

## Jay Vaughan

Partner



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Higher Education

Education

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Innovative Education Providers

K-12

Washington, DC

Accreditation

Reston

Private Equity

Acquiring and Protecting Federal Student Aid Funds

Impact Investing and Mission-Driven Enterprises

CooleyREG

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Strategic Counseling and Litigation

Jay Vaughan is chair of Cooley's education practice group. He works proactively with colleges and universities, alternate content providers and innovative education companies to navigate the dynamic regulatory environment, advise on strategic planning and assist with operational opportunities.

A former regulator, Jay assists organizations to understand accreditation, as well as state and federal laws regulating the field of postsecondary education, helps clients respond to inquiries from regulatory authorities and represents clients in hearings before state administrative agencies, accreditors (specialized and institutional) and the US Department of Education. He also advises on mergers and acquisitions (including corporate conversions), public-private partnerships, joint ventures and organizational litigation.

Previously, Jay worked as a manager with an accrediting agency, with primary responsibility for the evaluation of institutional compliance with agency standards, the financial review of accredited member institutions, substantive change requests and overseeing administrative actions threatening the removal of accreditation. During his seven-year tenure, he completed more than 300 on-site evaluations of accredited and applicant institutions. Since moving to private practice in 2002, Jay has been a frequent speaker on accreditation, regulatory and legal expectations for institutions, as well as the regulatory agencies that oversee their conduct.

### Education

The George Washington University Law School JD, 2001

James Madison University BS, 1993

### Admissions & Credentials

District of Columbia

Virginia

## Rankings & Accolades

Chambers USA: Higher Education – Nationwide (2026)

## Memberships & Affiliations

National Association of College and University Attorneys (NACUA)