

## School Openings and Child Custody

We live in unpredictable times. Schools are opening, schools are closing. One week they're using a hybrid model for learning, the next week it's completely virtual — forcing us to be resilient and adapt on the fly. This constant state of flux has parents asking themselves a variety of questions. Is your child's school opening back up? Are you trying to decide if your child should be virtual or return to the classroom? Do you share custody and need to make important educational decisions with the other parent? Many parents are weighing their options, and shared custody can have an impact on the end decision.

### **Shared Legal Custody**

Parents who share legal custody have a right to participate in making joint decisions regarding school. Some parents believe children need socialization and they think in-person learning is better than virtual learning on a screen. Others think children should remain at home and learn virtually. Each family has different circumstances impacting their decision.

### **Is it Safe to Return?**

One major question is at the center of it all: is it safe to return? Parents should consider whether they have any vulnerable people in their homes, such as elderly grandparents, or someone with an immune-compromised condition. Parents should also seriously evaluate the types of protocols the school will have in place. How will social distancing be maintained? Will students be wearing masks the entire day? Will the school provide transportation? What cleaning remediations will be in place? What if a student or teacher tests positive?

### **Here When You Need Us**

If parents disagree on whether a child should return to school, Weber Gallagher's family lawyers can assist with filing a Petition to the Court or reviewing your child custody order. You don't have to go it alone when faced with seemingly insurmountable obstacles. We're here to help you and your loved ones navigate this treacherous terrain, and we always have your best interests in mind.