



F3 Law

Michelle Sanford

Associate

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What can I solve for you?

I promise to deliver exceptional technical and intellectual value to you, drawing on my ten years of litigation experience as a former criminal defense attorney. You can expect me to provide insights and strategies that empower your goals and elevate our partnership to new heights.

What's it like to work with me?

With a calm and focused demeanor, I prioritize meaningful connections in my work. I believe that understanding people is key to success, and I strive to create a supportive environment where collaboration flourishes. My strong work ethic drives me to go above and beyond, ensuring that every individual feels valued and heard. By fostering trust and open communication, I aim to empower teams to achieve their goals together.

"Education breeds confidence. Confidence breeds hope. Hope breeds peace."

– Confucius



Overview

Michelle Sanford represents public school districts and charter schools in a wide range of special education legal matters. Her work includes advising clients on special education compliance under the IDEA, Section 504, and California education law. She also support clients through Title IX investigations, administrative hearings, and litigation when necessary – always with a focus on practical, education-centered solutions that align with legal obligations and institutional values.

Before joining F3 Law, Michelle worked as a Public Defender and represented young people in delinquency court for a decade. That role gave her direct insight into the systemic challenges young people face both inside and outside the classroom. Advocating for youth in the courtroom sharpened her ability to communicate with compassion, build trust quickly, and fight for outcomes that support long-term growth and stability. This experience continues to inform her current work with district clients, especially in matters involving IEPs, student discipline and equity.

Her interest in education law came from working with her juvenile delinquency clients throughout Los Angeles County. Almost all of Michelle's clients had IEPs, many were Regional Center consumers, and often foster-care youth. It was very important for Michelle to understand how special education and delinquency matters intersect, and she knew that in order to do so, she needed to learn from the best. Working at F3 and learning from educators across the state continues to inform Michelle's practice today as she helps districts fulfill their mission of educationally serving our youth while navigating complex legal landscapes.

Involvement

Professional Affiliations –

- John M. Langston Bar Association of Los Angeles – Member
- Black Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles – Member

Community Affiliations –

- Diversity Uplifts, Inc. – Board Member (2022 – present)

After School

When I'm not at work, you can find me enjoying Pilates to stay centered and energized. I am even working on completing my instructor certification!



I also love diving into a good book or listening to engaging podcasts. My favorite podcasts are Heavyweight and Otherworld, and I love all Agatha Christie audiobooks! Nothing compares to quality time with family, sharing laughter and creating memories. Balancing these passions helps me recharge and brings me joy.

Education

- Southwestern Law School (J.D.)
- University of California, Irvine (B.A., African American Studies and B.A., Criminology, Law and Society, *summa cum laude*)

Admissions

Bar Admissions

- California

Court Admissions

Related Services

- Special Education

Related Clients

- Charter Schools
- Public Education K-12