GIBSON DUNN

Gibson Dunn Secures Jury Verdict for Student with Disabilities in Federal Civil Rights Trial

Pro Bono | November 19, 2026

After more than four years of litigation, a federal jury in New Orleans has returned a verdict for our pro bono client J.H., a student with disabilities, in a civil rights case against the Jefferson Parish School Board and the Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office.

In 2021, J.H.'s elementary school called the police on him, a 10-year-old fifth grader, rather than follow the behavior plan in his individualized education program (IEP), the federally required plan for the supports a school must give a student with disabilities. Sixty-three seconds after arriving on campus, Sheriff's Office deputies had physically restrained and handcuffed J.H. After a two-week trial, the jury found that the School Board failed to accommodate J.H.'s disabilities under the ADA and found both defendants liable for negligent infliction of emotional distress.

In the family's words: "We hope our case means that every child with a disability is met with patience and understanding, and that no other family has to fight this hard to be heard."

Thank you to our co-counsel at the ACLU of Louisiana, to DRC and Veritext for generously providing pro bono jury consulting and videographer services, and to the Gibson Dunn team: partners Tiaunia Henry, Katie Marquart, Betty Yang, and Katie Townsend and associates Hannah Kirshner, Mark Cherry, Angela Reid, Kate Lee, Brian Yeh, Janae Staicer, Maxwell Peck, Brianna Banks, Azucena Marquez, Angelle Henderson, Allonna Nordhavn, Samarah Jackson, and Harry Moran. Above all, thank you to J.H.'s family, whose persistence made this possible.

Related People

Tiaunia Henry

Katie Marquart

Betty X. Yang

Katie Townsend

Hannah E. Kirshner

Mark J. Cherry

Angela Reid

Kate Lee

Brian Yeh

Janae Staicer

Maxwell Peck

Brianna N. Banks

Azucena Marquez

Angelle Henderson

Allonna Nordhavn

Samarah Jackson

Harry H. Moran

Related Capabilities

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