

Illinois Special Education Due Process Hearing Officers

<p>Kristine Anderson</p>	<p>Kristine Anderson is currently of counsel to the law firm of Kirkland & Ellis in Chicago, IL involved in a range of litigation projects as well as issues involving professional ethics. Kristine received her B.A. from Oral Roberts University and her J.D. from the Chicago-Kent College of Law at the Illinois Institute of Technology.</p> <p>Prior to her legal practice, Kristine worked for approximately six years as a teacher of learning disabled students, most recently in Evanston Public School District 65. She also has experience working as an Assistant Director of Services for Students with Disabilities at Oral Roberts University.</p> <p>Ms. Anderson became a hearing officer in July 2005 and is excluded from taking cases in School District 202 and School District 65 in Evanston, IL.</p>
<p>Harry Blackburn</p>	<p>Harry Blackburn is a retired Deputy General Counsel to the Illinois State Board of Education, having served the agency in several capacities from 1971 to 2002. Among the many duties and responsibilities Mr. Blackburn's service at ISBE included being an Administrative Hearing Officer for State Teacher Certification disciplinary hearings and other types of hearings requiring administrative determinations. Mr. Blackburn currently is a sole practitioner in a limited general law practice in Cook county and surrounding counties.</p> <p>Harry Blackburn became a hearing officer in July 2008 and is excluded from taking cases in Chaney-Monge School District 88, Richland School District 88a and Lockport Township High School District 205.</p>
<p>Ann Breen-Greco</p>	<p>Ms. Breen-Greco is also a trained mediator and did mediation for ten years with the Center for Conflict Resolution, for court-referred misdemeanors and for the Department of Human Rights. She is a board member of both the National and Illinois Association's of Administrative Law Judges. Ms. Breen-Greco has served on the faculty of the National Association of Administrative Law Judges for the last four years at the annual conferences, conducting workshops on child abuse and neglect cases, basics for administrative law judges, bias and discrimination, and stress reduction. She is also the co-editor of the association's newsletter, as well as editor of the American Bar Association's National Conference of Administrative Law Judges' newsletter. She is the immediate past chairperson of the Chicago Bar Association's Administrative Law Judge Committee. Breen-Greco has been a hearing officer since June 1, 1999.</p>

<p>Alan Cook</p>	<p>Mr. Cook has been a practicing attorney since 1973 and has practiced as a labor arbitrator since 1978. He is a member of the Chicago Bar Association, American Arbitration Association, Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services, and the Industrial Relations Research Association.</p> <p>Mr. Cook was a former level II due process reviewing officer and has been a due process hearing officer since June 1, 1999.</p>
<p>Julia Quinn Dempsey</p>	<p>Julia Dempsey is a retired judge (Cook County Circuit Court Juvenile Division). She was formerly chief legal advisor to the Illinois State Board of Education and has been admitted to practice in Illinois and before several Federal District Appellate Courts.</p> <p>Judge Dempsey was former president of the Illinois Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, former chairperson of the Illinois State Bar Association School Law Section Council, member of Cardinal Bernardin's Commission on Clerical Child Abuse, recipient of the Chicago Bar Association Juvenile Law Committee Award and a member of the Illinois Supreme Court Study Committee on Juvenile Justice.</p> <p>Judge Dempsey has been a hearing officer since June 1, 1999. She is excluded from taking cases in Forest Park District 91 and Proviso Township District 209.</p>
<p>Sheana Hermann</p>	<p>Ms. Hermann is a sole practitioner and former Level II special education hearing officer. She was a Due Process Coordinator for the Chicago Public Schools from July 2003 through October 2003. Ms. Hermann participates in the Greater Chicago Food Depository Kids Café Program, the Lake County Haven and the Lake Forest/Lake Bluff Volunteer Center.</p> <p>Ms. Hermann became a hearing officer in July, 2004 and is excluded from taking cases in Lake Bluff Elementary District No. 65 and Lake Forest Community High School District No. 115.</p>
<p>Lynette Lewis</p>	<p>Lynette Lewis is a sole practice attorney in Evergreen Park, IL. Prior to private practice, Ms. Lewis worked as an attorney in the Juvenile Division of the Cook County Public Defender's Office as well as an arbitrator for Cook County for the past fourteen years and is a trained mediator.</p> <p>Ms. Lewis served eight years on a local school council in Chicago, IL and has served as a troop leader for the Girl Scouts of Chicago for 20 years. Ms. Lewis currently serves as Chairperson for WellSpring Center for Hope, an advocacy agency against domestic violence. She is a member of the Cook County Bar Association and the Rainbow P.U.S.H. Coalition. She became a hearing officer in July 2008.</p>

<p>Mary Onken</p>	<p>Mary Onken has served as a mediator and arbitrator for the past eight years. She is a certified chairperson for Cook, DuPage, Will and Kane County Mandatory Arbitration Programs. In addition to her dispute resolution practice, Ms. Onken provides litigation support and management services to insurers, brokers, law firms, underwriters, and corporations. She also handles personal injury and real estate matters for individuals.</p> <p>During her 19 year legal career, Ms. Onken has represented both plaintiffs and defendants in all types of complex civil disputes. Her diverse legal background gives her a fair and balanced approach to resolving disputed matters in a timely and efficient manner.</p> <p>Ms. Onken became a hearing officer in July 2008 and is excluded from taking cases in Naperville Community Unit School District 203.</p>
<p>D. Michael Risen</p>	<p>Michael Risen joined the Department of Educational Leadership at Bradley University beginning in the fall of 2004 where he teaches Graduate courses including American Public School Law, Legal and Social Justice, The Principalship, Special Education Law, School Finance and Research Methods. Dr. Risen comes from a K-12 Public Education background where he has served as an elementary principal for 15 years (2 as an assistant principal) in the East Peoria Elementary #86 school district, two years as Superintendent of Schools of Green Valley CC #695, seven years as Superintendent of Schools at Midwest Central Community Unit District #191 and six years as Superintendent of Byron CUSD #226.</p> <p>Dr. Risen received his PhD in educational administration in 1989 from Illinois State University where he also earned his MS in educational administration in 1975 and his BS in Business Education in 1971. He also earned an Education Specialist degree from Western Illinois University. He holds three Illinois teaching certificates, including high school, a type 75 in education administration and the superintendent's endorsement.</p> <p>Dr. Risen became a hearing officer in July 2008 and is excluded from taking cases in Metamora Community Consolidated School District 1, Germantown Hills School District 69 and the Woodford County Special Education Association.</p>
<p>Mary Schwartz</p>	<p>Mary Schwartz has worked with children with disabilities and their families throughout her career as an attorney and a licensed clinical professional counselor. She served as Legal Director for the Center for Disabilities and Elder Law in Chicago; currently, she is Of Counsel to Children's Law Group, where she provides representation in the areas of adoption, mental health and family law matters. Additionally, she is a trained divorce mediator.</p>

	<p>Ms. Schwartz’s background in mental health includes both private practice and non-profit work. Most recently, she served as mental health director of a community mental health agency specializing in care for immigrants and refugees Her mental health career began with working as a counselor and therapist at the Sonia Shankman Orthogenic School at the University of Chicago. She later returned there as a senior administrator and served as Acting Co-Director for one year. She also has worked as a consultant and in-service training provider for private schools in the metropolitan Chicago area and has presented at local, state and national conferences on many mental health, disability, and legal issues. She has served on many community boards, including: the Disability Ethics Board at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, the Association of Child Psychotherapists, and the Geriatric Advisory Council to the Illinois Department of Human Services.</p> <p>Ms. Schwartz received her master’s degree from the University of Chicago in educational psychology and her juris doctorate from Valparaiso University School of Law.</p> <p>Mary Schwartz became a hearing officer in July 2005 is excluded from taking cases in Matteson District 162 and Rich Township High School District 227.</p>
<p>Joseph Selbka</p>	<p>Joseph Selbka is an attorney in solo practice with an emphasis in litigation. Previous to his sole-practice work, Mr. Selbka worked in private practice and as a Special Assistant Attorney General. He has experience in employment and disability discrimination issues.</p> <p>In addition to his legal practice, Mr. Selbka is an adjunct lecturer at the University of Illinois-Chicago in the area of law and public administration as well as serving in on several boards and associations with UIC.</p> <p>Mr. Selbka became a hearing officer in July 2008 and is excluded from taking cases in Oak Park School District 97 and Oak Park River Forest High School District 200.</p>
<p>Alfred Spitzzeri</p>	<p>Alfred Spitzzeri is a sole-practice attorney based in Naperville, IL, concentrating in the area of personal injury. Mr. Spitzzeri was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1986 after graduating cum laude from the Loyola University of Chicago School of Law. Mr. Spitzzeri is also a currently certified court arbitrator in Cook, DuPage, Kane and Will Counties, as well as being a certified court mediator in DuPage County. Prior to becoming an attorney, Mr. Spitzzeri was a certified school psychologist and worked for eight years in the Berwyn public schools.</p> <p>In addition to his legal practice, Mr. Spitzzeri is a Vice-President of the</p>

	<p>DuPage County Bar Association and has previously served as an Assembly Representative of the Illinois State Bar Association. Additionally, he serves as a current member of the Naperville Chamber of Commerce and the Joint Civic Committee of Italian-Americans.</p> <p>Mr. Spitzzeri became a hearing officer in July 2005 and is excluded from taking cases with Berwyn School District 98 and Naperville School District 204.</p>
<p>Stacey Stutzman</p>	<p>Stacey Stutzman is a licensed attorney in good standing in the State of Illinois. Prior to her appointment as a due process hearing officer, she practiced law in the area of civil litigation and her practice included the representation of families under the IDEA. She has an adult child with Down syndrome and served 8 years as a member of the Libertyville District 70 Board of Education, including 2 years as its President. Ms. Stutzman is also a trained mediator and arbitrator. She most recently participated in the National Academy for IDEA Administrative Law Judges and Hearing Officers held in July 2008 in Seattle, WA.</p> <p>Ms. Stutzman became a hearing officer in July 1997 and is excluded from taking cases Libertyville School District 70, Community High School District 128 and the Special Education District of Lake County.</p>
<p>W. David Utley</p>	<p>David Utley currently is of counsel to the law firm of Ryan, Ryan & Landa in Waukegan, IL, involved in various civil litigation in Cook County, DuPage County, McHenry County and Kane County. Prior to that, he served as an attorney with Safeco Insurance Companies for twenty-three (23) years. While at Safeco, he chaired the Community Involvement Committee which was responsible for corporate charitable contributions in a 3 state area. In addition, he has also served as an arbitrator for the Circuit Court of Cook County since the program inception.</p> <p>Mr. Utley holds a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts in Education from St. Louis University and is a former teacher, having taught in the Rockwood School District (Missouri) and Schaumburg Community Consolidated School District # 54 (Illinois).</p> <p>He currently serves on the Plan Commission and the Bikeways Advisory Committee for the Village of Schaumburg and previously served on the Family Counseling Oversight Committee for the Village. He also previously served on the Board of Shelter, Inc., a non-for-profit organization providing temporary emergency shelter and support to families in need.</p>

	Mr. Utley is excluded from taking cases in Schaumburg Community Consolidated School District # 54 and Schaumburg Palatine High School District # 211.
James Wolter	<p>Dr. Wolter is a professor of special education at Chicago State University. He has taught science and mathematics as a Peace Corps volunteer in Malaysia and at Forest Psychiatric Hospital in Des Plaines, Illinois. He was a special education teacher and a special education administrator at New Trier High School.</p> <p>While he was employed by New Trier High School District, the district employed a law firm that assigned John Relias to work on the district's special education matters. Dr. Wolter and Mr. Relias worked together in this capacity from 1979 to 1994.</p> <p>Dr. Wolter has been a hearing officer since 1979 and is excluded from taking cases in New Trier Township High School District 203, and Wilmette School District 39.</p>

Reserve Hearing Officers:

Vivian Gordon	<p>Dr. Gordon has 19 years of experience in the area of school law. She is a former teacher, assistant professor of law, former director of various award winning law-related education programs and author of law related education textbooks currently used nationwide. She serves as a Teacher Dismissal Hearing Officer, a Part C Hearing Officer for the Department of Human Services, an Adjunct Professor at Blitstein Teachers Institute and is currently in private practice.</p> <p>Dr. Gordon served as a level II special education hearing officer from 1992-1997 and has been a due process hearing officer under the single – tier hearing system since July 1, 1997.</p>
Linda Mastandrea	<p>Linda Mastandrea is a sole-practice attorney based in Chicago, IL. Ms. Mastandrea was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1995. Prior to her current practice, Ms. Mastandrea worked as Legal Counsel for the Client Assistance Program of the Illinois Office of Rehabilitation Services. She also has experience as an adjunct professor at the Chicago-Kent College of Law at the Illinois Institute of Technology, having taught several courses on the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Fair Housing Act, among others. Ms. Mastandrea has been the Regional Director of the America's Athletes with Disabilities and other entities advocating issues on behalf of individuals with disabilities.</p> <p>Ms. Mastandrea became a hearing officer in October 2005.</p>