

**U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of New Jersey,  
U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights &  
New Jersey Division on Civil Rights  
Present:  
Addressing Discrimination and Bias-Based Harassment  
in New Jersey Public Schools**

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**AGENDA**

January 25, 2024

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**Moderator**

**John Carroll**, Program Manager

U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights

**Panelists**

- **Kelly Horan Florio**, Senior Civil Rights Counsel  
United States Attorney's Office for the District of New Jersey, Civil Rights Division
- **Joy Purcell**, Senior Attorney  
United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights
- **Danielle Thorne**, Senior Advisor to Affirmative Enforcement  
New Jersey Office of the Attorney General, Division on Civil Rights, Affirmative Enforcement Unit

**Questions and Answers**

**Closing Remarks**

**Patricia Perlmutter**, Associate Director of Policy, Outreach and Community Relations

New Jersey Office of the Attorney General, Division on Civil Rights

# Moderator & Panelists Bios

## John Carroll *(Moderator)*

*Program Manager, U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights*

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**John Carroll** has been the Program Manager for the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights New York Regional Office since 2008. As Program Manager, John oversees OCR NY's case processing, complaint mediation, compliance reviews, internal training programs, external training and outreach, and technical assistance. John started as an investigator with OCR in 1992 and served as a Compliance Team Leader prior to becoming the Program Manager. Prior to joining OCR, John graduated from the City University of New York, Lehman College with a BA in Psychology.

## Kelly Horan Florio, *Senior Civil Rights Counsel*

*U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of NJ, Civil Rights Division*

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**Kelly Horan Florio** is Senior Civil Rights Counsel in the Civil Rights Division at the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of New Jersey. Ms. Florio has been working exclusively in the area of civil rights in the District of New Jersey since 2016, enforcing a number of federal civil rights statutes including, but not limited to, the Equal Opportunities Education Act, Civil Rights Act of 1964, Fair Housing Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act, Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act, Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Act of 1994, and the Voting Rights Act. During this time, Ms. Florio has won several significant awards for her work in the area of civil rights, among them the Assistant Attorney General's Distinguished Service Award and the Director's Award for Superior Performance as an Assistant United States Attorney—Civil.

From 2003 through 2016, she worked as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Civil Division in the Eastern District of New York, where she represented the United States in a wide variety of affirmative and defensive matters and cases, some involving civil rights issues. Prior to that, she litigated in private practice, including work as an associate with Reed Smith LLP, where she specialized in general education and special education issues.

Ms. Florio received her undergraduate degree from Washington and Lee University and her law degree from Washington and Lee University School of Law.

# Joy Purcell, *Senior Attorney*

*U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights*

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**Joy Purcell** is a Senior Attorney at the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) New York Regional office where she investigates and mediates complaints alleging discrimination on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, and retaliation. Before joining OCR in 2014, Joy worked at a civil legal services organization in Washington, DC representing parents and caregivers of children with special needs in education, housing, and healthcare cases. She graduated magna cum laude from the University of Miami School of Law and holds a bachelor's degree in Latin American Studies and Politics from New York University.

# Patricia “Trish” Perlmutter,

*Associate Director of Policy, Outreach and Community Relations*

*New Jersey Office of the Attorney General, Division on Civil Rights*

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**Trish Perlmutter** (she, her, hers) serves as Associate Director for Policy, Outreach, and Community Relations for the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights. In that role she supports the Policy and Community Relations Units' work to prevent and eliminate discrimination and bias in the Garden State. Throughout her career, she has sought to remedy systemic injustice and drive institutional reform. Previously, Trish served as Policy Counsel at Partners, advocating to advance the legal rights of survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Prior to that, Trish was a clinical professor at the Center for Social Justice at Seton Hall University School of Law, where she led class action lawsuits on behalf of detained persons. Trish began her career in private practice at Cravath, Swaine & Moore, after clerking for federal district judge, H. Lee Sarokin. She holds a B.A. from Princeton University's School of Public and International Affairs and a J.D. from Harvard Law School.

# Danielle Thorne, *Senior Advisor to Affirmative Enforcement*

*New Jersey Office of the Attorney General, Division on Civil Rights*

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**Danielle Thorne** (she/her) is a Senior Advisor in the Affirmative Enforcement Unit at the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights' (DCR), where she leads proactive investigations into patterns and practices of discrimination. Danielle has led several of the Affirmative Enforcement Unit's recent investigations, including one alleging that a municipal court engaged in discrimination on the basis of national origin and several alleging that local school districts engaged in discrimination on the basis of gender identity or expression. Prior to joining the Affirmative Enforcement Unit, Danielle led DCR's drafting and publication of several key reports and guidance documents, including the Division's reports on white supremacy and youth bias, and the Division's guidance documents on discrimination in student discipline and responding to bias incidents in K-12 schools, among others. Before joining DCR, Danielle was a senior associate in private practice where she managed complex civil litigation and regulatory compliance matters, engaged in internal investigations, and maintained an active pro bono practice focused on criminal justice and education reform. Danielle received her undergraduate degree, *summa cum laude*, in Africana Studies and Sociology from Rutgers University, where she also completed a Certificate in Women's Leadership for social change with the Institute for Women's Leadership. She received her law degree, *summa cum laude*, from St. John's University School of Law.