

“Special Education Law Practice”

Thursday, April 13, 2017

noon - 1:30 p.m.

1.0 CLE Credit Hour (No Ethics)

University of Houston Law Center, Hendricks Heritage Room



Dustin Rynders,
Supervising Attorney,
Disability Rights Texas

Dustin Rynders is the Supervising Attorney of the Education Team at Disability Rights Texas (DRTx), a nonprofit law firm where he supervises a team of attorneys, advocates, and policy specialists in addition to maintaining his own case load. Dustin has also represented students with disabilities in the foster care and juvenile justice systems, and provides systemic policy education and advocacy at the state level, serving on committees including the Advisory Committee of the Texas Judicial Commission’s Juvenile Justice Committee. Dustin supervises DRTx’s initiative to improve the engagement of transition age youth and caregivers through a grant from the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health. In 2015, Dustin formed a partnership with Harris County Juvenile Probation Department, which allows a team of staff from his office to provide educational advocacy services to probation involved youth.

Dustin also works as Adjunct Professor of special education law at the University of Houston Law Center. Dustin is a sought after presenter at national conferences and is regularly asked to comment to media on topics related to education, juvenile justice, child welfare, and disability. Dustin is licensed to practice in the State of Texas and has been admitted in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas. Dustin received a Bachelor of Arts from Pepperdine University, cum laude (2001), a M.P.Aff. from the L.B.J. School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas (2003), and a J.D. from The University of Houston Law Center (2006).



Pam Kaminsky,
Associate Attorney,
Rogers Morris & Grover, LLP

Ms. Pam Kaminsky’s practice focuses on representing public school districts in special education and disability law litigation, student disciplinary matters, and discrimination claims. Her experience includes representing school districts in due process hearings, ARD meetings and mediations, preparing responses to Office for Civil Rights complaints and Texas Education Agency complaints, as well as representing public school districts in matters at both the administrative level and in litigation. She is also a frequent speaker at conferences across the State.

She was admitted to the Texas bar in 2002. She is admitted to practice before the U.S. District Courts for the Southern and Eastern Districts of Texas. She received her preparatory education from Sam Houston State University (B.S., 1994); and her legal education from South Texas College of Law (J.D., 2002). Ms. Kaminsky is a member of the State Bar of Texas.



Karen Mayer Cunningham,
Special Education
Advocate

Karen Mayer Cunningham is a special education advocate, helping families navigate the ARD/IEP process in federally funding schools for students between the ages of 3-21. With 20 years experience, Karen’s knowledge assists students in correctly crafting a special education plan than provides expected progress for students. Karen serves as a Commissioner for the Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities in Houston, while chairing the K-12 committee for the city, serves on the Texas A & M Center for Disabilities and Development Constituent Advisory Council and is on the Texas Education Agency Advocate List.

Karen will be presenting on the framework needed to represent families in 504/ARD meetings. Teaching real strategies to help families navigate the special education process in a school setting. The federal law vs the state code, and what is truly available to help students receive FAPE.