BEFORE THE
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE MATTER OF:

SAN JOSE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT,

v.

PARENT ON BEHALF OF STUDENT.

OAH CASE NUMBER 2020060078

ORDER FOLLOWING PREHEARING CONFERENCE

GRANTING REQUEST FOR CONTINUANCE

AUGUST 14, 2020

On Friday, August 14, 2020, Administrative Law Judge Ted Mann, Office of Administrative Hearings held a telephonic prehearing conference. The Administrative Law Judge will be referred to as an ALJ. The Office of Administrative Hearings will be referred to as OAH. The prehearing conference will be referred to as a PHC.

Jeffrey Maisen, Attorney at Law, appeared on behalf of San Jose Unified School District. Natashe Washington, Attorney at Law, 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

Student moved to continue the prehearing conference and due process hearing based on Student's need to retain and prepare an expert witness for hearing following the recent impasse in settlement discussions.

The motion was timely filed three days prior to the prehearing conference. San Jose filed a non-opposition to Student's motion.

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 as found in Student's need to retain and prepare an expert for hearing following the parties reaching an impasse with their settlement discussions, along with San Jose's non-opposition to the continuance. All previously scheduled dates are vacated. The case shall proceed as follows:

Prehearing Conference: Friday, October 2, 2020, at 1:00 PM.

Prehearing Location: Videoconference through MS Teams.

All other prehearing matters shall be addressed at the October 2, 2020 prehearing conference. All prehearing motions must be filed three business days before the PHC.

Due Process Hearing: October 13 – 15, 2020.

The hearing shall begin at 9:30 AM and end at 3:30 PM on each day of the hearing, unless otherwise ordered. The hearing shall continue day to day at the discretion of the ALJ.

Hearing Location: Videoconference through MS Teams.

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. If the parties reach a settlement 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 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. The assigned ALJ will check for messages before the hearing.

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.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

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Ted Mann
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Ted Mann

Administrative Law Judge

Office of Administrative Hearings