

## Nathaniel J. Kuzma, Longtime Buffalo City School District General Counsel, Joins Lippes Mathias LLP



November 27, 2023 | **PRESS RELEASES**

**BUFFALO, NEW YORK (Nov. 27, 2023)**— Lippes Mathias today announced the addition of Nathaniel J. Kuzma, who has joined the firm after spending more than a decade—and the last seven years as general counsel—at Buffalo City School District, whose approximately 7,500 employees, 32,000 pupils and nearly 60 facilities make it the second-largest school district in New York State. Kuzma will use his years of first-hand experience representing school districts and administrators to assist the firm’s employment and education practice teams, which also features partner Brendan P. Kelleher, another former Buffalo City School District General Counsel, and Amy Habib Rittling who has extensive experience representing independent schools.

“This is a bittersweet transition, but I’m confident it’s the right move for me at this juncture of my career,” Kuzma said. “The strength of Lippes Mathias’ existing education practice team was a major point of attraction for me, as were the specific growth opportunities. I wanted to go somewhere where I could continue to make an impact on a large scale and it’s clear to me that that’s the exact situation I’m walking into.”

Before transitioning to the Buffalo City School District, Kuzma began his career in private legal practice, representing families in their pursuit of special education programming and services. In his extensive education

practice at Lippes Mathias, he will advise and defend school districts and their officers and employees in all aspects of federal and state court litigation and before state or federal administrative agencies such as the Commissioner of Education, the New York State Division of Human Rights, the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB), the United States Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR), and at arbitrations and mediations. Kuzma will also assist education clients in navigating the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and will routinely negotiate business contracts, special education issues, student residency and tuition obligations, and workplace investigations on behalf of his clients. Additionally, he will represent clients with employment matters including counseling and advising employers on all aspects of employment relationships and employment practices and policies, conducting workplace investigations, and defending clients in legal claims involving discrimination, harassment, wrongful termination, state and federal wage and hour laws, the Family and Medical Leave Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

“Having two former school district general counsels on one team is an experience that I doubt many firms can provide for their education clients,” Kevin J. Cross, Lippes Mathias’ managing partner and chairman, said. “Nate’s reputation for excellence as an attorney precedes him, but he’s also a tremendous fit for our firm’s culture, which puts a premium on collaboration and collegiality.”

Kuzma received his B.A. from the University of Michigan before pursuing his M.S. in cultural foundations of education from the Syracuse University School of Education, where he received a certificate of advanced study in disability studies. Kuzma went on to study at the Syracuse University College of Law, where he received his J.D. as well as a certificate for focus in disability law.

Kuzma will be based in Lippes Mathias’ office at 50 Fountain Plaza in Buffalo and can be reached at [nkuzma@lippes.com](mailto:nkuzma@lippes.com) or 716-853-5100.

### ***About Lippes Mathias LLP***

*Lippes Mathias is a full-service law firm with nearly 175 attorneys serving clients regionally, nationally, and internationally. With offices in Buffalo, Clarence, Albany, Long Island, New York, Rochester and Saratoga Springs, N.Y.; Greater Toronto Area; Chicago, Ill.; Jacksonville, Fla.; Cleveland, Ohio; San Antonio, Texas; Oklahoma City, Okla. and Washington, D.C., the firm represents publicly and privately-owned companies, private equity and venture capital firms, real estate developers, financial institutions, municipalities, governmental entities, and individuals.*

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**Nathaniel J. Kuzma**

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