



## Janelle Edwards-Stewart

Principal

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Janelle Edwards-Stewart is a member of the Education, Employment and Labor Team at Porzio, Bromberg & Newman, P.C. She is a respected speaker on current education and employment law topics and provides comprehensive counsel to various businesses and educational institutions, advising public and private entities in sectors such as education, healthcare, and insurance on a broad range of matters. Her adeptness in federal and state courts and administrative agencies showcases her legal background and effective representation of her clients.

### **Employment and Labor**

As a member of the Employment and Labor Team at Porzio, Janelle advises public entities and private companies in fields including education, healthcare, and insurance on employment matters ranging from defense of discrimination allegations and claimed violations of the New Jersey Conscientious Employee Protection Act (CEPA) to internal investigations of employee wrongdoing.

### **Outside General Counsel & Litigation – Employment and Labor**

Janelle advises clients on discrete matters or serves as outside general counsel on day-to-day operations and labor and employment issues. She also provides key support to human resource personnel, including assessing policies and complaints related to employee discipline and removal, discrimination, disability accommodations and leaves of absence, harassment, reductions in force, restrictive covenants, and wage and hour disputes. Additionally, Janelle addresses and offers solutions for employment contract disputes, questions of regulatory compliance, and standards for implementing and enforcing employment policies. Janelle represents clients in federal and state courts and before administrative agencies, including the EEOC and the New Jersey Department of Labor.

### **Education Law**

As a member of the Education Team at Porzio, Janelle advises and serves as outside general counsel for Approved Private Schools for Students with Disabilities (APSSDs), independent schools, various public school districts, and public colleges.

### **APSSD Counsel and Advocacy**

As a trusted advisor to APSSD administrators and educators, Janelle works closely with ASAH (the premiere trade organization for NJ APSSDs) member schools on day-to-day legal and operational issues as well as long-term compliance with new and existing Department of Education regulations. A large majority of her counsel focuses on resolving staff-

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related issues, student programming and discipline issues, and addressing claims threatened or filed by employees or families.

Janelle is a frequent speaker at public schools, private independent schools, and APSSD annual conventions and events. She conducts legal workshops with administrators and educators to support their services that are comprehensive to their respective student populations, which typically include children with developmental disabilities, behavioral issues, and other such challenges.

Janelle also works with the [Porzio Governmental Affairs](#) (PGA) team to provide strategic guidance on shaping and advocating for laws and regulations that support ASAH's, and its member schools', objectives.

### **Outside General Counsel & Litigation - Education**

In Janelle's role as outside general counsel for private schools, she advises on issues and disputes involving general operations, and labor and employment. She counsels and does trainings for education clients on bullying and student discipline as well as employee discipline, removal, discrimination, and tenure. Additionally, she assesses commercial contract disputes, construction bids, employment contracts, regulatory compliance, safety issues, and policy drafting, implementation, and enforcement. Janelle also has significant experience representing education clients in federal and state courts and before administrative agencies, including the EEOC and the New Jersey Department of Labor.

## Recognitions

*No aspect of this or any advertisement has been approved by the Supreme Court of New Jersey. For ranking methodologies, please see [here](#).*

- American Bar Association's Tort Trial & Insurance Practice Section - Leadership Academy (2021-2022)
- *New Jersey Law Journal* - New Leaders of the Bar (2018)
- New Jersey Rising Stars® (2018-2019)

## Memberships

- American Bar Association, Tort, Trial and Insurance Practice Section: Chair-Elect and Membership Vice-Chair, Employment and Labor Law General Committee, 2020-2021; Vice-Chair, Women Trial Lawyers, 2018-2021; Vice-Chair, Employee Benefits General Committee, 2020-2021; Vice-Chair, Business Litigation General Committee, 2018-present; TIPS Now! Fellows, 2017-2018.
- New Jersey State Bar Association
- New York State Bar Association
- Connecticut Bar Association
- Garden State Bar Association
- New Jersey Association of School Attorneys

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- New Jersey Superior Court of Essex Vicinage Advisory Committee on Minority Concerns

### News

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- Porzio Announces Principal and Counsel Promotions, 7/01/2021
- Janelle Edwards-Stewart Honored as a New Leader of the Bar by New Jersey Law Journal, 6/21/2018
- Janelle Edwards-Stewart Quoted in "Springfield leaves 'looping' in superintendent's hand", 12/28/2017
- 8th Annual Porzio Employment Law Forum, 11/15/2016
- Porzio's Litigation Practice Profiled by New Jersey Law Journal, 11/15/2016
- Porzio's Education Team Participated in the New Jersey School Boards Association Workshop 2016, 10/26/2016

### Articles

- Porzio's 2023 Employment Law Year in Review, 12/29/2023
- Porzio's 2022 Employment Law Year in Review, 12/28/2022
- Porzio's Employment Law Year in Review, 1/10/2022
- The Employer's Life Vest for the American Rescue Plan, April 2021
- Implementing Workplace Accommodations During COVID-19: What Employers Do and Don't Have to Do, September 2020
- Three Phase Plan for Returning to the Workplace, 7/21/2020
- The Appellate Division Gives Employers a "Fat" Chance, April 2019
- Have You Really Agreed to Arbitrate?, December 2018
- Federal District Court's Treatment of Employers' FMLA Obligations Ends in a Draw, February 2017
- Is Paid Sick Leave Here to Stay?, November 2016
- An Alien Concept Creates Limits on Employee Pay Reductions, August 2016
- How to Put the "Independent" In Independent Contractor Status, 8/31/2015

### Events

- Porzio's Seventh Annual Ethics & Eggs, 12/07/2023

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- Porzio's Women's Initiative Network's Ethics & Eggs Seminar 2021, 12/09/2021
- Business as (Un)Usual: Pivoting Your Business During These Uncertain Times, 4/01/2020
- Associate Janelle Edwards-Stewart Presenting on Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying, 11/02/2017
- Associate Janelle Edwards-Stewart Presenting at the ASAH 40th Annual Conference, 10/27/2017
- Porzio Attorneys Presented at the Lightbridge Academy Owners Conference, 10/17/2017
- Porzio Presented at ASAH's 4th Annual Symposium for Business Office and Human Resources Personnel, 5/19/2017
- Porzio Attorneys To Present During ASAH Workshop, 12/15/2016
- Porzio Attorneys to Present at NBI's Advanced Employment Law Seminar, 12/07/2016
- Porzio Presents and Sponsors 39th Annual ASAH Conference, 11/18/2016
- Porzio to Present at ASAH's 3rd Annual Symposium for Business Office and Human Resources Personnel, 5/13/2016

## Speaking Engagements

- "Practical Steps for Improving Your Organization's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Initiatives," Porzio's Seventh Annual Ethics & Eggs CLE Seminar, 12/07/2023
- "Employee Mental Health: Mind Your Business!," Presenter, Porzio Employment Law Forum, Morristown, NJ, 10/04/2023
- "Porzio's 2023 School Safety Symposium", 6/01/2023
- "Keeping Up with the Rapidly Changing Employment Landscape in New Jersey," ASAH's Annual Human Resources Symposium, 5/19/2023
- "Outside the Scope: How to Survive and/or Conquer Corporate Representative Depositions and Notices in State and Federal Court," American Bar Association TIPS/YLD Section Conference, New York, NY, 5/03/2023
- "Recruitment and Retention: Lawful Methods and Potential Pitfalls Employers Should Know," Porzio Employment Law Forum, 11/02/2022
- "Are DEI Initiatives Working? How to Ensure That Yours Are," Morris County Chamber of Commerce, Human Resources & Talent Committee Virtual Meeting, 2/08/2022
- "Ethical and Diversity Considerations in Written and Verbal Communications," Porzio's Ethics & Eggs 2021, 12/09/2021
- "Masks, Vaccines, and Religious Exemptions," NJSBA Virtual Fall School Law Forum, November 23, 2021.
- "Sisters in Law @ Monroe College," Monroe College, November 17, 2021.
- "'Rite' Religious Accommodations," Porzio Employment Law Forum, October 20, 2021.

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- "Minimizing Corporate Risk in 2021 – What have we learned from COVID-19?" Porzio's Fourth Annual WIN Ethics & Eggs Virtual CLE Seminar, December 17, 2020.
- "Politically Incorrect: Regulating Employee Speech In and Out of the Workplace," Porzio Employment Law Forum, October 27, 2020.
- "Workplace Harassment Training," City of Newark – Firefighters, Attorneys, & Human Resource Personnel, August 24, 2020 and September 18, 2020.
- "How to Design Your Return to Work Plan," Morris County Chamber of Commerce Webinar, July 8, 2020.
- "The Old School and the New - Considerations for School Re-Opening," Porzio Webinar, July 7, 2020.
- "How to Design Your Return to Work Plan - From Employees to Floor Plan to Business Operations," Porzio MorphMom Webinar, June 10, 2020.
- "Continuing Legal Education - The Employment Guide to Surviving Covid-19," ABA Webinar, May 21, 2020.
- "Business As (Un)Usual-Pivoting Your Business During Uncertain Times: Part I," Morphmom Webinar, April 1, 2020.
- "Paid & Unpaid Leave," ASAH Human Resource Group Meeting, Edison, NJ, January 8, 2020.
- "Minds That Play Tricks on Us: Outsmarting Unconscious Bias," Porzio Employment Law Forum, October 3, 2019.
- Implicit Bias Seminar, Presented to Morris Arts Staff and Board, September, 2019.
- "Transition Services & Graduation," New Jersey School Boards Association's Spring School Law Forum, June, 2019.
- "Grrr or Great!: Animals in the Workplace," Porzio Employment Law Forum, Morristown, NJ, October 3, 2018.
- "Current Requirements for Background Checks & Update and Overview of Reasonable Accommodations," Lakeside, NJ, July 12, 2018.
- "Current Trends and Best Practices in Human Resources," ASAH's 5th Annual Symposium for Business Office and Human Resources Personnel, South Iselin, NJ, May 18, 2018.
- "ABA's New Anti-discrimination Rule - Maintaining The Integrity of The Profession - Rule 8.4 Misconduct," Ethics & Eggs, Porzio, Bromberg & Newman, P.C., Morristown, NJ, December 1, 2017.
- "Hot Topics In ADA Compliance: From Websites to Reasonable Accommodations," Porzio Employment Law Forum, Morristown, NJ, November 15, 2017.
- "Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying: Getting It Right," Madison Public Schools, Madison, NJ, November 2, 2017.
- "The Code has Passed...Now What" and "PSSDs in the Middle: Legal Proceedings Implicated by Student Behavior," ASAH 40th Annual Conference, Atlantic City, NJ, October 27, 2017.
- "Employment Law Basics for Lightbridge Owners & Managers," Lightbridge Academy Owners Conference, Iselin, NJ, October 17, 2017.

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- "Boundaries: Staying Behind the Line," Cerebral Palsy of North Jersey, Livingston, NJ, June 20, 2017.
- "Safeguarding Employee Personal Information with Consideration of New NJDOE Annual Disclosure Form and DOE Regulations," ASAH's 4th Annual Symposium for Business Office and Human Resources Personnel, Iselin, NJ, May 19, 2017.
- "NJDOE Legal & Government Affairs Update," ASAH's 4th Annual Symposium for Business Office and Human Resources Personnel, Iselin, NJ, May 19, 2017.
- "Personnel Files," ASAH Human Resource Group Meeting, Edison, NJ, March 7, 2017.
- "Critical Contracts for Your Organization," ASAH Business Managers Workshop, Edison, NJ, December 15, 2016.
- "National Labor Relations Board Decisions Affecting Unionized and Non-Unionized Workplaces," National Business Institute, Newark, NJ, December 7, 2016.
- "ADA in the Workplace and School," *Stop My Crisis with Vivian Gaspar*, Princeton Community Television, Princeton, NJ, December 2, 2016.
- "Job Descriptions: Cutting Edge Tips For Ensuring You Get It Right The First Time," Porzio Employment Law Forum, Morristown, NJ, November 15, 2016.
- "Employment Law 101: How to Draft PSSD Employee Contracts and How to Handle Health Benefits during Medical and Family Leaves," ASAH's 3rd Annual Symposium for Business Office and Human Resources Personnel, Iselin, NJ, May 13, 2016.
- "Boundaries: Staying Behind the Line," Confidentiality and Social Media Training, Group Home Administrators, Mt. Laurel, NJ, February 16, 2016.
- "Boundaries: Staying Behind the Line," Confidentiality and Social Media Training for Durand Academy, Private School for Students with Disabilities, Woodbury, NJ, January 29, 2016.
- "Advanced Topics in Family and Medical Leave," Porzio Employment Law Forum, November 20, 2015.
- "Training Program: Everything You Need To Know About Unions," Morris County, NJ, May 15, 2015.
- "Key Legal Information All School Nurses Should Know," City of Newark's Annual School Nurses Conference, Newark Beth Israel Medical Center, January 29, 2014.
- "Medical v. School-Based Supports and Services," New Jersey School Boards Spring Law Forum, June 13, 2013.

## Practices

- Education Law
- Employment and Labor
- Litigation

## Area of Focus

- Disability Accommodations & Leaves of Absence
- Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation
- Employment Counseling
- HR Training & Policy Development
- Reductions in Force
- Restrictive Covenants
- Wage and Hour

## Industries

- Education

## Prior Relevant Experience

- Office of the General Counsel for Newark Public Schools, Newark, NJ, *Associate Counsel; Law Clerk*.
- New York Civil Liberties Union, New York, NY, *Intern*.
- Rutgers School of Law-Newark, Child Advocacy Clinic, Newark, NJ, *Clinical Intern*.
- Department of the Public Advocate, Trenton, NJ, *Intern*.
- Office of the Attorney General, Newark, NJ, *Intern*.

### Opinions, Decisions, and Cases

- *Bergen Center for Child Development v. New Jersey Dep't. of Educ.*, OAL Dkt. No., EDU 12485-18, Agency Dkt. No. 152-6/18 (December 2019)
- *C.G. on behalf of G.G. v. Board of Education of the Township of Morris*, Morris County, OAL Dkt. No. EDU 07231-18, aff'd by Comm'r Agency Dkt. No. 98-4/18 (January 2019)
- *C.M., on behalf of Minor Children, J.M., E.M., and E.M., v. Board of Education of the Township of Springfield*, Union County, OAL Dkt. No., EDU 06664-18, aff'd by Comm'r Agency Dkt. No. 89-4/18 (September 2018)
- *Columbia High School Baseball Boosters, Inc. v. Board of Education of the South Orange – Maplewood School District*, Essex County, OAL Dkt. No. EDU 4046-17, aff'd by Comm'r Agency Dkt. No. 42-3/17 (November 2017)
- *Y.G. on behalf of S.G. v. Union Township Board of Education and Windsor Learning Center*, OAL Dkt. No. EDS 19267-16, Agency Dkt. No. 2016/24429 (February 2017)

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- *P.S. and S.S. on behalf of A.S. v. Springfield Township Board of Education*, OAL Dkt. No., EDS 11492-16, Agency Dkt. No. 2016-24777 (August 2017)
- *Pittsgrove Township Board of Education v. K.D. on behalf of D.D.*, OAL Dkt. No. EDS 10556-15, Agency Dkt. No. 2015-22962 (May 2016).
- *C.J. on behalf of J.J. v. Clearview Regional Board of Education*, OAL Dkt. No. EDS 02079-16, Agency Dkt. No. 2016-23888 (April 2016)
- *J.T. on behalf of J.T. vs. Newark Board of Education*; US Court of Appeals, Third Circuit, Docket No. 13-2299 (April 2014)

### Bar Admissions

- Connecticut, 2010
- New Jersey, 2010
- New York, 2009

### Court Admissions

- United States District Court, District of New Jersey
- United States Court of Appeals, Third Circuit

### Education

- *Rutgers Law School*  
J.D., 2009
- *Barnard College of Columbia University*  
B.A., 2004  
Dean's List