buffalo, NY 14202

Practices & Industries

Education
Labor & Employment
Construction

Admissions

New York
Illinois
U.S. Supreme Court

Education

B.A., University at Buffalo, State
University of New York
J.D., John Marshall Law School



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Karl has also served as an adjunct assistant professor in the University at Buffalo Graduate School of Education and at SUNY Buffalo Law School.

Honors

- Listed, *Best Lawyers in America*, *Upstate New York Super Lawyers*, and *Who's Who in American Law*
- Legion of Merit of the U.S. Armed Forces
- New York State Conspicuous Service Award
- Martindale Hubbell "AV Preeminent" ranking
- WNYESC Dr. Robert W. Heller Distinguished Service Award
- ECASB Wayne Schlifke Lifetime Achievement Award

In the News

School Board Members on Contract Negotiating Teams: Help or Hindrance?
On Board, September 1, 2014

How I...Went From Military to Law Firm
Buffalo Business First, July 11, 2014

Fifty-Five Hodgson Russ Attorneys Named to *Best Lawyers* 2014
August 28, 2013

Hodgson Russ Number One in Buffalo Who's Who in Law
September 12, 2008

Press Releases

Hodgson Russ LLP Honored with 2023 New York State Bar Association President's Pro Bono Service Award
April 17, 2023

Karl W. Kristoff Rejoins Hodgson Russ's Education Practice
Hodgson Russ Press Release, February 18, 2021

Sixty-three Hodgson Russ Attorneys Named to 2016 Upstate New York Super Lawyers, Hugh Russ Listed Among Top 50
Press Release, August 31, 2016

2017 Best Lawyers Names Fifty-four Hodgson Russ Attorneys From Multiple Offices
Hodgson Russ Press Release, August 18, 2016

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Sixty-Four Hodgson Russ Attorneys Named to 2015 Upstate New York Super Lawyers, Hugh Russ Listed Among Top 50
Press Release, August 19, 2015

Fifty-Five Hodgson Russ Attorneys Named to Best Lawyers 2016, Five Honored as Buffalo 'Lawyers of the Year'
Press Release, August 17, 2015

63 Hodgson Russ Attorneys Named to *Super Lawyers* Listing
Press Release, August 14, 2014

Seventy Hodgson Russ Attorneys Named to *Super Lawyers* Listing
August 2013

Publications

U.S. Department of Education Announces Long-Awaited Final Title IX Regulations
Hodgson Russ Education Alert, April 25, 2024

New York State's "Freelance Isn't Free" Act – What Employers Need to Know
Hodgson Russ Labor & Employment Alert, April 18, 2024

Employees Enjoy a Private Right of Action Under Changes to New York City Earned Safe and Sick Time Act
Hodgson Russ Labor & Employment Alert, March 7, 2024

New York State Amends Workplace Violence Prevention Law to Apply to School Districts
Hodgson Russ Education Alert, February 15, 2024

NY General Obligations Law Amended to Limit Further Pro-Employer Provisions in Settlement Agreements
Hodgson Russ Labor & Employment Alert, January 23, 2024

New Year - New Statute of Limitations for Complaints filed with the New York State Division of Human Rights
Hodgson Russ Labor & Employment Alert, December 29, 2023

New York State Increases Minimum Wage and Modifies Other Salary Requirements
Hodgson Russ Labor & Employment Alert, December 22, 2023 - CORRECTED*

Alternative Instruction for Suspended Students
Hodgson Russ Education Alert, October 20, 2023

Wage Theft In New York Is Now Criminal Larceny
Hodgson Russ Labor & Employment Alert, October 3, 2023

New York State Bans Employee Captive Audience Meetings
Hodgson Russ LLP Labor & Employment Alert, September 28, 2023

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Presentations & Events

39th Annual School Client Conference

M-Hotel Buffalo, 2040 Walden Ave, Buffalo, NY 14225, January 12, 2024

38th Annual School Client Conference

Buffalo Marriott Niagara 1340 Millersport Hwy, Amherst, NY 14221, January 13, 2023

Working with the Media While in Crisis Mode

WNY Education Law Conference

August 30, 2022

School Safety: Red Flag Laws, Critical Responsibilities, Creating Student Support Systems, and Other Practical Considerations for School Districts

June 8, 2022

Threat Assessment and Violence Prevention

2022 Annual School Client Conference

May 30, 2022

37th Annual School Client Conference

Buffalo Niagara Marriott, 1340 Millersport Hwy, Amherst, NY 14221, May 6, 2022

31st Annual School Client Conference

Millennium Hotel Buffalo, 2040 Walden Ave, Buffalo, NY, January 15, 2016

30th Annual School Client Conference

Millennium Hotel Buffalo, 2040 Walden Ave, Buffalo, NY, January 16, 2015

29th Annual School Client Conference

Hodgson Russ, Buffalo, NY, January 17, 2014

New York State Schools Boards Association 94th Annual Convention

October 1, 2013

Professional Affiliations

- Education Law Association
- New York State Association of School Attorneys
- National Council of School Attorneys
- National and New York Public Employer Labor Relations Associations
- American Arbitration Association (Construction Industry and Commercial Panels)
- Charter member, New York State School Boards Association's Legal Partners Program

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- New York State Veterans Affairs Commission
- Bar Association of Erie County
- Monroe County Bar Association and Education Committee, Member
- New York State Bar Association
- Illinois State Bar Association
- Federal Bar Association
- American Bar Association

Community & Pro Bono

- 'Say Yes Buffalo' Legal Services Program
- Past council president and current Endowment Committee chair, St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Williamsville, New York
- Member, Governance Committee of the NYS School Attorneys Association