Knox McLaughlin Gornall & Sennett, P.C.
Erie • Pittsburgh • Jamestown, NY
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Jennifer E. Gornall

Shareholder

Jennifer practices local governmental law, with a specific focus on education and special education law. She represents many school districts in the northwest Pennsylvania region in the capacity of general solicitor and also as special counsel for special education matters or other specific projects. She provides guidance to school districts involved in the special education mediation process and represents school districts in due process hearings. Jennifer also has significant experience with Title IX regulations.

Jennifer has experience in a wide range of school issues such as student discipline matters including expulsion procedures, hearings and student discipline policy drafting; student records and privacy issues; public meeting procedures; constitutional issues affecting students; public records and ethics laws; transportation contracts; construction building projects; and many other procedural and legal issues that confront both school district administrations and boards of directors. She also represents regional municipal entities such as townships, boroughs and municipal authorities, including port authorities, airport authorities and water and sewer authorities.



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Practice Areas

- Governmental Practice

Education

- The Dickinson School of Law, J.D.; *Dickinson Law Review, Articles Editor; Woolsack Honor Society, Member; American Bar Association Section of Urban, State and Local Government Law Award*
- College of William and Mary, B.A.

Admissions

- Pennsylvania

Representative Experience

- Successfully prosecutes over 50 student expulsion hearings annually

- Revised Erie Public School District’s student discipline policies, truancy policy and child abuse reporting policy
- Filed and successfully completed over 100 condemnations of blighted property located in the City of Erie on behalf of the Erie Redevelopment Authority

Representative Clients

- Allegheny-Clarion Valley School District
- Bradford Area School District
- Brookville Area School District
- Cameron County School District
- Commodore Perry School District
- Corry Area School District
- Cranberry Area School District
- Dubois Area School District
- Erie's Public Schools
- Erie Regional Airport Authority
- Fairview School District
- Harbor Creek School District
- Jamestown Area School District
- Keystone Area School District
- Mercer Area School District
- Mercer County Career Center
- Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit 5
- Oil Creek Township
- Punxsutawney Area School District
- Redbank Valley School District
- Ridgway Area School District
- Riverview Intermediate Unit VI
- Smethport Area School District
- Seneca Highlands Intermediate Unit 9
- Union School District
- Valley Grove School District
- Wattsburg Area School District
- And other Districts, as Special Education counsel

Honors

- Included in The Best Lawyers in America®, (Government Relations Practice, 2024-2027)



- Inaugural Recipient of 2005 Generation-E Leadership Award, Young Erie Professionals

Community and Professional Service

Community and Professional Service

- Humane Society of Northwestern Pennsylvania, *Board Member (2014-present) and Board President (2025-present)*
- Foundation for Erie's Public Schools, *Board Member, 2022-present*
- Erie Cemetery Association, *Board of Trustees, 2021-present and Board of Corporators, 2017-present*
- Hamot Health Foundation, *Board of Corporators, 2017-2022*
- WQLN, *Board Member 2008–2018*
- The Ophelia Project, *Board Member 1998–2006*
- Community House, Inc., *Board Member 1998–2002*
- March of Dimes, *"Ambassador Family", 2004, Board Member 2005–2007, Board President 2006–2007*
- ECBA Attorneys & Kids Together, *Participant*
- City of Erie Diversity Task Force, *Member 2006–2008*
- Erie County Truancy Task Force, *Member 2008–present*

Professional Affiliations

- Erie County Bar Association
- Pennsylvania Bar Association
- Pennsylvania School Board Solicitor’s Association
- National School Board Association Council of School Attorneys, *Board of Directors, 2008-2010*

Presentations

Speaking Engagements

- Firm's Annual Municipal Law Symposiums (multiple years), *Special Education Topic; School Law Update*
- LeadHERship in the Wilds Conference, July 2025
- Principal Retreat for Northwest Tri-County IU5, July 2025
- Title IX Update Training for School Districts, July 2024
- Title IX Training for School Districts (virtual in 2020 and 2021)
- Midwestern IU 4 Superintendent Advisory Council Presentation, October 2019
- Seneca Highlands IU9 Special Education Update, April 2019
- Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA)'s Annual Spring Legal Roundup, 2009–2019
- PASA-PSBA School Law Workshop, October 2015 and 2018
- Midwestern IU 4 Superintendent Advisory Council Presentation, October 2018
- Keystone Shortway PA Association of School Business Officials (PASBO) Meeting, August 2018
- Presentation for Warren County School District: Section 504 Disability Law, December 2016
- Firm's Child Abuse Reporting and Clearances Update Lunch & Learn, October 2015
- School District Policy Review, North East School District, August 2014
- Child Abuse Reporting Requirements training, Erie's Public Schools, August 2014
- PA Open Records Act Seminar 2008–2009
- "PA School Law Handbook 2005," PA School Board Association, *contributing editor*
- Frequent speaker at regional school district meetings and other school training sessions

Articles and Publications

- Update on Supreme Court Decision Regarding Title IX Sports
- Federal Court Vacates 2024 Title IX Regulations
- Title IX Update: What Schools Need to Know Before August 1, 2024

About Knox Law

Knox McLaughlin Gornall & Sennett, P.C. is a full service law firm that has provided practical solutions to businesses, families, public entities, and nonprofits for over 65 years. Our practice areas include ADR Services, Bankruptcy & Creditors' Rights, Business & Tax, Business Succession, Construction Law, Elder Law, Employee Benefits, Environmental Law, Estate Planning & Administration, Governmental Practice, Health Law, Intellectual Property & Technology, Labor & Employment, Litigation, Mergers & Acquisitions, Public Finance & Bonds, Real Estate, and Workers' Compensation.