BEFORE THE
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE MATTER OF:

EL SEGUNDO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT,

v.

PARENTS ON BEHALF OF STUDENT.

OAH CASE NUMBER 2023070586

ORDER FOLLOWING PREHEARING CONFERENCE

GRANTING REQUEST FOR CONTINUANCE

AUGUST 28, 2023

On August 28, 2023, Administrative Law Judge Alexa Hohensee, Office of Administrative Hearings, held a prehearing conference by videoconference. The Administrative Law Judge is called an ALJ. The Office of Administrative Hearings is called OAH. The prehearing conference is called a PHC.

Attorney Adam Newman appeared on behalf of El Segundo Unified School District, called El Segundo. Parents appeared on behalf of Student. The PHC was recorded. Based upon discussion with the parties, the ALJ issues the following order:

HEARING DATES, TIMES, AND LOCATION

At the PHC, Student moved to continue the prehearing conference and due process hearing based on Parents' desire to hire an attorney to represent Student. El Segundo did not oppose the motion. The due process hearing was scheduled for September 6 and 7, 2023.

A due process hearing must be conducted and a decision rendered within 45 days of receipt of the due process notice unless an extension is granted for good cause. (34 C.F.R. § 300.515(a) & (c) (2006); Ed. Code, §§ 56502, subd. (f), 56505, subd. (f)(3); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 1, § 1020.) As a result, continuances are disfavored. Good cause may include the unavailability of a party, counsel, or an essential witness due to death, illness or other excusable circumstances; substitution of an attorney when the substitution is required in the interests of justice; a party's excused inability to obtain essential testimony or other material evidence despite diligent efforts; or another significant, unanticipated change in the status of the case as a result of which the case is not ready for hearing. (Ed. Code, § 56505, subd. (f)(3); Cal. Rules of Court, rule 3.1332(c).) OAH considers all relevant facts and circumstances, including the proximity of the hearing date; previous continuances or delays; the length of continuance requested; the availability of other means to address the problem giving rise to the request; prejudice to a party or witness as a result of a continuance; the impact of granting a continuance on other pending hearings; whether trial counsel is engaged in another trial; whether the parties have stipulated to a continuance; whether the interests of justice are served by the continuance or imposing conditions on the continuance; and any other relevant fact or circumstance. (Cal. Rules of Court, rule 3.1332(d).)

The request for continuance is granted for good cause. Parents are unfamiliar with due process hearing procedures and substantive requirements of special education

law and seek a short continuance to hire a special education attorney to represent their child's interests. The parties agreed on the record to continuance dates. All previously scheduled dates are vacated. The case shall proceed as follows:

PREHEARING CONFERENCE will be held on September 22, 2023, at 10:00 AM.

All other prehearing matters shall be addressed at the DATE prehearing conference. All prehearing motions must be filed three business days before the PHC.

DUE PROCESS HEARING will be held on October 3, through 5, 2023.

The hearing will be conducted via telephone or videoconference and shall begin at 9:30 AM and end at 3:30 PM on all days, unless otherwise ordered. The hearing shall continue day to day, Mondays and Fridays included, at the discretion of the ALJ.

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.

SETTLEMENT

The parties shall immediately inform OAH in writing if they reach a settlement or otherwise resolve the dispute before the scheduled 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 PM the day before the 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. At the same time, the parties should send the signature page of the signed agreement or a letter withdrawing the case to OAH at https://www.applications.dgs.ca.gov/oah/oahsftweb.

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.

If the matter settles subject to board approval, in addition to a signed copy of the signature page of the settlement agreement, the parties shall provide the date of the next board meeting. The hearing dates will not be cancelled without this information.

FAILURE TO COMPLY

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

ORDER INCLUDES ALL RULINGS

This order includes all rulings made at the PHC.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Alexa Hohensee

Alexa Hohensee
Administrative Law Judge
Office of Administrative Hearings