BEFORE THE
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of:	
PARENT ON BEHALF OF STUDENT,	OAH Case No. 2015110163
v.	ORDER FOLLOWING PREHEARING CONFERENCE
SACRAMENTO CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT.	

On February 12, 2016, a telephonic prehearing conference was held before Administrative Law Judge Lisa Lunsford, Office of Administrative Hearings. Allison S. Hyatt, Attorney at Law, appeared on behalf of Student. Sarah L. Garcia, Attorney at Law, appeared on behalf of Sacramento City Unified School District). The PHC was recorded.

Based upon discussion with the parties, the ALJ issues the following order:

1. Hearing Dates, Times, and Location. The hearing shall take place on February 23, 24 and 25, and March 1, 2016, and continue day to day, Monday through Thursday, at the discretion of the ALJ. The hearing shall take place at the District's offices located at 5735 47th Avenue, Sacramento, California, 95824. The hearing shall begin at 9:30 a.m. the first day of the hearing and at 9:00 a.m. all other days, unless otherwise ordered.

As ordered in the scheduling order, Sacramento City, as the named local educational agency, shall provide a facility for the hearing that fully complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq.), the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794 et seq.), the Unruh Civil Rights Act (Civ. Code, § 51 et seq.), and all laws governing accessibility of government facilities to persons with disabilities. Sacramento City is ordered to certify to OAH within three business days of the date of this order that it will provide a facility that complies with the law.

Prior to the beginning of the hearing, District shall ensure that the hearing room is configured into a courtroom setting and shall have at a minimum (1) a table for Student and his representatives; (2) a table for District's legal representative and special education representative; (3) a table for the witness; and (4) a table for the ALJ, near an electrical outlet. District shall provide drinking water and tissue to all parties, witnesses and the ALJ. The same hearing room shall be used for each day of hearing and shall be available at least one hour prior to the commencement of the hearing each day. The hearing room shall be

locked following the hearing each night. District shall ensure that the hearing room and access to it are in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The parties shall immediately notify all potential witnesses of the hearing dates, and shall subpoena witnesses if necessary, to ensure that the witnesses will be available to testify. A witness will not be regarded as unavailable for purposes of showing "good cause" to continue the hearing if the witness is not properly notified of the hearing date or properly subpoenaed, as applicable.

2. Issues and Proposed Resolutions. The issues at the due process hearing, and the proposed resolutions, are listed below.[1]

Issue 1: Did Sacramento City deny Student a free appropriate public education by failing to find Student eligible for special education and related services under the eligibility category of specific learning disability in connection with the Student Study Team meeting held on December 18, 2013?

Issue 2: From the June 13, 2014 individualized education program until October 6, 2014, did Sacramento City deny Student a FAPE by failing to include goals that are measurable?

Issue 3: During the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 school years, beginning with the June 13, 2014 IEP, did Sacramento City deny Student a FAPE by failing to identify or describe the specific reading methodology to be used with Student on his IEP?

Issue 4: During the 2015-2016 school year through the date of hearing, did Sacramento City deny Student a FAPE by failing to offer an Orton-Gillingham based reading methodology?

Issue 5: During the 2013-2014, 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years, beginning with the June 13, 2014 IEP through the date of hearing, did Sacramento City deny Student a FAPE by failing to:

a. implement the assistive technology recommendations in the June 2014 assistive technology evaluation; and

b. offer an aide?

[1] Student withdrew Issue Three in Student's Complaint, and Sacramento City's motion to dismiss the allegation in Issue Four of the Complaint, relating to a violation of Student's rights under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, was granted. In addition, the issues have been rephrased and reorganized for clarity. The ALJ has authority to redefine a party's issues, so long as no substantive changes are made. (*J.W. v. Fresno Unified School Dist.* (9th Cir. 2010) 626 F.3d 431, 442-443.)

Student's Proposed Resolutions:

a. Compensatory educational services in the form of specialized tutoring using the Barton Program or another Orton-Gillingham based reading intervention method five times a week for 45 minute sessions from a professional tutor certified in the method and experienced in tutoring children with dyslexia through the summer and until Student is reading at grade level; and

b. A full time paraprofessional aide dedicated primarily to Student to serve as a reader and a scribe, to strengthen Student's executive functioning and ability to use assistive technology and other tools, to improve communication between school and home, and ensure Student benefits from the core curriculum in the main classroom, for as long as Student needs the accommodations to access his curriculum.

3. Exhibits. Exhibits shall be pre-marked and placed in three-ring exhibit binders prior to the hearing. The parties shall number exhibits in a way that clearly identifies the party offering the exhibit (for example "S-1" for Student or "D-1" for District). Each exhibit shall be internally paginated, by exhibit, or all pages of a party's exhibit binder shall be Bates-stamped or otherwise consecutively numbered. Each exhibit will consist of one document or short series of documents that are related (such as emails). Each exhibit binder shall contain a detailed table of contents. Each party shall serve an exhibit binder containing its respective exhibits on the other party in compliance with Education Code section 56505, subdivision (e)(7). At the hearing, each party shall supply an exhibit binder containing its exhibits for use by the ALJ, and a second exhibit binder for use by witnesses. The parties may not serve exhibits on OAH prior to the hearing. In the event of duplicate exhibits, the most legible version will be used.

Each party is expected to comply with Education Code section 56505, subdivision (e)(7) and timely serve an exhibit binder containing its respective exhibits on the other party. Except for good cause shown, or unless used solely for rebuttal or impeachment, any exhibit not timely exchanged shall not be admitted into evidence at the hearing unless the ALJ rules that it is admissible.[2]

4. Witnesses. Each party is responsible for procuring the attendance at hearing of its own witnesses. Each party shall make witnesses under its control reasonably available.[3] The parties shall schedule their witnesses to avoid delays in the hearing and to

[2] Student's request to strike an October 2015 manifestation determination from Sacramento City's exhibit list was denied without prejudice.

[3] Student's counsel objected to Student being named as a potential witness on Sacramento City's witness list due to his young age of eleven years old. Sacramento City countered that it is not uncommon for Students to testify in these proceedings, and it is

minimize or eliminate the need for calling witnesses out of order. Neither party shall be permitted to call any witnesses not timely disclosed except for good cause shown, and at the discretion of the ALJ. The parties are encouraged to review and shorten their witness lists prior to the hearing, bearing in mind that evidence will be excluded if it is repetitive, cumulative, or insufficiently probative to justify the time it would take to hear.

The parties shall meet and confer to develop a proposed joint witness schedule. The proposed schedule will be presented to the ALJ at the beginning of the hearing. Prior to commencing the hearing, the ALJ and the parties will discuss the proposed witness schedule and address scheduling issues for individual witnesses, before the ALJ finalizes the schedule. Additionally, the parties shall be prepared at the end of each day of hearing to discuss the witnesses to be presented the next day and the time the testimony of each such witness is expected to take.

The parties shall provide resumes for each witness who testifies in their professional capacity. Those resumes shall be included in the parties' evidence binder as separate exhibits.

5. Scope of Witness Examination. Each witness shall be called to testify only once, except for rebuttal purposes, and all parties shall examine the witness on all issues when the witness is first called. After the first direct and cross-examinations, each party shall be limited in examining the witness to only those matters raised in the immediately preceding examination. The order in which the parties present their cases in chief shall be subordinate to the need for each witness to appear only once.

6. Telephonic Testimony. Whether a witness may appear by telephone is a matter within the discretion of the ALJ. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 5, § 3082, subd. (g).) Any party seeking to present a witness by telephone shall move in advance for leave to do so, unless the opposing party has stipulated that the witness may appear by telephone. The proponent of the witness shall provide the proposed witness with a complete set of exhibit binders from all parties, containing all of each party's exhibits, prior to the hearing; and shall ensure that the hearing room has sound equipment that allows everyone in the room to hear the witness, and the witness to hear objections and rulings. No witness will be heard by telephone unless all these requirements have been fulfilled. The parties indicated that at this time no witnesses are expected to testify telephonically.

7. Electronic Recording of Hearing.

a. Audio Recording. Both parties' requests to record the hearing are granted, subject to the following conditions: 1) that OAH's recording is the only official recording; 2) that the recording will be turned on and off at the same time as the ALJ's

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possible that Student will not actually be called to testify in this matter. The objection was overruled, and Student can renew this objection if he is in fact called by Sacramento City to testify.

recording, in order to avoid recording conversations while off the record; and 3) that operation of the party's recording mechanism will not be allowed to delay the hearing.

b. Video Recording. No party, witness or anyone else present may make any video recording of any part of the proceedings. Any person doing so shall be subject to sanctions.

8. Order of Presentation of Evidence. In an administrative proceeding, the burden of proof is ordinarily on the party requesting the hearing. (*Schaffer v. Weast* (2005) 546 U.S. 49, 56-62 [126 S.Ct. 528, 163 L.Ed.2d 387].) Here, Student is the petitioning party. Accordingly, Student shall present its case-in-chief, followed by Sacramento City.

9. Motions. No further pretrial motions are pending or contemplated. Any motion filed after this date shall be supported by a declaration under penalty of perjury establishing good cause as to why the motion was not made prior to or during the prehearing conference of February 12, 2016.

10. Compensatory Education/Reimbursement. Any party seeking reimbursement of expenditures shall present admissible evidence of these expenditures, or a stipulation to the amount of expenditures, as part of its case in chief. A party seeking compensatory education should provide evidence regarding the type, amount, duration, and need for any requested compensatory education.

11. Stipulations. Stipulations to pertinent facts, contentions or resolutions are encouraged. Any proposed stipulation shall be submitted to the assigned ALJ in written form.

12. Conduct of Counsel and Hearing Room Decorum. Counsel, all parties, and all witnesses shall conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner at all times. Cellular phones, pagers, recorders, and other noisemaking electronic devices shall be shut off or set to vibrate during the hearing unless permission to the contrary is obtained from the ALJ.

13. Special Needs and Accommodations. At present, neither party anticipates the need for any special accommodation or interpreter for any witness or party. A party or participant to this case, such as a witness, requiring reasonable accommodation to participate in the mediation or hearing may contact the assigned calendar staff, identified in the scheduling order, at (916) 263-0880, as soon as the need is known. Additional information concerning requests for reasonable accommodation is available on OAH's website at: http://www.dgs.ca.gov/oah/Home/Accommodations.aspx.

14. Hearing Open To the Public. At the request of Student, the hearing will be open to the public. Any observer who is also a witness shall be excluded from observing the due process hearing until after they have testified. This does not apply to parties.

15. Settlement. The parties are encouraged to continue working together to reach an agreement before the due process hearing. The parties shall inform OAH in writing immediately should they reach a settlement or otherwise resolve the dispute before the scheduled hearing. In addition, if a settlement is reached within five days of the scheduled start of the due process hearing, the parties shall also inform OAH of the settlement by telephone at (916) 263-0880.

IF A FULL AND FINAL WRITTEN SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT IS REACHED AFTER 5:00 P.M. THE DAY PRIOR TO HEARING, THE PARTIES SHALL LEAVE A VOICEMAIL MESSAGE REGARDING THE SETTLEMENT AT (916) 274-6035. THE PARTIES SHOULD ALSO LEAVE CONTACT INFORMATION SUCH AS CELLULAR PHONE NUMBERS OF EACH PARTY OR COUNSEL FOR EACH PARTY. THE PARTIES SHOULD SIMULTANEOUSLY FAX THE SIGNATURE PAGE OF THE SIGNED AGREEMENT OR A LETTER WITHDRAWING THE CASE TO THE OAH AT THE FAXINATION LINE at 916-376-6319.

Dates for hearing will not be cancelled until the letter of withdrawal or signature page of the signed agreement has been received by OAH. If an agreement in principle is reached, the parties should plan to attend the scheduled hearing unless different arrangements have been agreed upon by the assigned ALJ. The assigned ALJ will check for messages the evening prior to the hearing or the morning of the hearing.

16. Failure to comply with this order may result in the exclusion of evidence or other sanctions.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

DATE: February 17, 2016

DocuSigned by:
Lisa Lunsford
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LISA LUNSFORD
Administrative Law Judge
Office of Administrative Hearings