



Kelly Frels
Retired Partner

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About Kelly

Kelly Frels served as the firm's managing partner from 1995-2001 and as managing partner of the Houston office from 2001-2003.

He has been an attorney for public and private schools, community colleges, universities and other public bodies for more than 45 years. His current focus is providing counsel in governance, employment, desegregation and other civil rights issues. He also serves as a mediator in complex education disputes. Kelly was lead attorney for the Houston Independent School District (HISD) in its successful transition from a segregated to an integrated system in the 1970s and 1980s. He assisted HISD in establishing the Houston Community College as a component of HISD and later helped the community college become an independent entity.

His involvement in representing public school districts led him and five others to organize the School Law Section of the State Bar of Texas, which he later chaired. He served as president of the Houston Bar Association and the State Bar of Texas.

Publications and Speeches

"Advice for Law Practice and Life," Texas Association of School Board's Council of School Attorneys, October 16, 2020

Education

The University of Texas School of Law, J.D.
1970

Texas State University, B.S.
1966

Noteworthy

BL Rankings, *Best Lawyers*, Education Law, 2008 - 2024; Government Relations Practice, 2022 - 2024

Thomson Reuters, *Texas Super Lawyers*, 2003 - 2019

School Law Section State Bar of Texas, *Kelly Frels Lifetime Achievement Award (Inaugural)*, 2012

National School Boards Association, *Chairman's Award for Lifetime Achievement*, 2004

Education Law Association, *McGhehey Award for Lifetime Service*, 1991

Affiliations

National School Boards Association, Council of School Attorneys Chair, 1977 - 1978

School Law Section State Bar of Texas, Chair, 1977 -1978

Education Law Association, President, 1978 - 1979

Bar Admissions

Texas