BEFORE THE
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of: PARENT ON BEHALF OF STUDENT, v. LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, IVY BOUND CHARTER SCHOOL, and ILEAD CHARTER SCHOOL.	OAH Case No. 2018090151 ORDER OF DETERMINATION OF SUFFICIENCY OF DUE PROCESS COMPLAINT

On September 6, 2018, Student filed a due process hearing request[1] (complaint) with the Office of Administrative Hearings naming Los Angeles Unified School District, Ivy Bound Academy Charter School and ILEAD Charter School. On September 18, 2018, ILEAD filed a notice of insufficiency as to Student's complaint. Neither Student nor Ivy Bound have responded, and there is no need for them to do so.

APPLICABLE LAW

The named parties to a due process hearing request have the right to challenge the sufficiency of the complaint. (20 U.S.C. § 1415(b) & (c).) The party filing the complaint is not entitled to a hearing unless the complaint meets the requirements of title 20 United States Code section 1415(b)(7)(A).

A complaint is sufficient if it contains: (1) a description of the nature of the problem of the child relating to the proposed initiation or change concerning the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the child, or the provision of a free appropriate public education to the child; (2) facts relating to the problem; and (3) a proposed resolution of the problem to the extent known and available to the party at the time. (20 U.S.C. § 1415(b)(7)(A)(ii)(III) & (IV).) These requirements prevent vague and confusing complaints, and promote fairness by providing the named parties with sufficient information to know how to prepare for the hearing and how to participate in resolution sessions and mediation. (See H.R.Rep. No. 108-77, 1st Sess. (2003), p. 115; Sen. Rep. No. 108-185, 1st Sess. (2003), pp. 34-35.)

[1] A request for a due process hearing under Education Code section 56502 is the due process complaint notice required under title 20 U.S.C. section 1415(b)(7)(A).

The complaint provides enough information when it provides "an awareness and understanding of the issues forming the basis of the complaint." (Sen. Rep. No. 108-185, *supra*, at p. 34.) The pleading requirements should be liberally construed in light of the broad remedial purposes of the IDEA and the relative informality of the due process hearings it authorizes. (*Alexandra R. ex rel. Burke v. Brookline School Dist.* (D.N.H., Sept. 10, 2009, CIV. 06-CV-0215-JL) 2009 WL 2957991[nonpub. opn.]; *Escambia County Bd. of Educ. v. Benton* (S.D. Ala. 2005) 406 F.Supp.2d 1248, 1259-1260; *Sammons v. Polk County School Bd.* (M.D. Fla., Oct. 28, 2005, 8:04CV2657T24EAJ) 2005 WL 2850076 [nonpub. opn.]; but cf. *M.S.-G v. Lenape Regional High School Dist. Bd. of Educ.* (3d Cir. 2009) 306 Fed.Appx. 772, 775 [nonpub. opn.].) Whether the complaint is sufficient is a matter within the sound discretion of the Administrative Law Judge. (*Assistance to States for the Educ. of Children with Disabilities & Preschool Grants for Children with Disabilities* (Aug. 14, 2006) 71 FR 46,540-46541, 46699.)

DISCUSSION

Student's complaint is bereft of any claims against ILEAF, other than stating that Student attended ILEAF during the 2014-2015 and 2016-2017 school years. Student's complaint is deficient in that it does not identify any challenged IEP's developed at ILEAD,, and why they are challenged, any failure of ILEAD to implement an IEP, or any alleged procedural violations by ILEAD, for example.

Student has drafted his complaint in a manner that does not give ILEAD sufficient information to prepare for a resolution session, mediation or hearing. The complaint is insufficient as to ILEAD.

ORDER

1. Student's complaint is insufficiently pled under section title 20 United States Code 1415(c)(2)(D) as to ILEAD.

2. Student shall be permitted to file an amended complaint under title 20 United States Code section 1415(c)(2)(E)(i)(II).[2]

3. The amended complaint shall comply with the requirements of title 20 U.S.C. section 1415(b)(7)(A)(ii), and shall be filed not later than 14 days from the date of this order.

4. If Student fails to file a timely amended complaint, ILEAD will be dismissed as a party.

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[2] The filing of an amended complaint will restart the applicable timelines for a due process hearing.

5. All dates previously set in this matter are vacated as to ILEAD.

DATE: September 19, 2018

DocuSigned by:
Rebecca Freie
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REBECCA FREIE
Administrative Law Judge
Office of Administrative Hearings