



NATIONAL EDUCATORS LAW INSTITUTE

NELI FALL CONFERENCES

— 34TH ANNUAL DISABILITIES LAW CONFERENCE —



...Meeting the Challenges of the Ever Changing
World of Educational Law

BEHAVIOR
CONFERENCE

December 3, 2026
DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Austin
Austin, Texas

DISABILITIES
CONFERENCE

December 4, 2026
DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Austin
Austin, Texas

34TH ANNUAL DISABILITIES LAW CONFERENCE

December 3 & 4, 2026 · Austin, TX

BEHAVIOR CONFERENCE

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

The law pertaining to behaviorally-challenged students is ever-changing. NELI's Behavior Conference will deliver training on some of the most critical issues regarding this complicated subject. Experienced attorneys and behavior specialists will cover topics including how to distinguish disability-related behaviors from social maladjustment during an MDR, how to make your manifestation determinations bullet proof, how to navigate behavior, discipline and more restrictive placements, and how to provide services to students with disabilities at the DAEP.

Sign up for both the Behavior Conference AND the Disabilities Conference to save \$25.00!

CONFERENCE TOPICS

8:00 - 9:00 Registration & Continental Breakfast

9:00 – 9:45 "When Behavior Becomes a Barrier to Learning, How Much is Too Much?": Navigating Behavior, Discipline and More Restrictive Placements in Special Education

Cynthia S. Buechler - Buechler & Associates, P.C.

9:45 – 10:00 Morning Break

10:00 – 10:45 "Untangling the Behaviors When a Student is Both ED and Socially Maladjusted": How to Distinguish Disability-Related Behaviors from Social Maladjustment During an MDR

Dr. Heather Hughes - Eagle-Mount Saginaw ISD

10:45 – 11:30 "Whose Job is It Anyway?": Social Skills in the IEP, Who Should Provide Support and How to Make it Meaningful

Dr. Ann Hughes - Sanger ISD

11:30 – 1:00 Lunch On Your Own

1:00 – 1:45 "When Rights Collide": Navigating the Balance Between Disability Rights, Police Involvement, Staff, and the Protection of Others

Chris Jones - Texas Assoc. of School Boards

1:45 – 2:00 Afternoon Break

2:00 – 2:45 "Threat Assessments to MDR: Connecting the Dots for Bulletproof Manifestation Determinations

William Buechler - Buechler & Associates, P.C.

2:45 – 3:30 "This Ain't No Party, This Aint No Disco!": Providing Services to Students with Disabilities at the DAEP

Elvin Houston - Walsh Gallegos Kyle Robinson & De Los Santos, P.C.

DISABILITIES CONFERENCE

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

When you're in education, sometimes you have to think like a lawyer. A solid understanding of the laws governing special education will give you confidence in providing educational services to any child. Whether you're in general or special education, the 34th Annual Disabilities Law Conference is the ideal way to get up to speed on disabilities law. At the Disabilities Conference, expert school law attorneys and educational professionals will discuss timely subjects including how to effectively respond to a special education complaint, getting related services right from evaluation to IEP, effectively providing homebound services and transition a student back to school, how to draft defensible deliberations, and providing parents with the right records under FERPA and IDEA.

Sign up for both the Behavior Conference AND the Disabilities Conference to save \$25.00!

CONFERENCE TOPICS

8:00 - 9:00 Registration & Continental Breakfast

9:00 – 9:45 "Put it in Writing!": Drafting Dazzlingly, Defensible Deliberations

Cynthia S. Buechler - Buechler & Associates, P.C.

9:45 – 10:00 Morning Break

10:00 – 10:45 "Show Me the Way to Go Home": When, Where & How to Effectively Provide Homebound Student Services and Transition a Student Back to School

Dave Richards - Richards, Lindsay & Martin

10:45 – 11:30 ""Minutes, Models & Mandates": Getting Related Services Right from Evaluation to IEP

Jame Turner - Walsh Gallegos Kyle Robinson & De Los Santos, P.C.

11:30 – 1:00 Lunch On Your Own

1:00 – 2:00 "The Paper Trail": Providing Parents the Right Records Under FERPA and IDEA

Kaylyn Kirkpatrick - Walsh Gallegos Kyle Robinson & De Los Santos, P.C.

2:00 – 2:15 Afternoon Break

2:15 – 3:00 "Over 2,000 Complaints Filed Last Year": How to Effectively Respond to a Special Education Complaint - Common Issues, Documentation, and Response Strategies

William M. Buechler - Buechler & Associates, P.C.

3:00 – 3:30 "When the School Year Never Ends": Making Sound and Defensible ESY Decisions Including Eligibility, Data-Driven Decision-Making, Regression and Recoupment, and Individualized Services

Andie Tate - Northwest ISD

3:30 Adjourn

LOCATION & ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

LOCATION



**Doubletree by
Hilton Austin**
6505 Interstate Hwy 35 N
Austin, TX 78752
Phone: (512) 454-3737
Fax: (512) 419-0102



**BOTH CONFERENCES
HELD BACK TO BACK
IN SAME LOCATION!**

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

CYNTHIA S. BUECHLER is a partner in the law firm of Buechler & Associates, P.C. Ms. Buechler has been practicing disabilities law for over 40 years. Ms. Buechler is the C.E.O and Co-founder of the National Educators Law Institute.

WILLIAM M. BUECHLER is the managing partner at the law firm of Buechler & Associates, P.C. His practice emphasizes special education, Section 504, ADA, civil rights and employment and administrative law issues. Mr. Buechler frequently speaks at education law seminars and conferences at the state and national levels and he serves as managing director of the National Educators Law Institute.

ELVIN W. HOUSTON is a shareholder with the law firm of Walsh Gallegos Kyle Robinson & Roalson P.C. Mr. Houston represents school districts in Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee meetings, in mediation, and in matters before the Texas Education Agency and the Office of Civil Rights. advises school board members and school personnel in all aspects of federal and state special education and disability law. Mr. Houston joined Walsh Gallegos in 2004 and is a frequent speaker on legal issues related to public schools, disabilities, and special education.

ANN HUGHES, PH.D., is the Director of Student Intervention at Sanger ISD. With over 30 years experience as a teacher and administrator in alternative education settings, including DAEPs, juvenile correctional settings, and alternative schools, Dr. Hughes provides training related to positive behavioral interventions and supports and behavioral RTI.

HEATHER HUGHES, PH.D., BCBA is the executive director of special programs for Eagle Mountain Saginaw ISD and has over 30 years' experience as an educational diagnostician, LSSP, and teacher. She serves on several advisory boards and teaches college courses on a variety of special education and autism subjects.

CHRIS JONES is a senior attorney with TASB Legal Services. Before joining TASB, Mr. Jones was employed by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), where he worked in a wide variety of school-law related areas, including academic and financial accountability, accreditation, investigations, campus improvement activities, districts of innovation, special-purpose districts, school district consolidations, charter schools, teacher certification, special population

program monitoring, residential treatment facilities, TEA enforcement activities, litigation, school finance, and rulemaking. Mr. Jones has a degree in accounting from Texas Tech University. He received his law degree from The University of Texas.

KAYLYN KIRKPATRICK is an attorney with the law firm of Walsh Gallegos Kyle Robinson & De Los Santos, P.C. Ms. Kirkpatrick earned her law degree from Baylor Law School and comes from a family of educators and administrators who were raised to always make public education a priority. Her mother served as a Special Education Director, giving Kaylyn insight into the day-to-day challenges and joys of serving special education students. She now holds steadfast in her belief that the public school system is the key to creating and maintaining a just society.

DAVID RICHARDS is a partner in the Austin law firm of Richards, Lindsay & Martin, LLP, where his practice focuses on Section 504 and special education issues. Mr. Richards is a frequent contributor to various publications and guest speaker at conferences and inservices on disabilities law and 504 matters.

JAMIE TURNER is an attorney with the law firm of Walsh Gallegos Kyle Robinson & De Los Santos P.C. and focuses her practice on special education and student matters. Jamie previously served public schools as in-house counsel for the Austin Independent School District, in private practice representing schools in general education matters, and as a special education administrator.

ANDIE TATE is a staff attorney at Northwest Independent School District, a district serving over 32,000 students. Ms. Tate advises school district personnel on various general law matters, but has a focus on special education and Section 504 law. As in-house counsel, Andie represents the District in Level III hearings before the Board of Trustees, ARD committee meetings, mediations, and in matters filed with the Texas Education Agency and the Office of Civil Rights.

The legal information provided at this conference is for general purposes only. It is not intended as a substitute for individual legal advice or the provision of legal services. Accessing this information does not create an attorney-client relationship. Individual legal situations vary greatly and attendees should consult directly with an attorney.

ACCREDITATION

Earn up to 9 Hours of Continuing Education Credit! All attendees will receive a certificate at the end of each conference indicating they have earned Continuing Education Credit (4.5 hours for Main Conference, 4.5 hours for Pre-Conference). **Administrators, Teachers & Diagnosticians:** This program may meet the local criteria for up to 9 hours of school administrator's general management training, which is no longer governed by the Texas Education Agency. NELI has been approved by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) as a provider of continuing professional education (CPE) credit. **Counselors:** The conference sponsors are approved by the State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors for up to 9 hours of continuing education credit for licensed professional counselors. **School Board Members:** The conference sponsors are registered providers of school board member training with the Texas Education Agency. This program provides up to 9 hours of school board member training in the areas of Vision, Structure and Unity. **Psychologists:** The conference may be approved by the State Board of Examiners of Psychology for up to 9 hours of continuing education credit for psychologists. **Speech-Language Pathologists:** The conference may be approved by the Texas Speech-Language-Hearing Association for up to 9 hours of continuing education for Speech-Language Pathologists.

REGISTRATION FORM

NELI 34TH ANNUAL DISABILITIES LAW CONFERENCE

Registration is as easy as 1...2...3!

1. Choose Your Training

Choose Your Training

Register Me For:

☐ **Behavior Conference** — \$210.00*
December 3, 2026

☐ **Disabilities Conference** — \$210.00*
December 4, 2026

☐ **Gimme "The Works"!** — \$395.00*
Save \$25.00! Register me for both the
Behavior Conference AND the Disabilities
Conference!

* On-site registration fee of \$220.00 for Behavior Conference
and \$220.00 for Disabilities Conference required after
December 4, 2026. "The Works" pricing not available
after Dec. 4, 2026.

In Person!

**Doubletree by
Hilton Austin**
6505 Interstate Hwy 35 North
Austin, TX 78752
Phone: (512) 454-3737
Fax: (512) 419-0102

* There will be a limited block of rooms reserved at the
Doubletree by Hilton Austin at a state/government rate.
We strongly encourage you to make reservations as early
as possible to ensure availability. To receive this special
rate, contact the Doubletree by Hilton Austin directly at
(512) 454-3737 and reference "NEL" or "National Educa-
tors Law Institute".

2. Attendee Information

Submit Separate Form For Each Attendee

Attendee: _____ Position: _____
E-mail: _____ Phone: _____ Fax: _____
District/Co-op: _____ Region: _____
School (if applicable): _____
Mailing Address: _____
Billing Address (if different): _____

3. Submit Registration and Payment

Four Ways to Register

Payment:

- ☐ Check (☐ Enclosed ☐ Mailing Separately)
☐ Purchase Order (☐ Enclosed ☐ Mailing Separately)
☐ Invoice Me (Attn: _____)
☐ Credit Card (Please Call NELI at 512-732-2988)

Register Via:

Online: www.nelilaw.net
Phone: (512) 732-2988 **Fax:** (512) 322-9342
Email: edservices@nelilaw.net
Mail: National Educators Law Institute
3660 Stoneridge Road, Suite D-101
Austin, TX 78746

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Cancellation Policy—Please Read!: Cancellations will only be accepted through Nov. 24, 2026. Substitution of attendees is allowed at any time, up to and including the day of the conferences. Registrants not able to attend may transfer to any other NELI Conference within one year.