

Federal Appeals Court Decision Reinforces the Need for Process Integrity in Campus Misconduct Proceedings

A federal appeals ruling underscores why transparency, documentation, and due process remain essential in campus misconduct cases.

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Why this decision is relevant now: Universities are balancing evolving Title IX and student conduct requirements with high expectations from all stakeholders. In that environment, process integrity is the most reliable risk reducer.

A recent federal appellate opinion addressed procedural issues that commonly arise in campus misconduct proceedings, underscoring that institutions should be prepared to explain how credibility decisions were made and what opportunities the parties had to respond.

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Consistency, transparency, and documentation are what keep disputes from becoming permanent.”

Keith Altman

Key process themes:

When credibility is central, schools should be transparent about what evidence matters and how it is weighed.

Institutions should align written policies with actual practice—particularly around notice, the role of advisors, and the opportunity to present and challenge information.

Students should focus on the record: the allegations as framed, the policy elements, and any discrepancies between the school's procedures and what occurred.



A federal appeals court decision highlights why transparency, documentation, and due process remain essential in campus misconduct proceedings.

Practical steps to reduce dispute escalation:
Schools should publish clear process maps and train decision-makers to write rationales that match the policy's elements.

Parties should avoid "argument by volume" and instead submit a focused, document-supported narrative tied to policy requirements.

Where applicable, disability accommodations for participation should be addressed early and documented.

"In campus cases, the question is rarely just what happened; it is whether the process was structured to reach a reliable outcome. Consistency, transparency, and documentation are what keep disputes from becoming permanent." — [Keith Altman](#), Founder/Managing Partner



Keith Altman Founder of K Altman Law

What families and students should do now:

- Request the written policy, notice of allegations, and the list of policy elements the school must find.
- Ask what evidence will be considered and how you can submit or challenge information within the deadlines.
- Prepare a short, organized submission that ties facts to policy elements and highlights any procedural gaps.
- If accommodations are needed to participate, request them early and confirm in writing.

Next step:

If a campus process could affect enrollment, licensure pathways, or future opportunities, treat it as a record-driven proceeding and plan accordingly.

About [K Altman Law](#):

K Altman Law is a national education law firm serving students, families, and educators in matters involving student discipline, special education (IEP/504), Title IX, and related civil rights issues. We help clients understand processes, preserve rights, and make informed decisions at critical moments.

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