BEFORE THE
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of:	
PARENT ON BEHALF OF STUDENT,	OAH Case No. 2017110183
v.	ORDER FOLLOWING PREHEARING CONFERENCE; GRANTING IN PART REQUEST FOR CONTINUANCE
SAN DIEGUITO UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT.	

On March 16, 2018, a telephonic prehearing conference was held before Administrative Law Judge Paul H. Kamoroff, Office of Administrative Hearings. Margaret H. Adams, Attorney at Law, and Student's mother appeared on behalf of Student. Ernest L. Bell, Attorney at Law, and Tiffany Hazlewood, program supervisor, appeared on behalf of San Dieguito Union High School District. The PHC was recorded.

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

1. Hearing Dates, Times, and Location. District's request for a brief continuance is granted in part and the hearing shall take place on March 29, 2018, and April 3, 4, and 5, 2018, and continuing day to day, Monday through Thursday, at the discretion of the ALJ. The hearing shall take place at District's offices located at 710 Encinitas Blvd., Encinitas, CA 92024. 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, the named local educational agency was to 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. The named local educational agency failed to certify that it would provide a facility for this case that complied with the law. The local educational agency shall inform OAH within two days of the date of this order it is able to certify that it will provide a facility that complies with the law.

Prior to the beginning of the hearing, District shall assist the ALJ to ensure that the hearing room is configured into a courtroom setting, including (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 also make reasonable effort to ensure that drinking water and tissue are available to all parties, witnesses and 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, as applicable.

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

a. Did District deny Student a free appropriate public education by placing Student at La Costa High School, a comprehensive school, during the 2016-2017 school year, without sufficient therapeutic services, per his May 25, 2016 individualized education program?

b. Did District seriously infringe on Parents' opportunity to meaningfully participate in the individualized education program process, and substantively deny Student an educational benefit, thereby denying him a free appropriate public education, by;

i. Failing to refer Student for a functional behavior assessment by Nov. 1, 2016; and

ii. Failing to refer Student for a educationally related mental health services reassessment, prior to February 13, 2017?

c. Did District seriously infringe on Parents' opportunity to meaningfully participate in the individualized education program process, by offering FAPE in a prior written notice on January 30, 2017, rather than an IEP team meeting, and substantively deny Student a FAPE because District's FAPE offer was for placement at Sierra Academy in San Diego, when Student required a residential placement?

d. Did District seriously infringe on Parents' opportunity to meaningfully participate in the individualized education program process, and deprive Student of educational benefit, by failing to have an IEP in place at the start of the 2017-2018 school year?

e. Did District seriously infringe on Parents' opportunity to meaningfully participate in the educational decision making process at the October 5, 2017 IEP team meeting, by offering a placement that could not be implemented, and by failing to make any other FAPE offer until November 30, 2017?

g. Did District deny Student a FAPE at the November 30, 2017 IEP team meeting, because that IEP offered placement at the Sierra Academy of San Diego?

To remedy his issues, Student requests reimbursement for educational expenses and compensatory education.

3. Exhibits. Exhibits shall be pre-marked and placed in three-ring exhibit binders prior to the hearing. The parties shall use numbers to identify exhibits, but shall place the letter "S" or "D" in front of the exhibit to designate if it is a Student or District exhibit (for example, "S-5, S-6," or "D-1, D-2"). Each exhibit shall be internally paginated by exhibit, or all of a party's exhibits shall be Bates-stamped. Each exhibit binder shall contain a detailed table of contents. The parties shall serve their evidence binders on each other 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.

Except for good cause shown, or unless used solely for rebuttal or impeachment, any exhibit not included in the exhibit lists and not previously exchanged shall not be admitted into evidence at the hearing unless it is supported by written declaration under penalty of perjury, and the ALJ rules that it is admissible.

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. The parties shall schedule their witnesses to avoid delays in the hearing and to minimize or eliminate the need for calling witnesses out of order. Neither party shall be permitted to call any witnesses not disclosed in the party's prehearing conference statement except for good cause shown, supported by written declaration under penalty of perjury, 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 are ordered to meet and confer by 5:00 p.m. on March 21, 2018, regarding the scheduling of witnesses. The parties shall attempt to reach agreement on a witness list for the first day of hearing. District shall have witnesses available in case agreement on a witness list is not reached. Prior to the commencement of the due process hearing, the ALJ and the parties will discuss the length of time anticipated for direct and cross-examination of each witness and scheduling issues for individual witnesses, and the ALJ will finalize the witness 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.

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.

Student's motion to allow Rachel Spaulding, Andrew Rigdon, and Allison Anderson to testify by video-conference or telephonically is granted. Student shall provide Ms. Spaulding, Mr. Rigdon, and Ms. Anderson with a complete exhibit binder from each party, 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 witnesses.

District's motion to allow Brandi Eagling to testify telephonically is granted. District shall provide Ms. Eagling with a complete exhibit binder from each party, 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.

7. Electronic Recording of Hearing.

a. Audio Recording. The parties' joint motion to make an audio recording of the hearing is granted, subject to the following conditions: 1) OAH's recording is the only official recording; 2) the recording will be turned on and off at the same time as the ALJ's recording, to avoid recording conversations while off the record; 3) operation of the party's recording mechanism will not be allowed to delay the hearing; and 4) the recording may not be shared with any non-party representative, possible witness, or social media.

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 his case-in-chief, followed by District.

9. Motions. Student anticipates submitting a motion to quash subpoena duces tecum. No other 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 March 16, 2018.

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 has requested any special needs or accommodations.

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 https://www.dgs.ca.gov/oah/Home/Accessibility.aspx.

14. Hearing Closed To the Public. The hearing will be closed to the public unless Student requests it be open.

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 EMAIL THE SIGNATURE PAGE OF THE SIGNED AGREEMENT OR A LETTER WITHDRAWING THE CASE TO THE OAH AT https://www.dgsapps.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 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: March 20, 2018

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Paul Kamoroff
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PAUL H. KAMOROFF
Administrative Law Judge
Office of Administrative Hearings