BEFORE THE
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE MATTER OF:

PARENTS ON BEHALF OF STUDENT,

v.

GROSSMONT UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT.

OAH CASE NUMBER 2024060974

ORDER DENYING REQUEST FOR CONTINUANCE OF

DUE PROCESS HEARING

OCTOBER 2, 2024

On June 26, 2024, Student filed a request for due process hearing with the Office of Administrative hearings, also called OAH, naming Grossmont Union High School District. On July 31, 2024, OAH issued an order granting the parties' joint request for a mediation and continuance, setting the mediation for August 27, 2024, prehearing conference, also called PHC, for September 27, 2024 and due process hearing for October 8, 9, and 10, 2024.

On August 27, 2024, the parties participated in mediation. On September 27, 2024, the parties participated in the PHC.

On October 1, 2024, Student filed a motion to continue the due process hearing for approximately 30 days. Student supported the motion with a declaration from counsel, Timothy Adams. Adams stated that he has acted as students' chosen attorney in this and another matter, OAH case number 2024030862. In the declaration, Adams states that hearing in OAH case number 2024030862 began October 1, 2024 and will proceed through October 17, 2024.

OAH must conduct a due process hearing and issue a decision within 45 days of receiving the due process complaint unless an extension is granted. (34 C.F.R. § 300.515(a); Ed. Code, §§ 56502, subd. (f), 56505, subd. (f)(3).) Resolving the due process hearing quickly is legally required. Hearings may only be continued if "good cause" is established. (Ed. Code, § 56505, subd. (f)(3).) OAH is guided by the Administrative Procedure Act and the California Rules of Court when ruling on continuance motions. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 1, § 1020; Cal. Rules of Court, rule 3.1332.)

Good cause to continue a hearing may include:

- An essential lay or expert witness is unavailable because of death, illness, or other excusable circumstances;
- A party is unavailable because of death, illness, or other excusable circumstances;
- A party's attorney is unavailable because of death, illness, or other excusable circumstances;
- A new attorney substitutes in, but only if the party establishes that the substitution is required in the interests of justice;
- A new party is added, and the new party has not had a reasonable opportunity to prepare for trial, or other parties have not had a

reasonable opportunity to prepare for trial regarding the new party's involvement;

- A party is unable to obtain essential testimony, documents, or other material evidence despite diligent efforts; or
- The case has a significant and unexpected change which makes the case not ready for trial.

Generally, continuances are disfavored. (Cal. Rules of Court, rule 3.1332(c).)

Student established good cause to continue the due process hearing. However, Student did not demonstrate that they met and conferred with Grossmont Union regarding mutually agreeable dates for a continuance.

The request is denied. All previously scheduled dates remain as scheduled. Nothing in this order prevents the parties from submitting a request for continuance with agreed upon dates beginning October 22, 2024 or as soon thereafter as the parties are available. Such request must include declarations stating dates of unavailability, if any, arising on or after October 22, 2024 through the first date of availability for hearing.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Cole Dalton

Cole Dalton
Administrative Law Judge
Office of Administrative Hearings