

**SEAC Committee
Marin County SELPA
SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA**

January 25, 2023

9:30 a.m.

**Marin County Office of Education – Board Room
1111 Las Gallinas Ave, San Rafael, CA 94903**

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. BROWN ACT TRAINING FOR SEAC MEMBERS

III. ADJOURNMENT

Accessibility Accommodations

If you require assistance to access the meeting room or to otherwise participate at this meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please contact Rebecca Minnich at (415) 499 – 5875. You are encouraged to provide as much advance notice as possible to better enable Marin County SELPA to meet your accessibility needs in accordance with applicable law.

Public Records

In accordance with Government Code section 54957.5 and the Public Records Act, public records that are distributed to a majority of the SEAC members concerning open session agenda items will be made available upon request at rminnich@marinschools.org. Such records distributed during a public meeting will be made available for inspection at the meeting if prepared by the SEAC, or after the meeting if prepared by another party.



SCHOOL & COLLEGE LEGAL SERVICES
OF CALIFORNIA

The Brown Act: An Introduction and General Overview

January 25, 2023

Presented by:

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The Brown Act: An Introduction and General Overview

January 25, 2023

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The Brown Act: Government Code § § 54950 *et seq.*

The public commissions, boards and councils and the other public agencies in this State exist to aid in the conduct of the people's business. It is the intent of the law that their actions be taken openly and that their deliberations be conducted openly.

- The Act applies to “legislative bodies” of “local public agencies”.
- All meetings of the legislative body of a local agency shall be open and public.
- A meaningful agenda and timely notice protect public participation rights under the Act.
- Closed session is permitted in limited, narrowly construed situations.
- Civil and criminal penalties are available as remedies for violations of the Act.

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Hypothetically speaking...

Recordnet.com

GOVERNMENT

Stockton Unified says Ramirez not employee, will vote on alleged Brown Act violation

Ben Irwin | The Record
Published 6:33 p.m. PT Sept. 12, 2022

EdSource

Oakland school board closes meeting to public, citing protests

Open meetings expert says shutting out the public runs against spirit of state's law.

EDUCATION

Gateway school board members violated public meetings law, teachers union says

Michele Chandler
Redding Record Searchlight
Published 4:01 a.m. PT Jan. 11, 2023 | Updated 11:09 a.m. PT Jan. 11, 2023

NOVEMBER 8, 2019 | THERESA HARRINGTON

Letters: Does a possible Brown Act violation justify pulling a false fire alarm?

A police sergeant facing misdemeanor charges may have had good reason for her actions

COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTOR | Sep. 6, 2019 12:20 p.m. / OPINION

NEWS

San Dieguito board to re-do officer election due to alleged Brown Act violation

BY KAREN BILLING | DEL MAR TIMES

JAN. 9, 2023 10:24 AM PT

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The Brown Act applies to Legislative Bodies:

- School District Boards;
- Board of County Office of Education;
- SELPA Policy Council;
- Nomination Committee
- **Committees created by legislative bodies**
 - ❖ Limited exception for ad hoc committees composed solely of less than a quorum of the legislative body

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Open and Public Meetings:

A meeting is “any congregation of a majority of the members of a legislative body at the same time and location to hear, discuss, deliberate, or take any action on any item that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the legislative body.” Cal. Gov’t Code § 54952.2(a).

Reminder: Pay attention to avoid “non-meetings” turning into serial meetings or improperly noticed meetings.

- A series of communications, each of which involves less than a majority of the legislative body, but which taken together, involve a majority developing a collective concurrence.

Serial Meetings

BEST PRACTICE E-MAIL “DO”	BEST PRACTICE E-MAIL “DON’T”
Use caution when of the legislative body with emailing any other member informational items. Use “bcc” to avoid unintentional replies to all	Communicate your position or make a commitment on a pending matter to a majority of members.
When in doubt, send the email to the staff instead of forwarding it to members directly.	Solicit responses from other members when forwarding along information you received (such as an email received from a citizen).
Reminders from staff “Please Do Not Reply to All”	REPLY ALL!

Government Code § 54952.2 AB 992: Social Media and the Brown Act

A majority of the members of a legislative body shall not use a series of communications of any kind to discuss, deliberate, or take action on any item of business that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the legislative body.

- AB 992 **allows** a board member to communicate with community members via social media, to answer questions, provide information to the public, or solicit information from the public regarding a matter that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the board.
- AB 992 **prohibits** a majority of the members of the legislative body from using an internet-based social media platform to discuss among themselves business of a specific nature that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the legislative body.
- In practice, a board member may **NOT** respond directly to any communication on an internet-based social media platform regarding a matter that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the legislative body that is **made, posted, or shared** by any other member of the legislative body. A “like” or “share” will constitute a violation.

Meaningful Agenda and Timely Notice:

The public has the right to:

- Review the agenda in advance of all meetings.
- Attend all meetings and observe all deliberations except closed session.
- Comment to the Board on agenda items and issues within the subject matter jurisdiction of the local agency.
- Tape record the meeting.
- Obtain copies of all open session materials

Meaningful Agenda and Timely Notice:

Legislative bodies must publicly report (1) **any action** taken and the **vote or abstention** on that action of each member present for the action. Gov. Code § 54953(c).

Action by secret ballot is prohibited.

Meaningful Agenda and Timely Notice:

- A brief description of the item to be discussed or acted upon.
- Public records/writings distributed to board members less than 72 hours before a meeting must be made available to the public at the time of distribution to the board.
- The legislative body is prohibited from taking action on an item not appearing on the posted agenda subject to certain exceptions.

Let the Agenda Guide the Meeting

- What's permissible?
 - Brief response to statements or questions during public comment.
 - May refer to staff for factual information.
 - Request staff to place the item on a future agenda.
 - May briefly announce or report on member's own activities.

Standard Teleconferencing Rules- Brown Act

- The teleconference location must be noted on the agenda
- The agenda must be posted at the remote location
- Each teleconference location shall be accessible to the public
- The public may attend the meeting at the remote location
- Any vote must be done by roll call
- A majority of the members must be located within the territory of the district

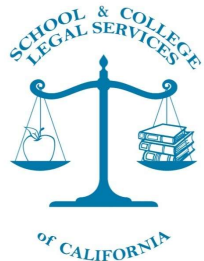
Special Teleconferencing Rules- Virtual Meetings

- AB 361 modified the rules to allow virtual meetings during a declared state of emergency (pandemic, smoke, flood, fire, earthquake) and is available through the rest of 2023 if the specified conditions are met and findings are made.
- AB 2449 just went into effect January 1, 2023 and permits another modified procedure for ‘hybrid’ meetings
 - An individual member needs to participate remotely for ‘just cause’ or ‘emergency circumstances,’ a limited # of times
 - Majority of committee still must be in person

Common Brown Act Errors

- Private communications among members, through a series of communications, through intermediaries, through a social media platform, etc.
- Failing to identify and open teleconferencing location such that members of the public can attend and offer comment in that location
- Agenda lacking required information / posting enough in advance of the meeting
- Materials distributed to members not immediately provided to the public at the same time members receive them
- Unaware that new members are subject to the Brown Act even before they take office

Questions?



Information in this presentation, including but not limited to PowerPoint handouts and presenters' comments, is summary only and not legal advice. We advise you consult with legal counsel to determine how this information may apply to your specific facts and circumstances.

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A “BRIEF GENERAL DESCRIPTION” OF THE RALPH M. BROWN ACT

Purpose: Transparency and participation. Public agency actions and deliberations shall be taken openly.

Primary Law: Ralph M. Brown Act, Government Code §§ 54950 *et seq.*

I. General Principle: The Act applies to “legislative bodies” of “local public agencies”. (Gov. Code § 54952).

- A. Governing Bodies (District Board of Trustees)
 - 1. Charter Schools (Education Code § 47604.1(b)(1))
- B. Subcommittees and Commissions
 - 1. Exception for ad hoc advisory committees composed solely of less than a quorum of members of the governing body. (Gov. Code § 54952(b))
- C. Private Entity Created by Legislative Body or Funded by a Local Agency (Gov. Code § 54952(c)).

II. General Principle: All meetings of the legislative body of a local agency shall be open and public. (Gov. Code § 54953).

- A. A meeting is “any congregation of a majority of the members of a legislative body at the same time and location (including teleconference locations where permitted by section 54953) to hear, discuss, deliberate, or take any action on any item that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the legislative body.” (Gov. Code § 54952.2(a)).
- B. Non-meetings (thus, no agenda or public participation requirement)
 - 1. Individual contacts or conversations between a member of a legislative body and any other person. However, be aware of serial meeting risks. (Gov. Code § 54952.2(c)(1)).
 - 2. Social media rules, now that AB 992 is in effect: a member of a Brown Act legislative body may engage in separate conversation or communications on an internet-based social media platform to answer questions, provide information to the public, or to solicit information from the public regarding a matter that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the legislative body provided that a majority of the members do not use the platform to discuss among themselves business of a specific nature. Also, a member ***shall not respond directly to any communication on an internet-based social media platform regarding a matter that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the legislative body that is made, posted, or shared by any other member of the legislative***

A Brief General Description: The Brown Act

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body. (Gov. Code § 54952.2(b)(3)(A)).

3. Attendance of a majority of the members at a conference or similar gathering open to the public that involves a discussion of issues of general interest to the public. Do not talk to each other about District business. (Gov. Code § 54952.2(c)(2)).
4. Attendance of a majority of the members at an open and publicized meeting organized to address a topic of local community concern by a person or organization other than the local agency. Do not talk to each other about District business. (Gov. Code § 54952.2(c)(3)).
5. Attendance of a majority of the members at an open and noticed meeting of another body of the local agency, or at an open and noticed meeting of a legislative body of another local agency. Do not talk to each other about District business. (Gov. Code § 54952.2(c)(4)).
6. Attendance of a majority of the members at a purely social or ceremonial occasion. Do not talk to each other about District business. (Gov. Code § 54952.2(c)(5)).
7. Attendance of a majority at an open and noticed meeting of a standing committee of the same body, provided that the members who are not on the standing committee attend only as observers. (Gov. Code § 54952.2(c)(6)).

Note: Be aware of public perception.

- C. Regular Meetings: occur at the dates, times, and location set by resolution, ordinance, or other formal action. (Gov. Code § 54954(a)).
- D. Special Meetings: called by the presiding officer or majority of the legislative body to discuss only discrete items. (Gov. Code § 54956).
- E. Emergency Meetings: limited to defined circumstances; when prompt action is necessary due to the disruption or threatened disruption of public facilities, certain notice and posting requirements suspended. (Gov. Code § 54956.5).
- F. Adjourned Meetings: regular or special meetings that have been adjourned or re-adjourned to a time and place specified. (Gov. Code § 54955).
- G. Serial Meetings (series of communications among board members outside of an agendized meeting)
 1. A serial meeting is NOT exempt from open and public meeting requirements (notice, agenda, location, etc.). A serial meeting is, in essence, a non-agendized private meeting.
 2. Prohibition on a “meeting” that is not properly noticed includes a “serial meeting”

(whereby Member A talks to Member B, who then contacts Member C to convey what Member A said, etc.) In addition, a quorum or more of board members may not hear, discuss, deliberate, or take any action outside of an agendized meeting. This includes using a series of communications of any kind directly or indirectly, except that nothing prevents an employee or official of the entity from answering a question or providing information to board members so long as the comments or position of any other member(s) is/are not communicated.

3. Act prohibits the use of “direct communication, personal intermediaries, or technological devices” by a majority of the body to conduct a “meeting” that is not properly noticed.

4. AB 992 (Brown Act and Social Media), codified as Government Code section 54952.2, subdivision (b), subpart (3), specifically addresses questions of impermissible serial meetings occurring over social media.

5. Impliedly covers members of a standing committee, even though it would not apply to those same members for matters outside the committee’s jurisdiction. (Gov. Code § 54952.2).

III. General Principle: A meaningful agenda and timely notice protect public participation rights under the Act. (Gov. Code § 54954.3).

A. A regular meeting must be noticed by an agenda posted outside the location where the meeting is to be held at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting and on the website, if the local agency has one. (Gov. Code § 54954.2)

Note: Section 54954.2(a)(2) imposes specific requirements regarding website posting- must be a “prominent, direct link to the current agenda” in an open format.

B. A special meeting must be noticed by an agenda posted outside the location where the meeting is to be held at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting and on the website, if the local agency has one. Off-agenda items are prohibited. Special notice must be given to news organizations which have requested it in advance. (Gov. Code § 54956).

C. An emergency meeting must be noticed one hour in advance to news organizations covered under the “special meeting” requirement; if telephonic communications are unavailable, then notice must be given as soon as possible thereafter. (Gov. Code § 54956.5).

Note: The emergency meeting provisions under section 54956.5 are **NOT** the same as the AB 361 emergency virtual meeting requirements.

D. Closed sessions are permitted under a narrow group of circumstances. They must be noticed as a closed session on the agenda, disclosed, in an open meeting, and any “action taken” must be reported out at the end of the closed portion of the meeting. (Gov. Code § 54957.1 and §

54957.7).

E. The agenda must include a brief description of the item to be discussed or acted upon (identify whether the item is for action or for discussion). (Gov. Code § 54954.2(a)(1)).

F. Public records/writings distributed to board members less than 72 hours before a meeting must be made available to the public at the time of distribution to the board. Agendas should indicate that such public records are available at the district office or other location. (Gov. Code § 54957.5).

G. The legislative body is prohibited from taking action on an item not appearing on the posted agenda. Subject to certain exceptions:

1. By a majority vote if an “emergency” exists. (Gov. Code § 54954.2(b)(1))
2. By a 2/3 vote or, if less than 2/3 of the body are present, by a unanimous vote, that action needs to be taken immediately and the need to take action occurred after the posting of the agenda. (Gov. Code § 54954.2(b)(2)).
3. If the item was continued from another meeting five or fewer calendar days beforehand and the item was continued to the meeting at which action will be taken. (Gov. Code § 54954.2(b)(3)).

H. Members of the public must be allowed to address:

1. Any item on the posted agenda. (Gov. Code § 54954.3).
2. Items not on the agenda but within the jurisdiction of the body. (Gov. Code § 54954.3).

Note: The agency can impose time limits on public expression, and can cut off comments to control disruptive behavior. (Gov. Code § 54954.3(b)(1))¹

Note: Members of the public cannot be required, as a condition to attendance at a meeting of a legislative body of a local agency, to register a name, to provide other information, to complete a questionnaire, or otherwise to fulfill any condition precedent to attendance. (Gov. Code § 54953.3)

IV. General Principle: Closed Session is permitted in limited, narrowly construed situations.²

A. Personnel matters (Gov. Code §§ 54954.5 and 54957).

¹ SB 1100 went into effect January 1, 2023 and further addresses public disruptions. Please review Legal Update Memo No. 20-2022 dated September 30, 2022 for further information regarding these amendments.

² The following list is not exhaustive but is a guide to some of the more frequently occurring closed session items.

1. The personnel exception includes action to appoint, terminate, promote, evaluate, or discipline an employee.
 2. If the closed session involves “complaints or charges” against the employee, the employee must be given 24 hours’ notice that he or she can demand that the matter be heard in open session.
 3. “Employee” includes an officer or an independent contractor who functions as an officer or employee.
- B. Litigation (discussion with counsel regarding) (Gov. Code §§ 54954.5 and 54956.9).
1. Whether to initiate litigation.
 2. Significant exposure to litigation based on “existing facts and circumstances”.
 - a) *If the facts are believed to be not yet known to a potential plaintiff, they do not have to be disclosed;*
 - b) *If the facts are believed to be known to a potential plaintiff, they must be disclosed.*
 3. Litigation that has already been formally initiated.
- C. Real estate negotiations (Gov. Code §§ 54954.5 and 54956.8).
- The real estate negotiation exception includes specific information to include on an agenda to benefit from section 54954.5’s “safe harbor” language. The negotiators – agency as well as negotiating party - must be disclosed on the agenda, and the property that is the subject of ongoing negotiations must be identified on the agenda. Identify whether the discussion relates to price, terms and conditions or both.
- D. Labor negotiations (Gov. Code §§ 54954.5 and 54957.6).
- The labor negotiation exception includes specific information to include on an agenda to benefit from section 54954.5’s “safe harbor” language. The agency designated representative and the name of the employee organization or title of unrepresented employee must be disclosed.
- E. Threats to Security of Public Buildings or Essential Public Services (School District Tactical Response Plans). (*See* Education Code section 32281).
- F. Student Discipline Matters. (*See* Education Code sections 35146 and 48912(b)).
- G. The Brown Act (Gov. Code § 54954.5) includes “**safe harbor**” **sample language** which should be used on the agenda when a closed session is noticed. If the agency utilizes the sample language or substantially complies with it, the agency and its officials cannot be held to have violated the noticing requirement for those sections.

H. Reporting Out (Gov. Code 54957.1)

V. General Principle: Civil and criminal penalties are available as remedies for violations of the Act.

A. Certain violations are punishable criminally. A criminal violation occurs where “action is taken” in violation of the Brown Act and “the member intends to deprive the public of information which the member knows to be or has reason to know the public is entitled.” Misdemeanor liability does not occur, however, unless there is “action taken.” (Gov. Code § 54959). Thus, mere deliberation without the taking of some “action” is not a criminal violation of the act.

B. The District Attorney or any interested person can also pursue civil remedies of mandamus, injunctive relief, or declaratory relief regarding: 1) Violations or threatened violations of the Act; 2) The applicability of the Act to past action, or threatened future action; 3) The validity of action allegedly taken in violation of the Act; and, 4) A court order that the agency be required to tape record its closed sessions and to preserve these recording for review by appropriate officials. (Gov. Code § 54960).

C. “Action taken” in violation of the Act is voidable

1. The person intending to sue must first give notice and allow the agency an opportunity to take curative action. (Gov. Code § 54960.1).

D. The agency may, in certain circumstances, also be liable for attorney’s fees for lawsuits brought to challenge a Brown Act violation. (Gov. Code § 54960.5).

TEN COMMON BROWN ACT ERRORS

1. Committee Meetings

With one exception, the Brown Act applies to all committees created by formal action of the governing board. See Government Code section 54952(b).

- Only ad hoc advisory committees composed exclusively of board members comprising less than a quorum of the board are exempt from the Brown Act.
- Standing committees of the board are subject to the Brown Act.
- Committees appointed by the CEO (superintendent) under their own authority are not subject to the Brown Act.

2. Private Communications Among Board Members/No Serial Meetings Allowed

Except during a duly noticed meeting, Board members shall not use a series of communications of any kind, directly or indirectly or through intermediaries, to discuss, deliberate, or take action on any item of business that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the body. *See* Government Code section 54952.2. Pursuant to AB 992, members of the legislative body shall not respond directly to any communication on an internet-based social media platform regarding a matter that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the legislative body that is made, posted, or shared by any other member of the legislative body.

3. Teleconferencing³

If the legislative body of a local agency elects to use teleconferencing, it shall post agendas at all teleconference locations and conduct teleconference meetings in a manner that protects the statutory and constitutional rights of the parties or the public appearing before the legislative body of a local agency. Each teleconference location shall be identified in the notice and agenda of the meeting or proceeding, and each teleconference location shall be accessible to the public. During the teleconference, at least a quorum of the members of the legislative body shall participate from locations within the boundaries of the territory over which the local agency exercises jurisdiction. The agenda shall provide an opportunity for members of the public to address the legislative body directly at each teleconference location. *See* Government Code section 54953(b)(2)(D).

NOTE: AB 361 modified the Brown Act's teleconferencing requirements during a state of emergency under Government Code section 8558. While this legislation was directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is not limited to public health emergencies. The AB 361 modified teleconferencing procedures are set to expire on January 1, 2024. Presently, Gov. Code § 54953(e)(1) provides that a local agency may use teleconferencing [audio, video or both] in any of the following circumstances:

³ AB 2449 went into effect on January 1, 2023 authorizing further modified teleconferencing procedures through January 1, 2026. Please review Legal Update Memo No. 19-2022 dated November 8, 2022 for further information regarding these amendments.

(A) The legislative body holds a meeting during ***a proclaimed state of emergency***, and state or local officials have imposed or recommended measures to promote ***social distancing***.

(B) The legislative body holds a meeting ***during a proclaimed state of emergency for the purpose of determining***, by majority vote, ***whether as a result of the emergency, meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees***.

(C) The legislative body holds a meeting during ***a proclaimed state of emergency*** and ***has determined***, by majority vote, pursuant to subparagraph (B) that, ***as a result of the emergency, meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees***.

4. Agenda Requirements

At least 72 hours before a regular meeting (24 hours for special meeting), the legislative body of the local agency, or its designee, shall post an agenda containing a brief general description of each item of business to be transacted or discussed at the meeting, including items to be discussed in closed session. A brief general description of an item generally need not exceed 20 words. The agenda shall specify the time and location of the meeting and shall be posted in a location that is freely accessible to members of the public and on the agency's website (Note: section 54954.2(a)(2) imposes additional website posting requirements). If requested, the agenda shall be made available in appropriate alternative formats to persons with a disability, as required by Section 202 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12132), and the federal rules and regulations adopted in implementation thereof. The agenda shall include information regarding how, to whom, and when a request for disability-related modification or accommodation, including auxiliary aids or services may be made by a person with a disability who requires a modification or accommodation in order to participate in the public meeting. *See* Government Code sections 54954.2 and 54956.

5. Newly Elected Members Subject to Brown Act

Newly elected individuals must conform their conduct to the Brown Act upon election even before taking office. For example, meetings between incumbents and newly elected members could constitute a majority of the Board.

6. Hearing Charges or Complaints

As a condition to holding a closed session on specific complaints or charges brought against an employee by another person or employee, the employee shall be given written notice of his or her right to have the complaints or charges heard in an open session rather than a closed session, which notice shall be delivered to the employee personally or by mail at least 24 hours before the time for holding the session. If notice is not given, any disciplinary or other action taken by the legislative body against the employee based on the specific complaints or charges in the closed session shall be null and void. *See* Government Code section 54957(b)(2).

7. Announcement Prior to Closed Session

Prior to holding any closed session, the legislative body of the local agency shall disclose, in an
Ten Common Brown Act Errors

open meeting, the item or items to be discussed in the closed session. The disclosure may take the form of a reference to the item or items as they are listed by number or letter on the agenda. In the closed session, the legislative body may consider only those matters covered in its statement. Nothing in this section shall require or authorize a disclosure of information prohibited by state or federal law. *See* Government Code section 54957.7(a).

8. Writings Distributed Prior to or At a Board Meeting Must be Available to the Public

- Written materials distributed to the Board of Education within 72 hours of the Board meeting are available for public inspection immediately upon distribution at the _____ (location and address).
- This does not apply to closed session materials.
- Government Code section 54957.5.

9. Public Reporting on Personnel Actions Taken in Closed Session

(a) The legislative body of any local agency shall publicly report any action taken in closed session and the vote or abstention of every member present thereon, as follows:

* * *

(5) Action taken to appoint, employ, dismiss, accept the resignation of, or otherwise affect the employment status of a public employee in closed session pursuant to Section 54957 shall be reported at the public meeting during which the closed session is held. Any report required by this paragraph shall identify the title of the position. The general requirement of this paragraph notwithstanding, the report of a dismissal or of the nonrenewal of an employment contract shall be deferred until the first public meeting following the exhaustion of administrative remedies, if any. *See* Government Code section 54957.1.

10. Confidentiality of Closed Session

(a) A person may not disclose confidential information that has been acquired by being present in a closed session authorized by Section 54956.7, 54956.8, 54956.86, 54956.87, 54956.9, 54957, 54957.6, 54957.8, or 54957.10 to a person not entitled to receive it, unless the legislative body authorizes disclosure of that confidential information. *See* Government Code section 54963.

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Areas of Expertise

Investigations, Compliance and Discrimination Complaints, Charter School Issues, Contracts, Governance, and Conflicts of Interest Issues



Experience

Ms. Ozalp is a former educator and has almost a decade of experience in school law. She counsels school districts, county offices of education, community colleges, and other public entities on issues such as personnel investigations and discipline, Uniform Complaints, sexual harassment and Title IX compliance, charter school oversight, Brown Act compliance, and conflict of interest laws. Ms. Ozalp provides legal trainings and workshops in these areas of expertise. She also advises clients on the development of governing board and county board policies and regulations. Ms. Ozalp frequently assists public agencies in investigating complaints regarding issues such as workplace misconduct, harassment, and discrimination. She is experienced in conducting fact-finding interviews and drafting investigative reports.

Prior to joining SCLS, Ms. Ozalp practiced education law with a public agency law firm in Northern California. She also served for seven years in Wisconsin government, as legal counsel to the Wisconsin state education agency (DPI) and to the Education committees of the Wisconsin State Legislature. In these roles she provided legal opinions, developed and drafted laws, interpreted and revised regulations, and defended public agencies in administrative hearings and litigation matters. Using her unique perspective gained researching, analyzing and advising on public education matters in state government, Ms. Ozalp practices preventive law through proactively counseling clients on compliance and avoiding legal issues where possible, as well as providing critical legal updates and workshops.

Ms. Ozalp is a member of the State Bar of California and the State Bar of Wisconsin.

Education

J.D., University of Wisconsin Law School (2010); M.A. in Applied English Linguistics, with certification in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, University of Wisconsin-Madison (2005); B.A. in English, with Distinction, University of Wisconsin-Madison (2002)

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